

# COAST



OVER 37 YEARS ON THE ROAD

## Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation

# Our Mission

**To champion and provide  
customer-focused public transportation  
with a commitment to excellence  
in safety and service.**

# Accomplishments

- Providing a critically important safe, affordable and accessible transportation service that supports regional economic growth
- Over 15 million passenger trips provided
- A highly valued and regarded medium-sized non-profit organization with just under 80 employees
- Produce an estimated \$24M in annual local and regional economic benefit (source: APTA economic impact tool)
- 37 years on the road serving the Greater Seacoast

# A Decision Point

- Our Comprehensive Operations Analysis work begun in early summer 2018 confirmed we had arrived at a major decision point.
- The funding changes we face beginning in July of 2020 created a crisis and an opportunity for COAST.
- COAST was compelled to comprehensively redesign how we provide public transit services in the Greater Seacoast region.



# The Crisis

- COAST needs to fund continuing operating and fixed costs but had to prepare for a tremendous potential loss of revenues (approx. 20%).
- Projecting out to FY21 and using typically secured revenues, COAST would have to cut approximately 60% of our current fixed route system, while significantly increasing our need and requests for matching or locally generated funding (\$113K).
- Staying the current course would simply not be possible.

# The Opportunity / COA

- Over the past 16 months we have been analyzing our system to determine how to best meet the changing public transit needs of the region.
- Held a series of 16 Public Forums and gathered Online/Onboard Surveys -
  - Riders
  - Stakeholders
  - Business Leaders
  - General Public

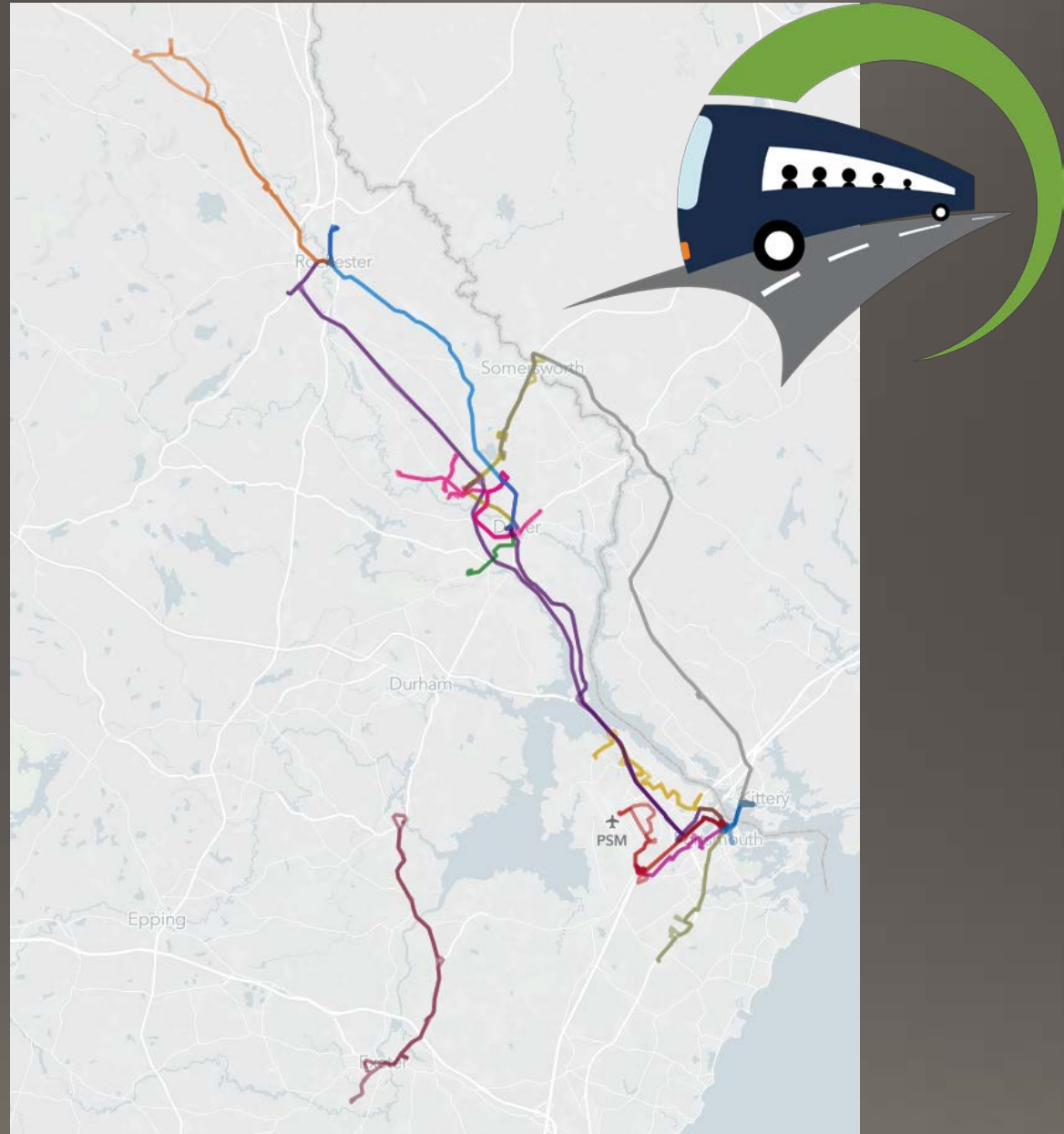
# What Did We Hear Initially?

