



# TITLE VI EQUITY ANALYSIS

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SECOND FACILITY SITE SELECTION:  
AMES TRANSIT AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE  
AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY

**FINAL REPORT**

SEPTEMBER 27, 2019

601 N. UNIVERSITY BLVD.  
AMES, IOWA 50010

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## BACKGROUND

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The Ames Transit Agency (CyRide) currently provides approximately 6.1 million rides annually, which equates to approximately 100 rides per capita, within the Ames, Iowa community (7th largest city in Iowa) and has grown by 59% from 4.1 million rides over the past twelve years. This level of per capita ridership rivals much larger urban centers, such as Washington DC and Boston. CyRide's ridership has stabilized/slightly declined over the past two years and is anticipated to be between 6.0 and 6.5 million rides in the next decade.

CyRide operates a progressive, seamless transportation system providing service to city residents and Iowa State University, with a high service level and frequency operating 14 fixed routes, 18 hours/day, 7 days a week, with a revenue fleet of 84, 25'-40'-60' vehicles operating on diesel, biodiesel and hybrid systems. A Low-No grant application was recently approved for two electric buses and CyRide anticipates modifying its facility and will begin operating these vehicles by 2022. This fleet ranks in the top 15% of the nation's fleets with the highest average fleet age and currently operates with 38% of its vehicles above CyRide's useful life benchmark, as well as housing approximately 18% of its vehicles outside due to its lack of bus storage infrastructure. Service frequencies on CyRide routes are also higher than the typical small urban transit system with buses operating every 2-30 minutes during the busiest times of the day and every 30-40 minutes when there is less demand. Additionally, CyRide operates the busiest route in the State of Iowa, providing over 12,000 rides per day on this route alone.

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## STUDY PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

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Over the past twelve years, CyRide has grown from a transit service providing approximately 4 million riders to approximately 6.1 million rides this past fiscal year, with a fleet that has grown from 61 to 84 buses. This rapid growth has left the transit system with functions undersized and a lack of space to store buses at its current facility (currently over 15 buses are being parked outside each day) and additional vehicles are parked off-site at a City of Ames-owned gravel lot. The needs/space analysis completed by CyRide found that CyRide's current operations should be cited on a lot of at least 10.5 acres - it currently has 4.5 acres available (42% of its space needs). Additionally, this lack of space has created other issues as identified on the next page:

- On-property accidents have risen dramatically due to the site's congestion and backwards "L" shaped configuration, as a result of five expansions;

- The maintenance department is land-locked and cannot be accessed at various times of the day;
- The maintenance department has half of the bus fuel/wash functions that are needed for CyRide's fleet per industry standards;
- New Department of Transportation regulations, effective December 2020, will require a "closed" training course that will require an additional, approximately 2 acres to meet these regulations.

As a result, CyRide embarked on an 18-month study to determine where and how to expand its facilities to accommodate its recent growth, as well as a plan for future growth. The result of a site analysis examining CyRide's current and adjacent sites found that expansion at or near CyRide's current facility at 601 N. University Blvd. was not possible. Therefore, CyRide began a site selection study to determine locations and functions of a second, remote facility to accommodate all current and possible future infrastructure needs of the transit system, with a desire to locate a site that could, over time, allow CyRide to reconsolidate all CyRide functions at the new location. This Title VI Equity Analysis will evaluate the two site finalists from this study for the second facility.

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## TITLE VI COMPLIANCE

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CyRide is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B. Further, Title 49 CFR Section 21.5(b)(3) states, "In determining the site or location of facilities, a recipient or applicant may not make selections with the purpose or effect of excluding persons from, denying them the benefits of, or subjecting them to discrimination under any program to which this regulation applies, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin; or with the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the Act or this part." Finally, Title 49 CFR Part, 21, Appendix C, Section 3(iv) provides that, "The location of projects requiring land acquisition and the displacement of persons from their residences and businesses may not be determined on the basis of race, color or national origin."

The public can find CyRide's current Title VI Non-Discrimination Policy and complaint process/form on the web at: <https://www.cyride.com/about-us/planning-documents/civil-rights/title-vi-non-discrimination-statement-complaint-form>.

To comply with this regulation, CyRide is required to conduct a Title VI equity analysis to demonstrate that the facility site is selected without regard to race, color, or national origin. Per guidance in the circular, this analysis must:

- Include outreach to persons potentially impacted by the siting of the facility;
- Compare impacts of various siting alternatives;
- Determine if cumulative adverse impacts might result due to the presence of other facilities with similar impacts in the area;
- Occur before the selection of the preferred site.

