

Rickenbacker Causeway Resident Toll Rate – Historical Fact Sheet *Prepared by Emmet J. Schwartzman – September 2025*

Historical Background

- **Opened:** 1947, financed by Dade County Revenue Bonds (1941)
- **Purpose:** Sole vehicular connection between Key Biscayne and mainland Miami
- **Management:** Operated by Miami-Dade County as an **enterprise fund** under the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department
- **Toll Collection:** Eastbound only, near Brickell Avenue

Resident Toll Plan Overview

- **Rate Introduced:** \$24 annually for Key Biscayne residents
- **Duration:** Maintained for over 20 years without increase
- **Eligibility:** Proof of residency and vehicle registration required
- **Administration:** Managed via SunPass and County toll division
- **Community Role:** Recognized as a necessity, not a luxury—daily access for work, school, and emergency services

FY 2026 Budget Proposal Highlights

- **Proposed Increase:** \$24 → \$72 annually for residents
- **Other Toll Changes:**
 - Standard two-axle vehicle toll: Increase by \$1
 - Commuter plan: Doubling in cost
- **Stated Rationale:**
 - Addressing \$402 million budget shortfall
 - Funding infrastructure projects (e.g., Bear Cut Bridge replacement)
 - Mayor Levine Cava: Current rates are “quite low” and subsidized

Policy Considerations

- **No Formal Cap:** The \$24 rate is not codified in statute, but its consistency reflects a de facto policy precedent
- **Equity Concerns:** Key Biscayne residents lack alternative access routes; toll increases disproportionately affect them
- **Transparency Request:** Commissioner Regalado has requested a breakdown of toll revenue allocation and spending

Advocacy Position

- Preserve the \$24 annual rate or implement a phased, community-informed adjustment
- Reinforce the County’s historical commitment to equitable access
- Ensure any changes are supported by clear financial justification and public engagement

Rickenbacker Causeway Annual Toll History for Key Biscayne Residents (1947–2025)

Year	Annual Toll (Resident Plan)	Notes
1947	\$0.25 per crossing	Causeway opened; no annual plan; tolls collected manually
1970s–1980s	~\$10–\$15 (estimated)	Early resident passes introduced; informal pricing, varied by year
1990s	\$20	Formalized annual plan for residents begins under Miami-Dade County
2000s	\$20–\$24	Modest increases; integration with SunPass electronic tolling system
2020s	\$24	Current rate; unchanged for several years; plan renewed annually