

Ordinance 2026-O-166

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAREDO ESTABLISHING ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITY'S INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE TOLL PROGRAM; INCORPORATING THE TOLL SCHEDULE PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL; ESTABLISHING IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES; PROVIDING FOR FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP; ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTING; OPERATIONAL PILOT PROGRAMS; EXTRAORDINARY ECONOMIC REVIEW; FUTURE BRIDGE TOLL RATE STUDIES; ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY; AND OTHER MATTERS INCIDENT THERETO.

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2026, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 26-O-114 establishing a phased Bridge Toll Rate Schedule effective January 1, 2027;

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that establishing a permanent governance and administrative framework for implementation of the Bridge Toll Program promotes continuity of operations, sound financial stewardship, informed policy decisions, public accountability, and efficient administration of the Bridge System independent of future toll rate adjustments;

WHEREAS, implementation of the adopted toll schedule requires coordinated operational planning, technology programming, budget implementation, customer communications, financial management, and cooperation among multiple City departments prior to the effective date;

WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that ongoing evaluation of the Bridge System through annual performance reporting promotes operational accountability, financial sustainability, customer service, regional competitiveness, and the continued movement of international commerce;

WHEREAS, establishing these implementation procedures serves an important public purpose and supports the efficient administration of the previously adopted Bridge Toll Program; and

WHEREAS, the City Council intends this Ordinance to establish a continuing governance framework for the administration of the Bridge System and the implementation of the Bridge Toll Program adopted through Ordinance No. 26-O-114.

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the administrative policies established by this Ordinance are intended to promote the orderly implementation and long-term governance of the Bridge System and are independent of future legislative decisions regarding bridge toll rates.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAREDO THAT:

Section 1. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish the administrative policies, procedures, and governance framework necessary to implement and administer the Bridge Toll Program previously adopted by the City Council through Ordinance No. 26-O-114.

This Ordinance is intended to provide for the orderly implementation, administration, financial management, operational oversight, and periodic review of the Bridge Toll Program before, during, and after implementation.

This Ordinance supplements the administrative implementation and governance of Ordinance No. 26-O-114 and shall not be construed as altering, amending, repealing, replacing, or otherwise modifying the toll schedule adopted therein except through subsequent action of the City Council.

Section 2. Incorporation of the adopted toll schedule for administrative and implementation purposes.

The Bridge Toll Schedule adopted by Ordinance No. 26-O-114 shall govern implementation of the Bridge Toll Program and is incorporated herein solely for administrative and operational purposes.

City of Laredo Bridge System - Proposed Toll Rate Schedule Through 2029

Type of Vehicle / User	Current Rate	INCREASE			
		Jan 2027	Jan 2028	Jan 2029	Beginning 2030, CPI-W or 4% COLA, whichever is greater
Non-Commercial Vehicles (Per Axle)	\$1.75	\$0.50	\$0.25	\$0.25	4% COLA
Commercial Vehicles (Per Axle)	\$4.75	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.50	
Pedestrians	\$1.00	\$0.25	\$0.25	\$0.25	

The City Manager shall implement the toll schedule in accordance with the dates established therein and shall take all actions reasonably necessary to prepare the Bridge System for implementation.

Implementation activities may include, but are not limited to:

- software programming;
- toll equipment configuration;
- financial system updates;
- customer notification;
- employee training;
- signage;
- operational testing; and
- coordination with governmental agencies.

The incorporated toll schedule shall be maintained by the City Secretary as part of the official records of this Ordinance.

Section 3. Implementation schedule (repeat the adopted January 1, 2027–January 1, 2029 schedule exactly).

The City Manager is authorized to complete all administrative actions necessary to implement the adopted toll schedule effective January 1, 2027.

Prior to implementation, staff shall verify operational readiness, including:

- toll collection equipment;
- electronic payment systems;
- accounting procedures;
- customer notification;
- operational testing;
- public communications.

The City Manager may establish administrative milestones necessary to ensure timely implementation.

Section 4. Administrative responsibilities.

The City Manager shall designate the departments responsible for implementing the Bridge Toll Program.

Responsibilities shall include coordination among:

- Bridge Department
- Finance Department
- Information Technology
- Communications
- Engineering
- Police
- Purchasing
- Legal

Each department shall cooperate in implementing the adopted Bridge Toll Program.

The City Manager may make administrative adjustments necessary to facilitate implementation provided such adjustments do not modify toll rates adopted by the City Council.

Section 5. Annual Bridge System Performance Report.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2027 and annually thereafter, the City Manager shall present to the City Council an Annual Bridge System Performance Report.

The report may include:

- toll revenues;
- operating expenditures;
- debt service;
- reserve balances;
- Capital Improvement Fund balances;
- bridge crossings by category;
- commercial traffic;
- pedestrian crossings;
- wait times;
- bridge utilization;
- maintenance activities;
- capital projects;
- customer service initiatives;
- technology improvements;
- regional competitiveness;
- international trade indicators;
- tariffs;
- United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement developments;
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection operational changes;
- Mexican Customs operational changes;
- inflation;
- and such other operational, financial, or policy recommendations as the City Manager determines appropriate.

In addition, the Annual Bridge System Performance Report may include recommendations for operational improvements, technology enhancements, customer service initiatives, and other policy recommendations the City Manager determines appropriate.