If disparate impacts are identified, the least discriminatory alternative must be implemented.

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## SITE SELECTION PROCESS

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CyRide's site selection study consisted of three phases, each analyzing a different subset of land parcels based on desirability for a facility expansion. The three phases are as follows:

- **Phase 1 (Current Site)** - Analysis of CyRide's current site at 601 University Blvd., which consists of 4.5 acres of land. The criteria developed for this analysis was as follows:
  - Design, Land and Construction Costs
  - Additional Operating/Maintenance Costs
  - FTA Payback
  - Additional Acres Needed
  - Percent of Space Accommodated
  - Operational Impact
  - Maintenance Impact
  - Environmental Impact
  - Potential Fatal Flaws

The result of this analysis found that any possible expansion options at its current site would require CyRide to build a second level for bus storage and administration functions or relocate all personal vehicles parking off-site. In addition, most facility functions would remain undersized compared to the space analysis study completed as part of this analysis.

*Therefore, this site did not meet the criteria developed for this analysis. The decision was then made to analyze the potential for purchase/lease of adjacent parcels of land.*

- **Phase 2 (Adjacent Sites)** - CyRide identified four sites adjacent to its current location at 601 N. University Blvd. Three of the sites are owned by Iowa State University (ISU) and upon discussions regarding possible usage of these parcels, ISU determined that these sites could not be available for CyRide's long-term use. The fourth site was north of CyRide, across the railroad tracks. A fatal flaw was identified with this site due to its contaminated soils from previous use of the land. The same criteria was used for this analysis as in the first phase.

*Therefore, these four sites did not meet the criteria developed for this analysis. The decision was then made to analyze the potential for purchase/lease of land parcels not contiguous to CyRide's current facility.*

- **Phase 3 (Non-Contiguous Sites)** - CyRide worked with the City of Ames to identify all vacant parcels of land within the city limits, with a minimum 8 acres of land. The criteria used to evaluate these parcels is as follows:
  - Land was not within the flood plain
  - Land was not zoned as/or adjacent/near single-family housing
  - Land had adequate infrastructure/utilities
  - Land was available

After applying the above criteria, 62 of 188 possible parcels remained for consideration; therefore, a second set of screening criteria was used to further narrow the sites as follows:

- Minimum of 15 Acres (to accommodate current/future growth and possible reconsolidation of all functions at the new site)
- Elimination of Sites East of I-35 (due to the additional deadhead miles that would increase annual operating costs)

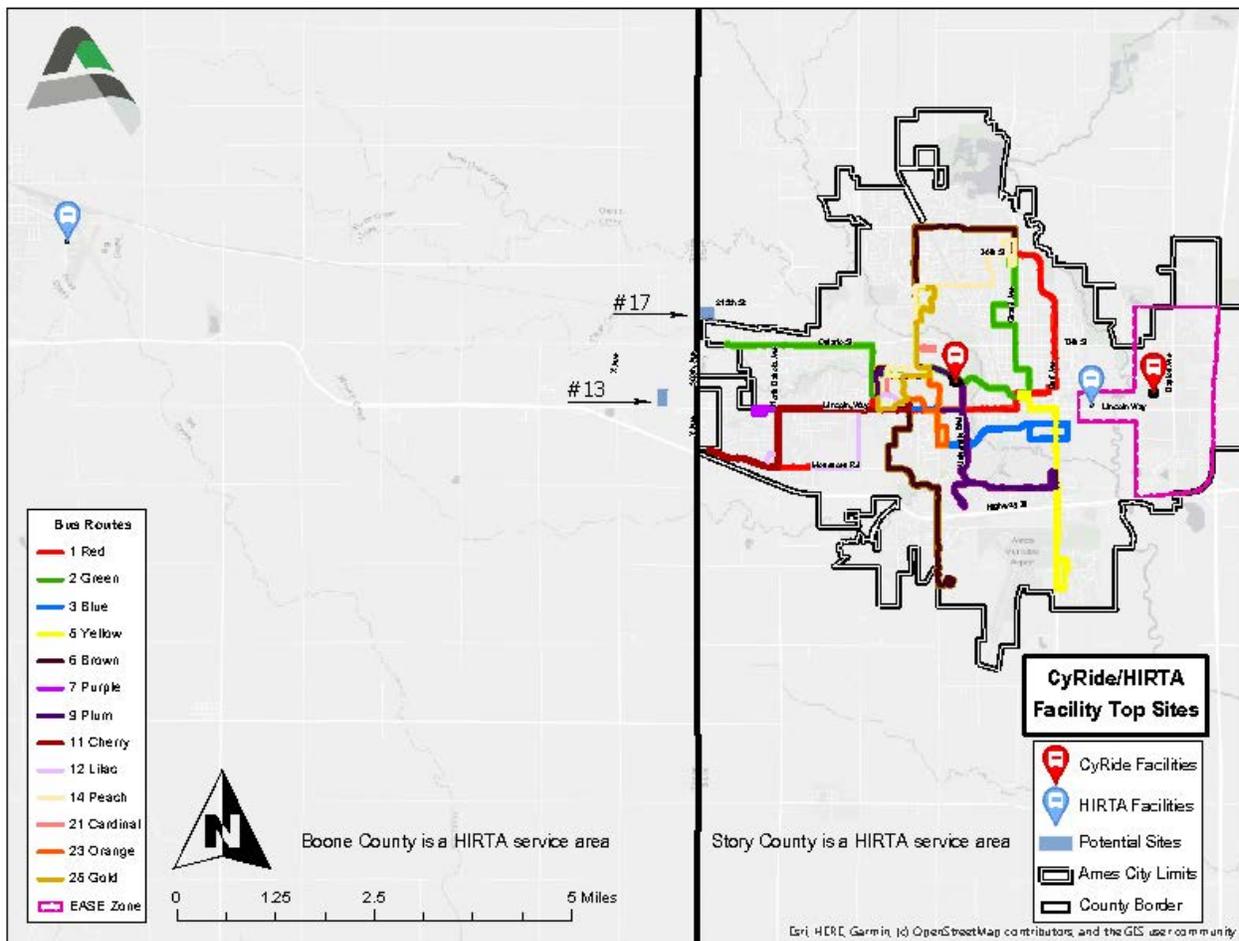
This second screening identified seventeen sites for consideration within the City of Ames corporate limits or within one mile of these limits (a board-directed expansion of possible site areas). A final analysis was completed on these sites using the following criteria, based on a field review and architectural/engineering review of each site, as well as contact with the land owners regarding land availability.