- Travel takes too long on COAST, and riders want service to be no less frequent than hourly
- The system doesn't connect well with itself, and our buses do not always go where people want to go
- Service on Sunday would be preferred, but not at the expense of Monday – Saturday service
- Service should be spread consistently across each service day, which should have a span as long as possible

# Top Five Goals

- Separate local routes from routes making regional connections
- Maintain a minimum of hourly frequencies throughout the day
- Operate weekdays and Saturdays, and maximize the consistency between weekday and Saturday service
- Operate most services until at least 8pm, and later when possible
- Prioritize hourly frequencies evenly spread across the day

# A More Efficient Regional Transit Network



# Proposed System Benefits

## Cost Efficiencies

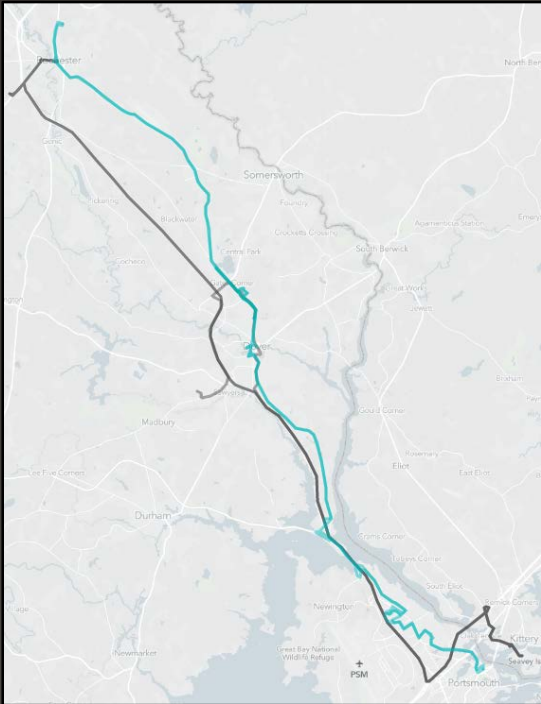
- Overall cost reduction
- Greater flexibility to operate routes only when sufficient demand exists
- Makes better use of downtime and deadheading to maximize revenue services
- Eliminates service to some of the lowest ridership areas
- Reduces peak vehicle requirement and associated costs

## Customer Service

- Significantly reduces travel times for the longest trips (by more than 50%)
- Improves timely connections between routes makes regional travel easier
- Clockface scheduling on most routes
- Extends service coverage to identified areas
- Maintains current daily span of service

