

Commercial Vehicle Rates

Space-based Modeling

Casco Bay Lines
Finance Committee Meeting
11/12/2025

DRAFT PROPOSAL for Finance Committee Review



Reminder: 4 Goals for Vehicle Rate Change

1. **Increase revenue to CBL**, noting increased risk to Federal grants to plug operating deficits
2. **Support island affordability and access**, year-round, including residents and frequent riders, people who use vehicles for work on Peaks
3. **Reduce congestion**, expanding discount travel times over “Wacky Wed”
4. **Charge fairly** for large commercial vehicles, and passenger vehicles with trailers, racks, or other protrusions that take extra space

The Problem with Weight-Based Pricing

- Ferry capacity is limited by deck space, not weight
- A large vehicle can occupy the space of 2 or 3 standard vehicles, but often pays less than one passenger vehicle
- No incentive to consolidate loads – freight capacity of flatbeds (and likely box trucks) underutilized
- Staff charges one rate for vehicle, an additional rate for freight carried, and a third rate for a trailer (if applicable)
- No truck scale to confirm reported freight weights
- Commercial vehicles represent only 16% of vehicle revenue despite significant space use
- Vehicle weight has negligible impact on operating cost

Why Length-Based Pricing Makes Sense

- Length accurately reflects the space a vehicle consumes on the ferry deck
- Aligns pricing with actual operational constraints
- Creates greater incentives for load consolidation potentially leading to reduced congestion
- Vehicles are charged one rate without the need of an additional freight rate
- Fair to all users - larger vehicles that take more space pay proportionally more

Proposed Rate Structure: Length-Based Pricing

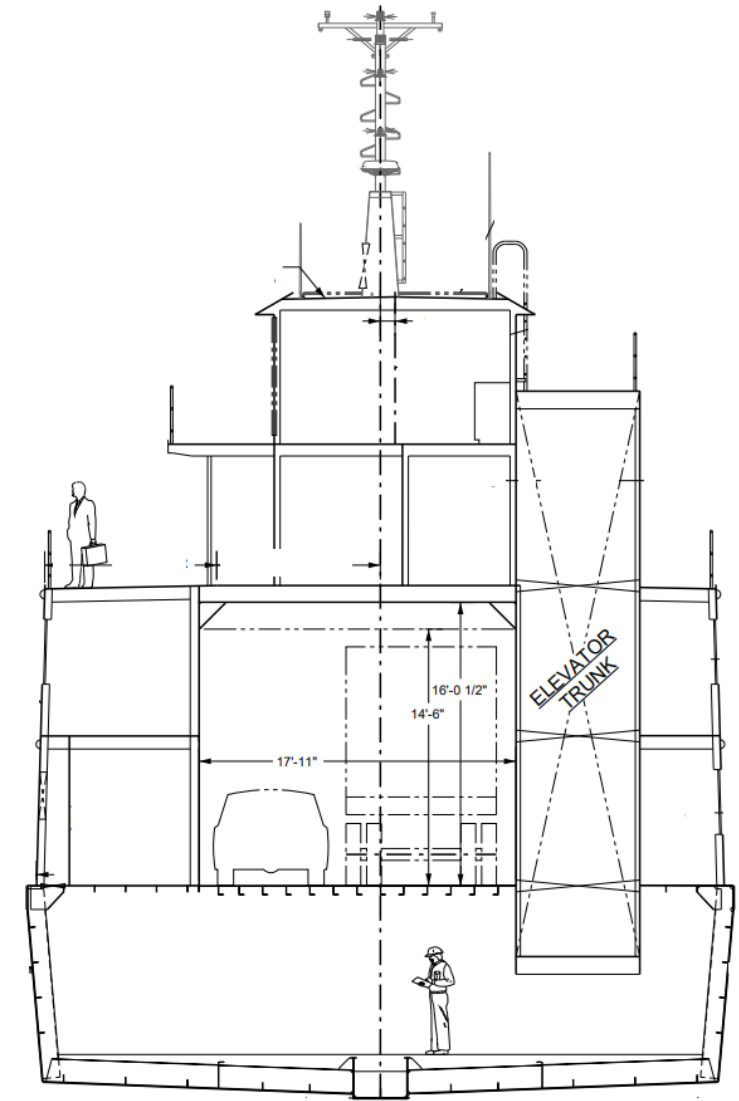
- Rates based on **total vehicle length** including trailers, bike racks, and other protrusions (*ladders, lumber, cone racks, trailer hitch, etc.*)
- **20-foot standard**: vehicles up to 20 feet pay base rate including *bobcats, golf carts*, and similar vehicles.
- Progressive surcharges: +25% for each additional 5 feet of length
- Day-of-week pricing: Higher rates Thursday-Saturday to manage peak demand
- Seasonal pricing maintained: Peak season (Mid Apr to Mid Oct) vs. Off-peak (Mid Oct to Mid Apr)
- **NOTE**: Passholder rate not valid for standard passenger vehicles if trailer, bike rack, or other protrusions extend the length of vehicle past 20 feet. Vehicle is charged standard base rate plus applicable length surcharge

Proposed Rate Schedule (Rates per Round Trip)

