



August 2, 2021

## ADMINISTRATION

**Volkswagen Settlement Grant:** CyRide was recently notified that our grant application for \$500,000 in State of Iowa Volkswagen Settlement Environmental Mitigation Trust funding was approved by the Iowa DOT. This is the third time CyRide has had a grant award from this VW Settlement fund. The plan is to spend this money to help purchase eight new Gillig 40-foot buses, which will replace other buses well past their useful life with new, cleaner-burning diesel vehicles. If the new bus purchase is approved by our governing bodies, these new buses would be expected to enter service sometime in 2023.

## SAFETY

**CyRide's New Employee Safety Reporting Program (ESRP):** Development of our Safety Management System (SMS) has been slow but steady in the past seven months since I started in this new Chief Safety Officer (CSO) position. Those of you who have reported safety hazards through the ESRP have no doubt noticed that the process of addressing your reports has been disappointingly slow. This is mostly my fault. The reason for this is that before January of this year when I started in this new position, we had only just certified our Agency Safety Plan (ASP), which documents the processes of our SMS. Much of the new stuff had not yet been put into practice. I chose to use these first safety hazard reports to develop the specifics of our safety hazard reporting process so that we can have a consistent and efficient workflow which works with real reports submitted by front line employees going forward. The down-side is that it is taking a long time to get back to you with risk assessments and mitigation reports so that you know exactly what CyRide is going to do about the hazard(s) you reported. To those of you who have reported safety hazards and have not yet received a final report, I apologize and I promise you have not been forgotten. Thank you for your infinite patience!

On the flip-side, those of you who have submitted ESRP forms for close-calls have hopefully had a much more pleasant experience. Response times for these have been quick and the data from your reports has already proven useful. In addition, I have been very impressed with what I've been seeing from your close-call reports! I've seen some amazing heads-up driving from many of you, avoiding collisions and preventing accidents. For years we have seen far too many preventable accidents that happen out on the road as collision reports make their way across our desks. But close-call reporting has given me a new opportunity to see preventable accidents that actually get prevented by our drivers! This is a new thing and I'm loving what I'm seeing from drivers who report these! Please continue to report close-calls as they happen out on the road. Remember, a close-call is any time a collision is prevented with a sudden, evasive maneuver.

As always, if you would like to know more or have any questions, please feel free to stop by my new office, it's behind the mailboxes. Thank you! -Kevin

## OPERATIONS

**Face Covering:** Face coverings are still required by FTA to ride the bus. But remember if someone who is boarding says they have a medical condition, they can ride without. The CDC has recommended wearing a mask in areas that you cannot socially distance, even if you are vaccinated. We are not going to change anything – yet – at CyRide. Fingers cross the Delta variant does not hit too hard here in Ames.

**Thunderstorms and Tornadoes:** Late spring in Iowa heralds the arrival of severe weather. During severe weather, the dispatcher will monitor weather radio, internet, and television broadcasts and will notify drivers of dangerous conditions. Drivers should notify the dispatcher if they must stop due to poor visibility caused by heavy rain or hail. Drivers should also call the dispatcher for instructions if a detour is required due to street flooding, downed tree limbs, etc.

In the event of a tornado warning, drivers should stop the bus in a safe location. Drivers should then direct their passengers to the nearest building for shelter. If no building is available, drivers should instruct their passengers to stay on the bus and remain below window level. Once the sirens have stopped, drivers should contact the dispatcher for further instructions. Don't be a Dorothy and Toto and make a run for it because our insurance won't cover you in Oz.

**Mind the Line:** Please pay particular attention to the yellow guide lines painted within the garage. They serve a useful purpose. These lines help guide drivers move safely within parking lanes and into and out of the garage. When parking your bus within the garage, keep the left side of your bus positioned parallel along the line. The left rear tires of your bus should be positioned next to or within two inches of the yellow guide line. Parking along the guide line ensures your bus is properly positioned and safely away from other buses and fixed objects like walls, water lines, air hoses, etc. Parking askew of the guide line makes it more difficult for other drivers to park and sets your bus up for a preventable accident. Do not be sloppy when parking. Take the time to properly align your bus up when parking. Back up a bit if you need to, you don't need a spotter to back up in the garage. Keep your bus straight and mind the line! Your fellow drivers will appreciate it.

**Change of Address:** If you have moved over the summer, be sure to fill out a change of address form. You can get these forms from the dispatchers and please return them to dispatch after filling them out.

**Bus Stop Signs, Benches, and Shelters:** When you see missing or damaged bus stop signs, rubbish strewn, or damaged bus shelters and/or benches, please record this information on a maintenance card. The maintenance card should be given to the dispatcher at the end of your shift. If damage, such as broken glass within the bus shelter, creates a potential hazard to passengers, notify the dispatcher immediately. Our timely reporting assists us in keeping CyRide safe, clean, and professional looking.

## HIRING AND TRAINING

**Can You Train a Lot?** Instructors, if you are willing to train more than three shifts per week, please let Jenny know so we can plan accordingly. In addition, if you find yourself getting burned out on training or need a break, please talk to Jenny. We would rather reduce your training hours than have you get to the point where you do not want to train at all.

