

Large Vehicle Rates

Space-based Modeling

Casco Bay Lines
Finance Committee Workshop
12/12/2025

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 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

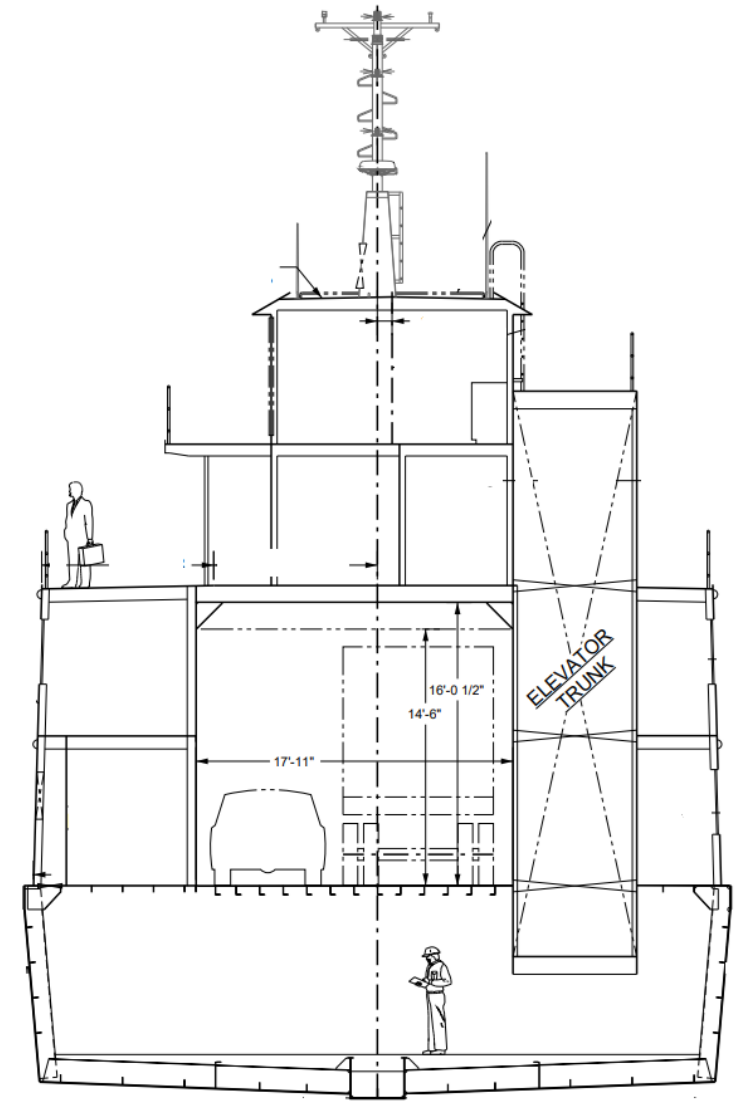
- Rates based on **total vehicle length** including trailers, bike racks, and other protrusions (*ladders, lumber, cone racks, trailer hitch, etc.*)
- **20-foot standard**: vehicles up to 20 feet pay base rate including *bobcats, golf carts*, and similar vehicles.
- Progressive surcharges: +25% for each 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 **21 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 w/pass | \$46.00 | \$46.00 | \$46.00 | \$82.65 | 0% |
| 20.1 ft to 21 ft w/pass | \$57.50 | \$57.50 | \$57.50 | \$103.31 | 25% |
| 20 ft or less | \$70.00 | \$100.00 | \$150.00 | \$170.00 | 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.



Proposed Measuring Process

- Lengths measured by painted hashmarks on loading lane curb or measuring wheel
- Staff empowered to resolve disputes about length measurement



Impact on Small Commercial Vehicles

- Vehicles under 6,000 lbs (73% of current commercial trips) reclassified as standard vehicles
- Vehicles under 21' 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



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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