



December 22, 2020

ADMINISTRATION

FY 22 CyRide Budget: At their December meeting the Transit Board approved the FY 22 budget and capital improvement plan, which runs July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022. While there may still be significant economic uncertainty over the next year and beyond, we are pleased the Transit Board approved the plans, which support CyRide's goal of connecting people to their community with safe and efficient transportation that exceeds customer expectations, and also will help reduce carbon emissions and provide a sustainable community in which to live.

We will also continue to support some of the major initiatives started last year designed to improve the quality and efficiency of our services. The role of technology will continue to be especially critical this next year. With expected decreases in ridership and revenues, we plan to increase the amount of data collected from the system, leveraging existing and emerging technologies to identify areas where system efficiency can be improved. Expanding the number of vehicles with automatic passenger counting hardware will support this initiative, as well as provide passengers with a real-time view of the number of people on board a bus. This same network capabilities could also permit bus video to be live streamed to dispatchers and the police in the event of an incident on a bus. We submitted a new federal grant application in November 2020 to deploy this technology across the entire large bus fleet. If awarded the grant, the goal of full deployment could be accomplished much sooner than anticipated. There will also be an investment in bus display monitors for newly purchased vehicles that will visibly display the next stops along a route to help passengers with disabilities. The same visual LED monitors may also be used for advertising.

Training will also be vital during this time. We plan to continue developing employees at all levels to reach organizational objectives. Well-rounded employees will help develop new leaders and increase our ability to adapt to the emerging challenges of the post-pandemic transit future.

FY 22 Capital Purchases: Keeping our fleet and facility in a state of good repair is important to provide the reliable transportation the community relies on. In accordance with this need, the following capital purchases are planned during FY 22:

- Three new 40' buses
- One new 60' articulated bus
- Two new low floor minibuses
- Replacement of a support vehicle
- Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning improvements on the facility.
- Replace of deteriorating concrete around the building
- Fall protection rails to upgrade safety measure when working on the articulated buses
- Safety software to assist with the agency safety plan requirements
- Upgrades to the facility technology
- Replacing the tire balancing machine

OPERATIONS

Winter Driving Tips: We've all heard the saying "there are two seasons in Iowa – road construction and winter." Most years it seems that way. Iowa's snow season typically runs from November through early March.

The following tips will help in reducing the chances of becoming involved in a weather-related accident.

- * Report for work rested and alert.
- * Do a thorough pre-trip inspection. Make sure you have de-icing fluid, an ice scraper, and window cleaner.
- * Slow down. The posted speed limit may **not** be a safe speed to travel at during inclement weather. Remember safety before schedule.
- * Give yourself more stopping distance, about 15-20 feet before where you would usually stop. Bridges and shady spots can be icy when other areas are not. Avoid sudden stops and quick direction changes.
- * Turn off the transmission retarder if the bus is equipped with one.

Snow and ice create hazards for our passengers as well. The following tips can help reduce the chances of our passengers having an accident.

- * Turn your four ways on early so the passenger knows you see them at the stop.
- * Approach the stop cautiously and allow extra clearance on the right side, if necessary.
- * Choose the boarding and de-boarding area carefully. If there is snow at the bus stop, select another area such as a sidewalk or driveway. If the sidewalk is icy or snow covered, give the passengers warning of the condition before they exit. If there is not a clear location keep a clearance of three to five feet from the snow bank so that passengers can use the street for boarding and de-boarding. Do not move the bus until all people are safely away from the bus. Check your mirrors carefully to make sure the area is clear.
- * If your bus steps are snow and/or ice covered, scrape or brush off the steps.
- * Monitor the interior temperature of the bus for the comfort of the passengers.

Interior Temperature of Your Bus: As the weather continues to stay cold, we should talk a little about the interior bus temperatures. All buses heat differently providing more heat to some areas than others. Drivers should frequently walk through the bus to monitor the temperature of the passenger seating area as well as referring to the interior thermometer. During winter, drivers should maintain their passenger compartment temperatures between 65-68 degrees F. This insures that passengers in winter clothing do not become uncomfortable. If the heater does not raise the temperature to this comfort range, the dispatcher should be notified.