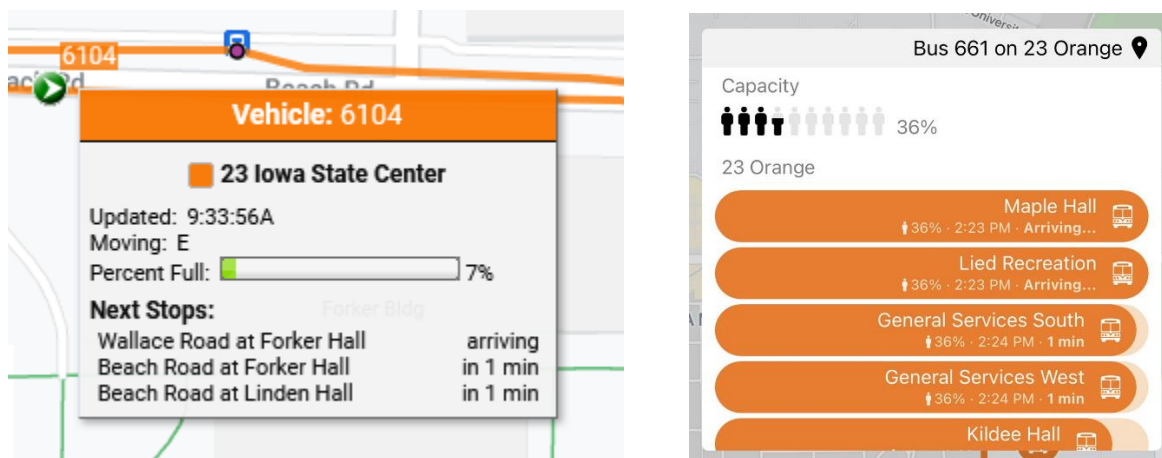
**Perfecting Your Skills “Setup Turns”:** Setting up your bus turn is an important skill at CyRide. It allows us to make tight turns while keeping our right side protected from vehicle intrusions. Most of us know the mechanics of a setup turn: checking our mirror before setting up, starting the setup 25’ from the intersection, turning the wheel back when you can see down the curb line. What is easy to forget is the critical role that speed plays in a setup turn. To be done effectively, they must be done SLOWLY. If a setup turn is done too quickly, the right side of the bus is moved away from the curb line as though you were performing a lane change. As you can imagine, if you allow enough room for a car to enter the space between you and the curb as you are proceeding around the corner, a serious collision can result. Next time you do a setup turn; carefully watch your right mirror to see how far away from the curb your rear tire travels. If you find yourself too far from the curb, try slowing down your turn.

**Help a Laneworker:** It is summer, when you return to base to park your bus at the end of your shift, please close all windows and roof vents. Also walk through your bus and pick-up any rubbish or lost items. Doing the above will make the laneworker’s life easier and more efficient when they clean and refuel your bus.

## FLEET AND FACILITIES

**Automatic Passenger Counters:** Earlier this year, CyRide was awarded nearly half a million dollars to help expand automatic passenger counters (APCs) across the entire large bus fleet. This project is planned to have installation start in early September.

CyRide already has 14 APCs, which are installed on the articulated buses, plus 1115, 1116, 1136-38, and 1142-44. When you are at a bus stop with one of these vehicles, passengers boarding and deboarding are automatically counted and the results are sent to Syncromatics for display to dispatchers, passengers, and administration staff. This lets everyone know how full the bus is well before it arrives at a bus stop. Here’s an example of what passengers are currently seeing if they use our website or the MyState app:



Expanding APCs across the entire large bus fleet will let passengers view this information on every route. With a return to more in-person learning next year, this should really help out passengers concerned about crowded buses. It will also go a long way toward implementing a major component of CyRide 2.0, which encouraged passengers to ride trips with lower utilization.

Beyond live data, the APCs also record data about how often bus stops are used. This is incredibly useful for route planning, and with more buses being equipped, we are hoping this will help us allocate extras in the most efficient way possible. Look for more information about APCs in the coming months as we get closer to implementation.

**Six New MiniBuses:** In the next few weeks, CyRide is expecting six new Glaval minibuses to arrive, which will replace 333 – 338. These new vehicles are built on a Ford chassis and have an air-ride suspension, which should go a long way toward improving the ride comfort for passengers and drivers, and cut down on the amount of noise we have in many of our current minibuses. Once these new minis arrive, they will need to go through the make-ready process, where the shop makes sure the buses are equipped to CyRide standards. Keep an eye out of the memo board, where information on these new buses will be posted when available.

**Bus Stop Signs, Benches, and Shelters:** The bus shelter at South 5<sup>th</sup> and South Walnut has had its glass panes removed and will be relocated soon. We are still determining the best spot for this shelter. As the school year ridership picks up, we will be using data collected from the APCs to help inform this decision-making process.

## **BREAK ROOM COMMITTEE CORNER**

**CY-Hawk Party:** Fall is right around the corner, which means football will be here soon! Traditionally, we have hosted a tailgate cookout the Friday before the big game. This year we are planning on a cookout later in the Fall when the hustle and bustle of a new semester has hopefully been tamed. Fear not Cyclone and Hawkeye fans! The week of the game we will decorate the break room, eat cookies and have prizes to win! More information will be posted soon!

**Break Room Committee Openings:** The break room committee does have a few openings, so if you would like to be a part of our group please see Rob Jennings.