- Site Access
- Land Availability
- Terrain - Excavation
- Availability of Water

- Availability of Sewer
- Availability of Gas
- Availability of Electricity
- Community Land Use Profile

Details of this analysis are contained in CyRide's Facility Feasibility Study results. The sites finalists selected were large enough to consider other transit operations; therefore, the opportunity to coordinate with the Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency's (HIRTA's) Story and Boone County door-to-door service was discussed as a way to economize and possibly streamline public transit operations within the city/counties at the new site to be chosen at the preferred location. HIRTA indicated an interest in sharing a facility and, as a result, both organizations began planning efforts to include their combined space needs in the facility.

*The results of this final site analysis left two potential sites (#13 and #17) for consideration and are the sites contained in CyRide's Title VI Equity Analysis as illustrated below.*



## BENEFITS AND BURDENS ANALYSIS

CyRide reviewed the benefits and burdens of each site to determine any impacts that might adversely affect the community (Table 1 below). In summary, there would be no displacement of residents or businesses at either of the two sites considered for site selection as they are both currently operated as farm land. Additionally, each site has some residential properties near the sites, but none immediately touching these two parcels, therefore it was determined that a facility at either site would not have any adverse impact. Both are located in a rural area on major roadways, so there would be no cumulative impacts from nearby businesses as well.

**Table 1: Benefits and Burdens**

<i>Benefits/Positive Impacts</i>	<i>Burdens/Adverse Impacts</i>
<b>Site #13</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good access to CyRide transit corridors</li> <li>• Located on highway - Convenient location to ISU and other parts of the campus community</li> <li>• May be able to be served by incremental extensions of utilities</li> <li>• Located near/adjacent to other industrial users - compatible land use</li> <li>• Possible new service to current/planned residential community nearby (bus stop)</li> <li>• Cleared land</li> <li>• Potential for coordination with regional transit provider</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current/Future residential community consideration</li> <li>• Possible higher utility infrastructure costs</li> </ul>
<b>Site #17</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good access to CyRide transit corridors</li> <li>• Located on arterial roadway</li> <li>• Close to City of Ames corporate limits</li> <li>• Cleared land</li> <li>• Railroad buffer between property and current residential properties</li> <li>• Potential for coordination with regional transit provider</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current/Future residential property consideration across railroad tracks and nearby</li> </ul>

## ALTERNATIVES EQUITY ANALYSIS

The siting criterion was used to narrow possible sites to #13 and #17. CyRide then analyzed area demographics and equity impacts (Tables 2 and 3 below and on the next page) to ensure that this did not result in disparate treatment on the basis of race, color, or national origin. **Site #13 is located in Boone County, Iowa in Census Block Group 020100-2; while Site #17 is located in Story County in Census Block Group 000100-5 and the information in these tables below reflect this subarea analysis of each site.**

