



Final Round of Public Information Meetings and Public Hearings

***** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE *****

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Dover, NH – The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation ([COAST](#)) is announcing its final round of opportunities to provide public input on COAST’s redesign of the region’s public transit system during the first week of December. Over the past 15-plus months COAST has undertaken a comprehensive review of its entire public transit system, asked for and received tremendous input from riders, partners and stakeholders, and based on that input, developed a proposal to redesign its services to better meet the needs of the region today and into the foreseeable future.

Rad Nichols, COAST Executive Director, stated, “There has been a remarkable amount of work undertaken over the past year-plus. We have held 16 public forums over three distinct public input periods, collected and analyzed over 330 responses to onboard and online surveys, and attended numerous partner and stakeholder meetings, all of which were necessary to get us to the point where we are today. The proposed conceptual plan has really come together, and we were very pleased with the positive response we received when the plan was released earlier this year.”

These meetings will represent the final public input opportunities on the proposed system changes coming to COAST in mid-2020. The meetings will be held as follows:

- Tuesday, December 3 (10a-12p), Dover Public Library
- Tuesday, December 3 (6p-8p), Somersworth City Hall
- Wednesday, December 4 (6p-8p), Portsmouth Public Library
- Thursday, December 5 (9a-11a), Friends of Farmington Meeting Space
- Thursday, December 5 (6p-8p) Rochester Public Library

The following items will be presented for final input:

- Final conceptualized plan, including routes and schedules
- Fare and fare media changes
- New recognized holidays
- Temporarily extending COAST ADA service to affected ADA clients no longer residing within COAST’s service area

Public input on the final conceptualized plan will be accepted at the public information meetings and hearings. Additionally, comments can also be submitted via email to info@coastbus.org, or by mail to COAST, 42 Sumner Drive, Dover, NH 03820. Comments will be accepted until Monday, December 16.

The new system has numerous benefits for riders; including dramatic reductions in travel times for the longest trips, more timely connections between routes, clockface scheduling, expansion of Saturday services and extensions of service coverage to a small number of highly sought areas. As required due to coming funding reductions, the service is designed to have a lower overall operating cost, make better use of vehicle downtime to maximize revenue service, eliminate service to some of the lowest ridership areas and reduce peak vehicle needs and associated costs.

“We owe an enormous amount of gratitude to the NHDOT for helping COAST assemble the funding necessary for implementation. A \$4.95M award of FTA funds, passed through the NHDOT over the next three years, will help COAST transition to the new service designed for better cost efficiencies, while also improving customer service,” explained Nichols.

A landing page for the Project can be viewed at www.coastbus.org/OurFuture. Visitors to the online landing page can read a project overview, review the project progress to date, see the latest version of the proposed system and timetables, obtain details on upcoming meetings and provide public comment and input through available forms.

Nichols added, “We are very proud of the comprehensive public input and planning process we have undertaken and feel that the result is a system design that best reflects the changing needs of the region. We are excited to see the proposed system move to the next stage after the upcoming final public input round.”

Nichols closed by saying, “Throughout this process, COAST has been committed to achieving the organization’s stated goals of actively engaging stakeholders in collaborative efforts to be responsive to the region’s changing needs, promoting fiscal stewardship of public transportation, and conducting ourselves with fiscal integrity and transparency that respects the taxpayers and municipalities we serve.”

The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) has provided public transit service to the Seacoast New Hampshire region since 1982. COAST is a non-profit agency, operating a regional public transit system that relies primarily on federal and local government support to operate. COAST is governed by a board of directors representing the communities served, two regional planning commissions, and many local and state agencies. COAST’s vision is to be an innovative leader in providing a broad range of public transportation services, connecting and coordinating a robust network of transportation options for everyone.

To learn more about COAST, or to find out if taking the bus is right for you, visit www.coastbus.org today!

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