



Take A Closer Look

Public Transit System Unveils New Campaign

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

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Dover, NH – To the many Seacoast residents who rely on public transit to get around, a COAST

bus coming is always a welcome sight. Starting today, however, looking at one of COAST's buses will be like looking in the mirror for the lucky passengers chosen to be part of COAST's new outreach campaign. A



new bus wrap features a larger-than-life interior view of the bus, complete with real COAST passengers sitting in the seats. Large letters read "Take a Closer Look at COAST."

"The design communicates the diversity of riders as well as a sense of the community that exists among those of us who ride the bus," said Esther, a regular commuter who appears in the bus wrap. "Last week when one of the regular morning commuters boarded the bus, she was greeted with a marble cake baked and frosted by the body-shop guy, a scratch ticket (that yielded \$45!) from the dry-wall guy, cards and a chorus of "Happy Birthday" from all of us on board."



COAST passenger
Esther



COAST passenger
Mary

Mary, another passenger pictured in the bus wrap, commented, "I hope the message people get from our pictures on the bus is that the bus is for everyone."

The bus wrap is part of a new campaign that Executive Director Rad Nichols hopes will prompt people who don't usually take the bus to give it a try. "People driving their cars in the Seacoast have probably seen our buses dozens, if not hundreds, of times," says Nichols.

"What we're trying to do with this bus wrap is say, 'Whether you have the use of a vehicle or not, we're offering you a convenient way to get where you're going. Let us show you how easy it can be.' Who can better communicate that message than our own regular customers?"

The campaign was timed to coincide with the launch of the most recent in a series of improvements that COAST has made in the last year, from new buses and bus routes to the use of Twitter and new bus stop signs to keep passengers updated and better informed.

COAST has certainly had a busy year. In December 2008, COAST introduced some of the most technologically advanced buses available into service and to its customers. The new buses are sleek, modern, fuel-efficient, and highly accessible. They incorporate automated stop announcements and other intelligent systems that make using the COAST bus easier and more enjoyable. At the same time COAST also began running the first of three new bus routes in Dover, known together as FastTrans.

Last March, the second of the three Dover FastTrans bus routes was implemented, along with significant improvements to COAST's longstanding Route 1 bus service between Dover, Somersworth and Berwick.

In May, COAST completed a comprehensive survey of its passengers. COAST was very proud to learn that 9 out of 10 of its customers are using the regional system 4 to 6 days a week and

believe it is providing a high quality service that they would recommend to their family, friends and colleagues.

Earlier this month COAST announced that it will be taking advantage of the popular networking tool Twitter to post service updates and other important announcements. This gives passengers with cell phones and a texting plan an easy way to get up-to-the-minute information as they are making their way to or waiting at the bus stop.

On October 12th COAST implemented Route 35, the third and final Dover FastTrans route. The three FastTrans routes now offer residents, employees and visitors hourly service in and around the City of Dover from Monday through Friday. COAST also took the opportunity to make a small yet notable improvement to Saturday service on its Route 2 bus between Rochester and Portsmouth.

This week COAST will begin installing a newly designed and much more informative bus stop sign. Instead of merely providing COAST's phone number, the new signs identify the stop name/location, all of the routes servicing the stop, and the departure times from that location by route and day, as well as any other pertinent information for that stop. COAST aims to replace all its existing signs with the new design over the next year.

COAST still has major plans in the works. In the near future, it hopes to release a new easy-to-use online trip planner for individuals wishing to use public transit in the Seacoast. Once available, this new tool will make it easy for anyone with internet access, especially those new to public transit, to plan a trip on the bus.

Finally, COAST expects to take delivery of new buses and trolleys in 2010. COAST will use the majority of the \$3.25 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds it was awarded earlier this summer to purchase these vehicles.

"As an organization we have dedicated ourselves to providing a reliable, affordable, friendly and safe public transit service to the Seacoast," Nichols stated. "I honestly believe we, and that

includes each and every employee at COAST, have built a superior public service that has a tremendous amount to offer residents and visitors of the Seacoast. The 'Take A Closer Look' campaign is meant to draw attention to all our efforts in a new way."

The "Take A Closer Look at COAST" campaign will feature a number of events and promotions over the coming year. For more information, please check the COAST web site at www.coastbus.org frequently.

A dedicated team of local professionals brought the bus wrap from idea to reality. The photography necessary for the design was shot by award winning photographer Andrew Edgar of Portsmouth. The graphic design of the wrap was completed by Danielle Sargent of Current Graphics. Coordination of the project, including production and installation of the vinyl, was overseen by Jane Marlow Cutter of Alternate Transit Advertising (ATA) in Greenland.

The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) has provided public transit service to the Seacoast New Hampshire region for over 27 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 bus service, visit www.coastbus.org or call the friendly staff at COAST at (603) 743-5777.