<b>Impact Criteria</b>	<b>Site #13</b>	<b>Boone County</b>	<b>Site #17</b>	<b>Story County</b>
Total Population	2,038	26,381	1,005	95,888
White	2,012	25,493	1,005	83,487
Non-White	26	888	0	12,401
<b>Non-White Percentage</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>
Population Under Poverty Line	83	2,426	0	16,713
<b>Percentage Under Poverty Line</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
<b>Median Income (Households)</b>	<b>\$86,146</b>	<b>\$57,906</b>	<b>\$139,191</b>	<b>\$52,671</b>
<b>Limited English Proficiency Percentage (Less than Very Well)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>

Source: Data from U.S. Census Bureau 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

In summary, the poverty rates percentages, minority population rates and LEP rates for both parcels of land are below the county level statistics for each of these categories and the median household income is higher than the county average.

<b>Impact Criteria</b>	<b>Site #13</b>	<b>Site #17</b>
Who would be impacted by selecting this site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nearby residences/businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nearby residences/businesses</li> </ul>
Will selecting this site require displacement of residents or businesses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No</li> </ul>
Listed other similar facilities nearby including maintenance, storage, operations, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufacturing business (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Railroad operations (tracks)</li> </ul>

*In summary, the Alternative Equity Analysis found that there were no adverse or cumulative impacts, or disparate impact per the Title VI regulations.*

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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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CyRide sought community input on the draft "CyRide Facility Feasibility Study" findings and two top sites identified during a month-long public comment period from August 23, 2019 to September 23, 2019. CyRide held a public open house on September 5, 2019 for people to review the study's findings, ask questions of staff and make comments. Notification of the release of the study and public input opportunities was made in the following ways:

- Information on CyRide's website included: Draft Facility Feasibility Study and Equity Analysis, Open House date/time/location/purpose and Comment Period
- Direct mailing to surrounding neighbors and property owners of the two top sites
- Notice in the Ames Tribune
- Notices on the buses and on CyRide's website in English and Mandarin Chinese, and placed in specialty grocery stores serving the Mandarin-Chinese-speaking community (LEP population)
- Social media notices on Facebook, Twitter and E-Notifications through CyRide's website

Seven individuals attended the Title VI Equity Analysis public meeting with a total of four comments provided during the public comment period, and at the meeting, as follows:

- **Respondent #1** - Indicated that he owned property near the two site finalists, that they had recently decided to sell their properties and requested that CyRide consider these sites for the second facility.
- **Respondent #2** - Requested CyRide to keep the current facility and several satellite locations for parking and spot checks.
- **Respondent #3** - Individual lives near Site #17 and indicated that 500th Ave. is a very high commute traffic roadway where vehicles travel at 65 mph. She indicated that it is not a four-lane road and had concerns that it is, and would be for CyRide as well, difficult to pull onto this road as a result. She also indicated that the railroad underpass provided for poor visibility and accessing Ontario was also difficult. She indicated that traffic needed to be slowed down along this roadway to be safe. She also shared that Site #13 has better visibility and is on a four-lane road.
- **Respondent #4** - Respondent stated, "James Farms owns a large parcel directly across the street from the potential facility site off 500 St. This land is directly in the path of future residential growth that would be negatively impacted by the noise, traffic and diesel fumes your large facility would generate. Locating the facility here would be incompatible with the existing

residential acreages and single family homes being developed in close proximity. We see the Lincoln Way site as being far preferable as it is on a large existing traffic artery that is already used for industrial purposes and which is currently owned by Iowa State University Foundation."

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## CONCLUSION

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Both locations identified and evaluated for CyRide's second maintenance, operations and administrative facility were selected without regard to race, color or national origin. An evaluation of the poverty rate, minority population rate, and LEP rate in the vicinities of the two sites shows no disparate impact would occur should any or either of these sites be selected. This conclusion is based on the fact that the rates of poverty, minority population, and LEP are lower in the Census Block Groups than the countywide averages. Additionally, there were no specific public comments from minority residents that citing of the facility at either of these two locations would impact them. ***Therefore, the conclusion from this Title VI Equity analysis is that there is no apparent disparate impact for either possible CyRide/HIRTA combined second facility location and further that the results of this analysis were confirmed through the month-long public comment period and public meeting. However, public comments were received indicating that site #13 was preferable due to its location along a major arterial into the City of Ames and its location in a current industrial area.***