Length Bracket	Sun-Wed Off-Peak	Thu-Sat Off Peak	Sun-Wed Peak	Thu-Sat Peak	Surcharge %
20 ft or less	\$70.00	\$100.00	\$150.00	\$170.00	0%
20 ft or less w/pass	\$46.00	\$46.00	\$46.00	\$82.65	0%
20.1 - 25.0 ft	\$87.50	\$125.00	\$187.50	\$212.50	+25%
25.1 - 30.0 ft	\$105.00	\$150.00	\$225.00	\$255.00	+50%
30.1 - 35.0 ft	\$122.50	\$175.00	\$262.50	\$297.50	+75%
35.1 - 40.0 ft	\$140.00	\$200.00	\$300.00	\$340.00	+100%
40.1 - 45.0 ft	\$157.50	\$225.00	\$337.50	\$382.50	+125%
45.1 - 50.0 ft	\$175.00	\$250.00	\$375.00	\$425.00	+150%
50.1 - 55.0 ft	\$192.50	\$275.00	\$412.50	\$467.50	+175%
55.1 - 60.0 ft	\$210.00	\$300.00	\$450.00	\$510.00	+200%
60.1 - 65.0 ft	\$227.50	\$325.00	\$487.50	\$552.50	+225%
65.1 - 70.0 ft	\$245.00	\$350.00	\$525.00	\$595.00	+250%

What about Width?

- Maine law limits vehicle and cargo width to 102” (8’ 6”), excluding side mirrors.
- Vehicles exceeding this width generally require a permit from the Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles, with only rare exceptions.
- The Battery Steele is designed to accommodate vehicles up to 8’ 6” wide, while still allowing smaller passenger vehicles to park alongside.
- **Proposed Width Surcharge:** Any vehicle wider than 8’ 6” (excluding mirrors) will incur an additional **50% surcharge**, applied on top of the base and length-based surcharge.



Impact on Small Commercial Vehicles

- Vehicles under 6,000 lbs (73% of current commercial trips) reclassified as standard vehicles
- Now eligible for passholder discounts - significant savings opportunity for local businesses making frequent trips
- Support for frequent users: landscapers, service providers, small contractors
- Annual Pass or 90 Day Pass with vehicle add-on (\$432/\$194) pays for itself quickly after a few trips

Impact on Extra Large Vehicles

- Box/Flatbed trucks will see rate increases reflecting space consumed
- **However:** No more freight charges - heavy loads no longer cost extra
- Dump trucks & fuel trucks benefit significantly: no more freight surcharges on dense gravel/concrete or oil/wood/propane
- Incentive for efficiency: **Consolidating loads** into fewer trips is an option for reduced costs and reduced congestion
- Rates more accurately reflect the space these trucks occupy

Financial Analysis Methodology

- Mapped commercial vehicle weight data to corresponding average vehicle length
- Used sales data from previous 12 months as baseline for each class (revenue & volume) to project and compare future revenue and volume.
- Created new Excel model that converts weight fare to new length fare, broken down by *Peak/Off-peak* and *Sun-Wed/Thu-Sat split*
- Model includes variables for Pass Adoption %, *Sun-Wed/Thu-Sat split %*, *Volume Decline % (price elasticity)*, and *YoY growth*.

Passholder Adoption Rate	65%	% of <6,000 lb vehicles purchasing annual/90-day pass
Sun-Wed / Thu-Sat Split	50%	% of tickets sold for Sun-Wed travel
YoY Volume Growth Rate	0%	Expected year-over-year growth in commercial vehicle volumes
Volume Decline (Vehicles >20 ft)	22%	Expected % decline in demand for vehicles over 20.1 ft due to higher rates

Weight Class	Assumed Avg Length (ft)
<6,000 lbs	18
6,000-10,999 lbs	21
11,000-19,999 lbs	24
20,000-29,999 lbs	27
30,000-39,999 lbs	28
40,000-49,999 lbs	29
50,000-59,999 lbs	38
Over 60,000 lbs	45
Max Charge	29
Trailer to 20ft incl vehicle	36
TRAILER OVER 20FT incl vehicle	51

Vehicle Weight / Length Comparison Examples



Chevy ¾ Ton, Crew Cab, w / 8' Bed
10,000 GVWR and 20.8'



Chevy 1 Ton, Crew Cab, w / Dump Bed
14,000 GVWR and 23.8'



Full Size Dump Truck "Max Charge"
60,000+ GVWR and 28'



16' Box Truck
16,000 GVWR and 24'



Large Flatbed Truck
50,000 GVWR and 40'



Financial Analysis Results

REVENUE COMPARISON SUMMARY	
FY2025 Vehicle Freight Rev (\$)	\$33,981
FY2025 Commercial Vehicle Ticket Rev (\$)	\$297,532
FY2025 Commercial Vehicle Rev (\$)	\$331,513
Total Proposed Annual Revenue:	\$436,244
Revenue Change (\$):	+\$104,730
Revenue Change (%):	31.6%

Assumptions

- **65%** passholder adoption
- **50/50** Sun-Wed/Thu-Sat Split
- **22%** Decline in Vehicles over 20' in length (consolidation)

Impact of Proposed Rate Structure on Goals



1. Increase revenue to CBL, noting increased risk to Federal grants to plug operating deficits



2. Support island affordability and access, year-round, including residents and frequent riders, people who use vehicles for work on Peaks



3. Reduce congestion, expanding discount travel times over “Wacky Wed”



4. Charge fairly for large commercial vehicles, and passenger vehicles with trailers, racks, or other protrusions that take extra space