Section 6. Financial Stewardship Policy.

The City Council declares that the first financial obligation of the Bridge System shall be the preservation, maintenance, operation, and financial sustainability of the City's existing international bridge infrastructure.

Accordingly, Bridge System revenues shall continue to support:

- operations;
- maintenance;
- public safety;
- technology modernization;
- debt service;
- reserve requirements;
- rehabilitation;
- capital preservation;
- and other authorized purposes.

Future expansion projects shall be pursued in a manner that does not compromise the operational integrity or financial sustainability of the existing Bridge System.

Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the City Council from authorizing future bridge expansion projects when determined to be financially prudent and in the public interest.

Section 7. Operational Pilot Programs

The City Manager may establish temporary operational pilot programs designed to improve:

- traffic flow;
- customer service;
- bridge utilization;
- congestion management;
- technology;
- operational efficiency; and
- other operational or administrative functions related to the efficient management of the international bridges.

Pilot programs may be temporary, seasonal, location-specific, or operational in nature and shall be implemented for the purpose of evaluating and improving bridge operations and customer service.

The City Manager shall report the results of pilot programs to the City Council.

Section 8. Waiver of International Bridge Tolls.

The City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager, or the City Manager's authorized designee, to waive or discount international bridge toll fees only under the following circumstances:

1. For municipal vehicles, emergency vehicles, and travel conducted in furtherance of official City business;
2. During a declared local disaster, public emergency, or for community events expressly authorized by the City Council; or
3. As necessary to comply with the terms of a binding interlocal agreement or other legally enforceable agreement.

The City Manager shall maintain a written record of each waived or discounted bridge crossing, including the date of the crossing, the person or entity receiving the waiver or discount, the amount waived or discounted, and the justification for the action. The City Manager shall provide the City Council with a quarterly report summarizing all such waivers and discounts.

Section 9. Extraordinary Economic Review and Council flexibility.

The City Council recognizes that international commerce is affected by circumstances beyond the City's control.

Accordingly, the Annual Bridge System Performance Report shall include evaluation of significant economic factors including:

- tariffs;
- international trade agreements;
- federal border policy;
- CBP operations;
- Mexican Customs;
- supply chain disruptions;
- inflation;
- regional competitiveness;
- extraordinary economic events.

Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to require modification of any toll rate or implementation schedule based solely upon the existence of one or more economic factors identified in the Annual Bridge System Performance Report.

The City Council retains full discretion to modify, postpone, suspend, or otherwise adjust future toll implementation schedules through subsequent legislative action.

Section 10. Periodic Bridge Toll Rate Studies.

The City Manager shall periodically evaluate the financial performance of the Bridge System.

Comprehensive Bridge Toll Rate Studies should generally be completed every five years, or sooner if directed by the City Council.

The purpose shall be to:

- evaluate financial sustainability;
- assess competitiveness;
- review capital needs;
- evaluate operational performance;
- recommend future adjustments if appropriate.

Section 11. Budget integration recognizing the implementation of the adopted toll schedule.

The adopted toll schedule shall be incorporated into future annual operating budgets, capital improvement programs, financial forecasts, debt service planning, reserve planning, and other financial planning documents approved by the City Council, including projected

toll revenues, operating expenditures, maintenance costs, capital improvements, technology investments, and reserve funding.

Budget adoption, including the adopted Capital Improvement Program, shall continue to occur independently pursuant to applicable law.

Section 12. Customer outreach and communications.

The City Manager shall develop a customer communication program prior to implementation.

The program may include:

- public notices;
- website updates;
- social media;
- stakeholder meetings;
- commercial carrier outreach;
- pedestrian notices;
- educational materials
- multilingual materials.

Section 13. Technology, programming, and operational readiness.

The City Manager is authorized to implement technological improvements necessary to administer the adopted toll schedule.

This includes:

- software;
- toll readers;
- payment systems;
- reporting;
- accounting;
- cybersecurity;
- customer interfaces.

Section 14. Administrative rounding procedures.

Where necessary for efficient toll collection, administrative implementation of toll rates shall follow the rounding provisions established in Ordinance No. 26-O-114.

No administrative rounding shall alter the intent of the adopted toll schedule.

Section 15. Effective date (implementation ordinance effective immediately; toll schedule remains effective January 1, 2027).

This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

The toll schedule previously adopted by Ordinance No. 26-O-114 shall take effect on January 1, 2027, in accordance with its terms.

Section 16. Construction

The City Council finds that this Ordinance is intended to establish administrative procedures governing implementation and ongoing administration of the Bridge Toll Program adopted through Ordinance No. 26-O-114.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed as altering, amending, repealing, replacing, or otherwise modifying the provisions of Ordinance No. 26-O-114 except through subsequent legislative action of the City Council.

Section 17. Severability

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or provision of this Ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such determination shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 18.

The publishers of the City Code of Laredo, Texas are authorized to amend said code to reflect the changes adopted herein and to correct typographical errors and to index, format and number paragraphs to conform to the existing code.

Section 19.

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon passage.

**DULY PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR ON THIS
THE ____ DAY OF _____, 2026.**

[EXECUTION PAGE FOLLOWS]

DR. VICTOR D. TREVIÑO
MAYOR

ATTESTED:

MARIO MALDONADO
CITY SECRETARY

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

DOANH "ZONE" T. NGUYEN
CITY ATTORNEY