



## Farmington Residents:

COAST continues to see a strong demand for our services. During our FY2016 (Oct. 1, 2015 – Sept. 30, 2016) COAST once again provided nearly 500,000 passenger trips in the Greater Seacoast. COAST offers an affordable, convenient and efficient way for individuals to access their jobs, education, medical services and commerce. Public transit, COAST, is an important part of your community and provides an essential service for thousands of the region's residents.

In FY2016, the COAST Rte. 6 bus service, connecting Farmington and Rochester, carried 22,509 passengers. This represented the second year in a row that a new annual record was set for the total number of riders carried, 11.6% over FY2015.

COAST continues to see some of the strongest growth on our system in our federally mandated van services for individuals with disabilities (+6.9% in FY16). These demand responsive services, which can provide up to door-to-door service under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are for people who can not utilize the fixed-route bus system due to a functional limitation or disability. The very strong growth in this part of COAST's operation is a function of New Hampshire's "silver tsunami" of aging adults, a growing awareness of the services we offer and downshifting of state supported services (& costs) to regional and local communities/providers. In FY16 COAST provided 329 rides to residents in Farmington who qualified for this service.



The continued success and growth of COAST and public mass transportation statewide in New Hampshire is indicative of the growing importance of this and other alternative modes of transportation to our residents and local businesses. The top three reasons for riding COAST, and public transit as a whole, are for work, school and to access commerce. Public transit provides affordable access to employment opportunities, education/job training and the ability to shop local, both critically important to our local and regional economies.

Public transit only exists through the public's recognition that it is an important component of the overall set of services that we support in our communities. Public transit, with a low fare to ride (e.g. \$1.50), does not pay for itself through user fees, regardless of how many passengers are carried. COAST routes, despite all of our tremendous success, have farebox recovery ratios ranging from 64% to less than 10%. The fare to ride public transit is low so as to be affordable for anyone to take advantage of and utilize on a frequent basis. There is a public benefit to this. Without community-based public transportation options; (1) many of our region's residents would have extremely limited or no access to employment opportunities, healthcare and basic services, (2) some area employers would have a harder time attracting and accessing

employees, (3) family transportation expenses would be much higher, (4) more disabled and elderly individuals would be unable to continue living independently in their own homes, and (5) our streets would be more crowded.

Approved by the Selectboard in mid-2016, advertising on COAST bus shelters in Farmington generated a total of \$6,125 in new net revenues to our public transit system. These revenues help offset the financial requests we make of our member communities. In cases in which a community allows this form of advertising, and fully supports COAST's funding request, we share 50% of the net revenues in a win-win relationship. This equated to a \$3,062.50 credit to the Town in CY16. We look forward to continuing this program into the future.

COAST is a public, non-profit transit system that relies primarily on federal and local government support to operate. For complete information on routes, schedules, services and how to plan a trip using COAST, please visit our web site at [www.coastbus.org](http://www.coastbus.org).

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rad Nichols", written in a cursive style.

Rad Nichols  
Executive Director