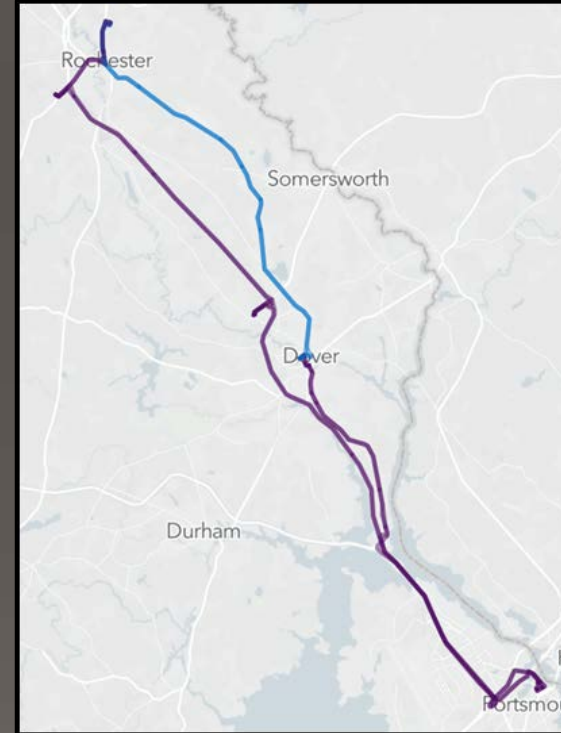
# Spaulding Corridor Comparison

## Current System



- Roch → Ports 90 min.
- Dov → Ports 50 min.
- Every half hour in peak directions at peak, and hourly off peak
- 5:30am - 10:30pm

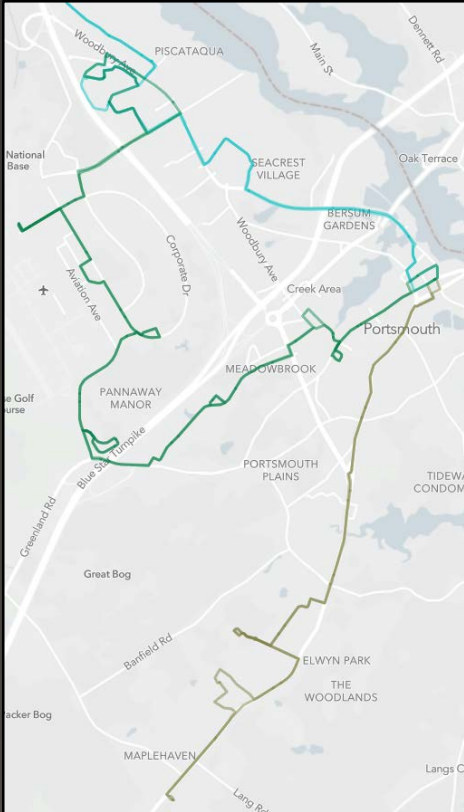
## Proposed System



- Roch → Ports **45 min.**
- Dov → Ports **25 min.**
- Hourly all day
- 5:30am - 10:30pm

# Portsmouth Comparison

## Current System



- Dtnw → Pease 29 min.
- Every half hour at peak, hourly off peak
- 5:30am - 9:00pm
- Significantly reduced Saturday schedule