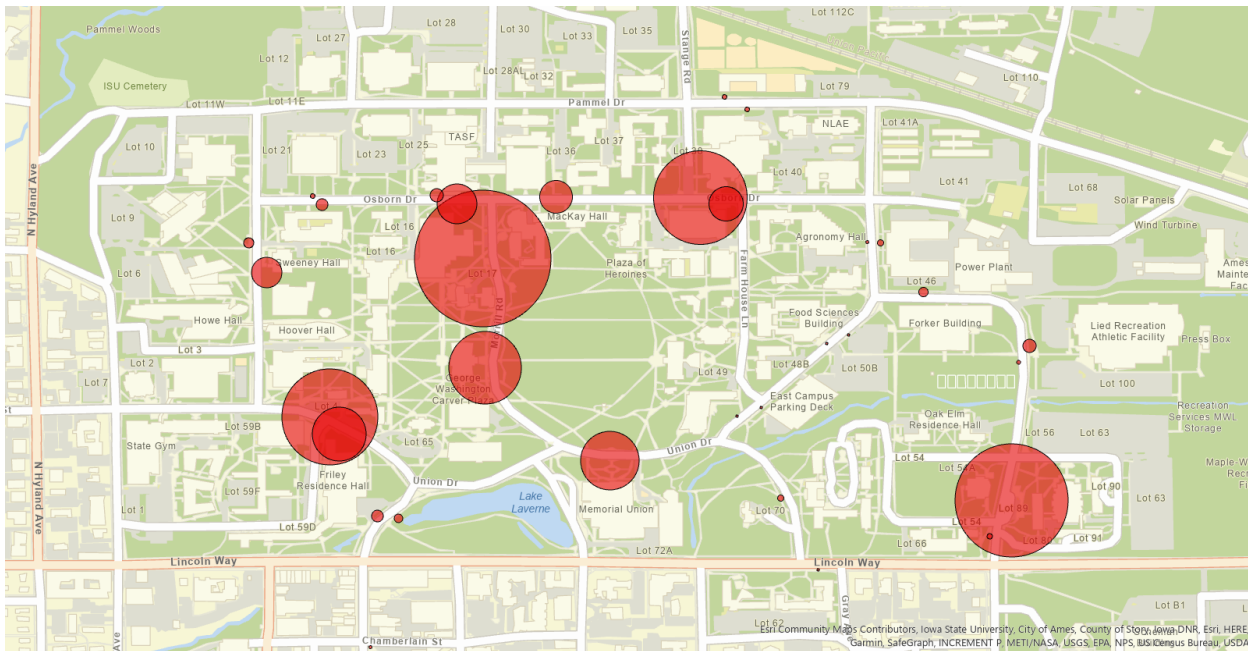
Tough Snow Warning, if it Comes: When curbing your bus, be on the lookout for the piles of accumulated snow that will exist at the edges of the street. The freeze-thaw cycle and road chemicals will turn this once fluffy material into something akin to concrete. Adequately survey the situation when stopping and ensure there is enough room between your bus and any snow. Hitting a frozen snow bank is a preventable accident. Striking this glacier-like substance can damaged the bus, especially mini bus step wells.

Parking Buses Outside in Cold Weather: As a reminder, when the outside temperature is 20 degrees F or colder, please keep the diesel buses idling when parking on the curb or in the employee lot. You should shut off the 4-ways and auxiliary heater (webasto), but keep the heater and the front windshield defrosters on to prevent window fogging. This procedure will prevent diesel fuel from gelling and clogging fuel lines and fuel filters.

Cold Weather Idling Beacons: With the return of cold weather, drivers will need to be familiar with the red and green beacon lights located on the roof above lane 13 (fuel lane). When the green beacon is illuminated, it means the temperature is below 20 degrees F and you should leave your bus idling when parking it outside. If the red beacon is on, the temperature is above 20 degrees F and it is okay to shut the bus engine off. In summary, when the green beacon is illuminated, keep your bus idling. Unless you are Disney's Elsa, nobody likes a "frozen" bus.

