

# Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit to Hold Public Meetings to Introduce a Regional Fare Policy and Automatic Fare Payment Options with Rewards Program.**

(Biddeford, Maine) – Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit (BSOOB Transit) will hold public meetings December 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> to present information and collect public input on a proposed regional fare policy and automatic fare payment options.

**Transit plans to introduce new payment options that will allow riders to pay fares using either a mobile app or a reloadable smart card.** Both the mobile app and the smart card can be linked to an account that riders can fund from bank accounts, credit cards, or pre-paid debit cards. Riders without access to banking would be able to load cash onto a smart card at the Transit customer service office at the Saco Transportation Center, municipal and designated retail outlets across the region. Riders using a mobile app or smart card would be required to scan their card or phones when they board the bus. Cash will still be accepted on buses.

**The base fare will increase from \$1.50 to \$2.00 and all current period passes and tickets will be replaced with a new electronic discounting method called “fare capping”.**

- When paid with a mobile app or a smart card, the proposed \$2.00 base fare (\$1.00 for riders eligible for reduced fare) activates a 90-minute pass. This means the rider can take unlimited trips within the 90-minute window. Riders who qualify for “reduced fare” include seniors, people with disabilities, and Medicare card holders and, with this change, students and veterans as well.
- When paying fares by mobile app or smart card, full fare local riders would not pay more than \$6.00 per day and \$60.00 per month. Riders eligible to pay “reduced fare” would not pay more than \$3.00 per day and \$30.00 per month for local service. Upon hitting these daily and monthly fare caps, the rider rewards program is activated and all rides thereafter will be free.
- The fare capping rewards program is a pay-as-you-go approach that significantly improves affordability and equity in the cost of using transit. It allows all riders equal access to discounts based on their transit use and not on upfront dollars invested in a high cost pass. This fare payment strategy allows lower income riders who cannot afford the higher upfront cost of a 10 Ride ticket or monthly pass access to the same discounting as higher income riders. Also, the new automated fare payment options allows riders to pay only for what they use whereas buying a monthly pass today requires riders to predict their future use.
- Cash will continue to be accepted on all buses, but paper transfers would no longer be offered. This will create an additional incentive for riders to migrate to the mobile app or smart card. Smart cards would

be widely accessible at the customer service office at the Saco Transportation Center, municipal offices and designated retail outlets across the region. This will offer riders without access to banking or a smart phone the ability to load cash onto a smart card.

BSOOB Transit has made significant improvements to its transit service including enhanced and expanded routes and improved bus stop signage. Very soon we will provide WI-FI on all buses, new bus shelters and we have commenced a fleet modernization campaign.

A passenger fare increase is necessary to keep pace with increasing cost of operation. BSOOB Transit recognizes that many riders live on limited incomes and have tight household budgets. For these reasons, the increase is timed to coincide with the introduction of new fare payment technology and the “fare capping rewards program” approach to help improve the affordability of using transit and the overall equity of our fare pricing.

BSOOB Transit wants to hear from riders, the general public, businesses, and social service agencies on how these changes might impact you. Riders and stakeholders are encouraged to attend these open-forum, public meetings, held in these communities along our routes:

## **PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Saco Transportation Center 138 Main Street  
December 9 6-7 PM

Old Orchard Beach (Town Hall) 1 Portland Ave.  
December 10 6-7 PM

McArthur Public Library (Community Room) 270 Main Street Biddeford  
December 12 6-7 PM

For additional BSOOB Transit information, updates, and survey:

- Website: [www.shuttlebus-zoom.com](http://www.shuttlebus-zoom.com)
- Social media: Facebook; Twitter;
- Phone: 207-282-5408
- Questions? Feedback? [cpendleton@shuttlebus-zoom.com](mailto:cpendleton@shuttlebus-zoom.com)
- Stop by BSOOB Transit customer service office at 138 Main St., Saco for information, tickets, schedules, and connections.  
Open Monday – Friday, 9am – 4:30 pm.

With annual ridership of 350,000, BSOOB Transit provides bus service between Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach, Scarborough, South Portland and Portland.