## Proposed System

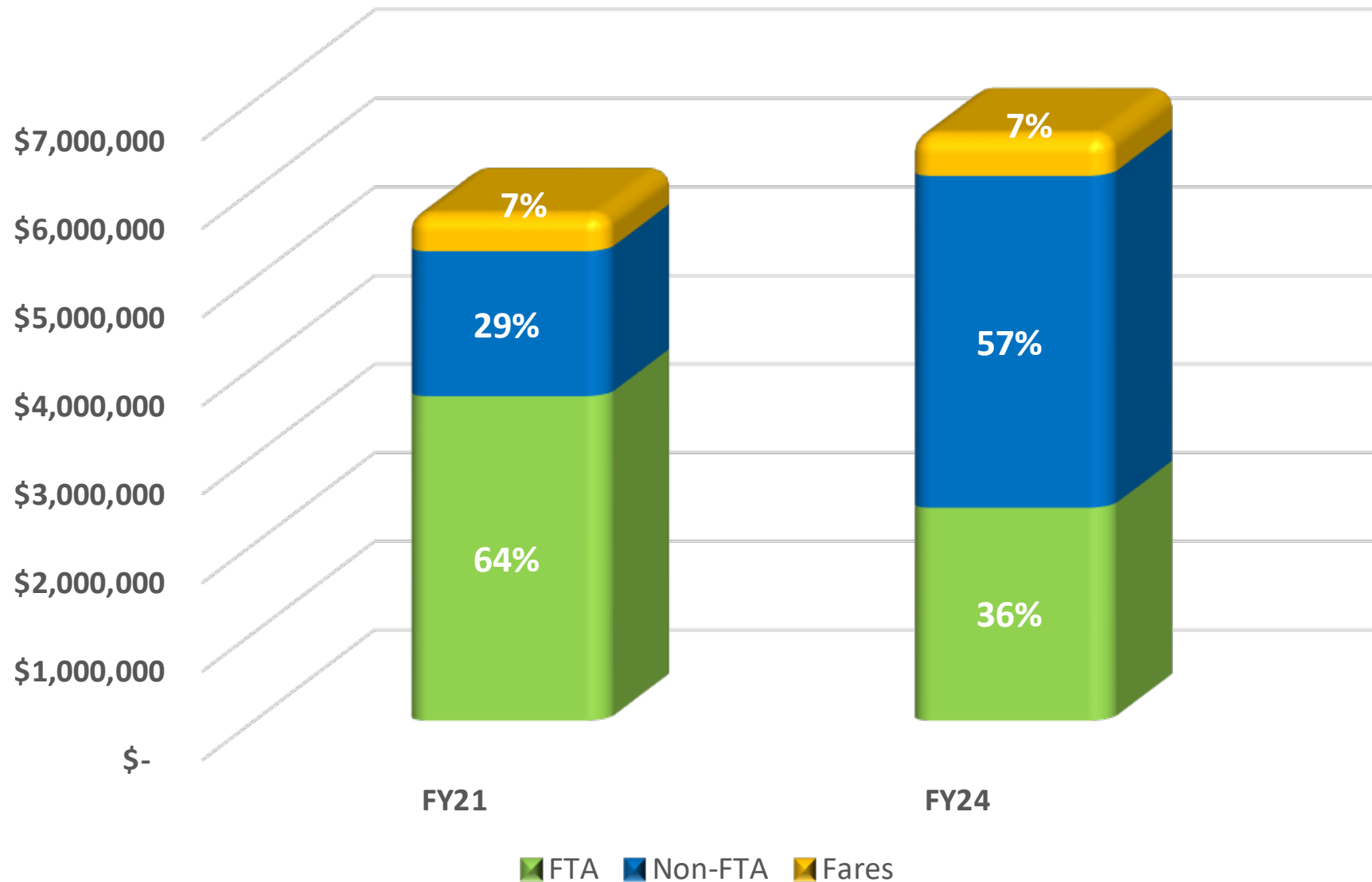


- Dtnw → Pease **10 min.**
- New Kittery connection
- Extends coverage to identified areas
- Hourly all day
- 5:30am - 9:00pm
- Saturday services largely mimic M-F, but only where demand demonstrates need

# NHDOT Award

- Conditional award of \$4,954,077 of Federal funds for the period 7/1/2020 – 6/30/2023.
- To assist COAST in its transition to a new overall service designed for better cost efficiencies while improving customer service.
- Federal funds breakdown:
  - CMAQ \$3.6M
  - 5307 Boston UZA \$1.354M

## COAST Funding Composition Projection (FY21 vs FY24)



# Key Takeaways

- Maintaining an efficient and effective public transit system is a regional priority for the Greater Seacoast.
- COAST conceptual service plan has been very well received.
- The NHDOT has enabled COAST to move forward with our new conceptual service plan. We will need additional non-USDOT matching funds to leverage all of the Federal Transit Administration funds awarded to us.
- We now have a small window to solve our next challenge. Over the next two to two and a half years we will have to develop and secure adequate funding (\$1.7-1.9M annually) to sustain operations or face dramatic consequences.



42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820  
603.743.5777



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