



ARRA Contracts Awarded

COAST puts Stimulus Money to Work

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Dover, NH –The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) announced today that the COAST Board of Directors approved expenditures of just under \$100,000 of the over \$3.25 million in stimulus funds allocated to the Seacoast’s regional non-profit public transit system. Projects to be undertaken as a result of the Board of Director’s vote include the purchase of bus stop shelters and amenities, environmentally efficient facility lighting upgrades, and equipment to support the ongoing maintenance of COAST’s fleet of 24 buses and vans.

Rad Nichols, COAST Executive Director stated, “We feel very fortunate to be a direct recipient of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. These funds will help us finance capital projects that we did not have resources to otherwise undertake. Our goal at COAST is to ensure that our customers and the Seacoast region receive maximum benefit from the ARRA funds that have been allocated to COAST.”

COAST has focused the expenditure of ARRA funds in three distinct areas, as allowed by the Act. These include: (1) procuring new vehicles and bus stop amenities for passengers, (2) reducing ongoing operating costs by investing in green upgrades to facilities and equipment, and (3) investing in ongoing preventative maintenance programs.

“We are focusing on implementing capital projects that will improve our passenger experience and lower ongoing operating expenses,” remarked Nichols. “ARRA funds cannot be utilized to support public transit operations.” This means that this money cannot be used to expand service or make-up for other potential cuts (state) to COAST funding.

Next month, the Board of Directors is expected to vote on the expenditure of approximately \$2 million for a contract to purchase two (2) new heavy-duty public transit buses and three (3) new heavy-duty replica trolley buses. "These new vehicles will be more accessible, comfortable, fuel efficient, and more reliable than the vehicles being replaced, commented Nichols. "This should result in a more enjoyable and carefree ride for our passengers, as well as a lower maintenance burden being passed on to the local communities."

Staff began conducting a nationwide search for federally supported bus contracts COAST could "piggyback" on back in January in anticipation of receiving ARRA funds. Piggybacking will allow COAST to take advantage of bulk pricing available under a larger contract, as well as shave months off the procurement cycle for such vehicles, which is critical for ARRA funded projects.

In an effort to be transparent and accountable to taxpayers who support the service, COAST has posted information about ARRA related projects on its web site at www.coastbus.org/recovery.html.

The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) has provided public transit service to the Seacoast New Hampshire region for over 26 years. COAST is a public, non-profit transit system that relies primarily on federal and local government support to operate. For more information on COAST, visit www.coastbus.org or call the friendly staff at COAST at (603) 743-5777.