



COAST Awards Bus Contract

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Contact: Rad Nichols, Executive Director, COAST

603-743-5777

Dover, NH –The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) announced Wednesday that the Board of Directors approved a contract for just over \$2.1 million for the procurement of two (2) new heavy-duty low floor buses and three (3) new heavy-duty low floor replica trolleys manufactured by the Gillig Corporation of Hayward, California. The funds utilized for this procurement are coming from the over \$3.2 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds awarded to the Seacoast's regional non-profit public transit system in March. To date, COAST has awarded over \$2.2 million in six (6) ARRA funded contracts.

COAST began conducting a nationwide search for federally supported bus contracts it could "piggyback" on back in January in anticipation of receiving ARRA funds. Piggybacking has allowed 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.

Rad Nichols, COAST Executive Director stated, "We look forward to taking delivery of these buses and trolleys in December 2010. The vehicles will be equipped very similarly to the 2008 Gillig low-floor buses we placed in service this past winter, except they will be powered by the new greener 2010 Cummins ISL engines."

The improvements in regulated emissions, NOx & particulate matter that are incorporated in the 2010 engines will result in considerable percentage decreases (80 to 90%) in both of these emissions factors. "One of our goals at COAST is to minimize the impact of our operation on the environment, beyond the outstandingly positive effects of providing hundreds of thousands of passenger trips on our buses every

year,” remarked Nichols. The vehicles being replaced by the new buses and replica trolleys include 1988 and 2001 model year buses and replica trolleys currently active in the COAST fleet.

The use of ARRA funds for 100% of the procurement of the three (3) replica trolley buses, replacing the current COAST trolley fleet operating in Portsmouth and on the Pease Tradeport, will save the City of Portsmouth and the Pease Development Authority (PDA) just over \$135,000 each. “We are very pleased to be able to provide such an advantageous avenue for replacing these vehicles to the City and PDA,” declared Nichols.

COAST has focused their 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.” Therefore ARRA funding cannot be used to expand service or make up for other potential cuts (state funds) to COAST funding.

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.