Labor Management Committee: The Labor Management Committee (LMC) will be meeting again to discuss "less desirable" shifts such as on-calls and open reliefs. The current criteria does not allow us to get enough of these shifts covered so the LMC will be working through options of how to get them covered during run pick. The LMC driver members are Eric Ollie (union representative), Adam Weiderholt (full-time driver), Will Thomas (part-time driver), Destiny Harris (part-time driver) and Aaron Newman (student driver). Chris Crippen, Rob Jennings, Jason Lippard, Jenny Bethurem, Laurel Scott, and Julie Brouard will also attend.

Tablet Ridership Data: Over the past three months, circulator route drivers have been collecting stop-level ridership data on the tablets. Thanks to their efforts, we can now see much more detail about ridership trends than we ever have before. For example, the map below graphically shows how busy different areas of campus are for circulator routes, with bigger circles indicating more passengers boarding at a stop.



This is just one of many examples. We could break this down by route, time of day, or day of the week and relate it to variables like weather conditions, class times, special events, or pretty much anything else you can think of. Using data like this, we can make more informed decisions on a variety of aspects of our system like extras, stop locations, route alterations, schedule changes, and much more.

Getting good data like this is extremely important moving forward and we wouldn't be able to get this data without you. Thank you all very much for being so diligent in counting passengers on your tablets when driving circulator routes. Please continue to do so!

Fall Semester Ridership Update: We continue to carefully track changes in ridership stemming from the pandemic. Preliminary passenger counts from July 1 through November 24 are listed on the following page, compared to the same period last year.

Year-To-Date	2019	2020	Change
Free/Reduced Fare Riders	2,280,835	775,708	-66.0%
Full Fare Riders	143,461	54,063	-62.3%
Total Passenger	2,424,296	829,771	-65.8%

Lower ridership has been observed across all routes. Passenger counts are down 73.5% on the #23 Orange, and the routes primarily serving the west Ames student population (#7 Purple, #11 Cherry, and #12 Lilac) are down 70.3%. Other routes have fared slightly better, such as the #1 Red (-58.2%) and #3 Blue (-56.3%).

These ridership reductions are in line with the rest of the industry. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) released information comparing ridership from July through September against the same period last year, showing the following changes for the fourth quarter:

- CyRide (IA): -58.16%
- Des Moines (IA): -64.5%
- Champaign-Urbana (IL): -65.53%
- Blacksburg Transit (VA): -82.23%
- Chapel Hill (NC): -88.21%
- State College (PA): -89.33%
- **Overall US Buses: -51.54%**

Compared to other transit systems serving university communities CyRide has been relatively fortunate. While the winter months are likely to be difficult, we are expecting the situation to improve as warmer weather arrives in the spring and a vaccine becomes available.

HIRING AND TRAINING

Winter Safety Reminder: Drivers, if you should run over an object that could or has caused harm or damage to your bus, please stop your bus immediately and inspect it for damage. Stopping your bus immediately will prevent further damage from occurring. As always, keep the dispatcher informed of your condition and status.

FLEET AND FACILITIES

Minibuses: CyRide will receive six new minibuses that will replace 333 – 338. These vehicles are being replaced with 85% federal funding through a national discretionary grant submitted by the Iowa DOT to FTA. These buses are scheduled for delivery in summer 2020.

New Gillig Buses: We will also be purchasing four new Gillig buses which will replace #7117, #7124, and #7133. The fourth bus will expand the fleet by one bus for the Lilac Route. These buses are being replaced with 80% to 85% federal funding. These buses will be delivered in fall 2021 to spring 2022.

Facility Modifications: Over the past few months, remodeling has occurred to the second floor administrative area, the lower level meeting room, and the dispatch office. This construction is being funded with remaining grant money from the garage expansion and pit upgrades recently completed. The lower level meeting room is transitioning to an office for the new Transit Chief Safety Officer position. The dispatch area that was originally developed for a potential Dial-A-Ride office has been converted into a

small meeting room. Finally, the second floor administrative area has been slightly modified to provide an office for the secretary and hallway running straight through to the employee stairs instead of jogging around the director's office. Finally, heating improvements will be made to the second floor, providing added temperature control, as well as new LED lighting in several offices. Below are pictures of the ongoing second floor improvements prior to completion!



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Happy Holidays! Below are pictures of CyRide seasonal décor to put everyone in the holiday spirit!

