



February 21, 2008

## ADMINISTRATION:

**Alternative Analysis Study Moving Forward** – In the Signals' October 2007 newsletter, you were updated on the completion of the Ames Transit Feasibility Study ([http://www.cyride.com/planning\\_policies/Transit\\_Feasibility\\_Study.html](http://www.cyride.com/planning_policies/Transit_Feasibility_Study.html)) that evaluated transportation in seven identified corridors/areas in Ames that had current transit operational issues or opportunity for growth in the next several years.

Staff obtained public input regarding the Transit Feasibility Study corridors/areas. Meetings were held with various community organizations such as Ames Chamber of Commerce, Iowa State University's Transit Advisory Council (TAC), Government of the Student Body (GSB), ISU Retirees, as well as three public meetings held on ISU campus and at Ames City Hall. Neighborhood Associations, schools, PTA groups as well as other organizations were contacted as well for an opportunity for special presentations to their group. The information was also shown on Channel 12 TV for the public to view. The PowerPoint presentation discussed at these meetings could be viewed on CyRide's website as well as comment form downloaded to submit to staff.

To summarize, the comments advised CyRide to follow the consultant's recommendations from the Transit Feasibility Study for the corridors/areas identified. In December 2007, CyRide's Board approved all of the consultant's recommendations to allow staff to proceed with studies and grant applications. These suggestions were as follows:

- Corridor 1: Iowa State Center to Central Campus – Implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to replace Orange Route. Therefore, staff is currently formally seeking a \$200,000 New Starts Alternative Analysis grant (\$160,000 federal) to continue study of the Orange Route corridor for a possible conversion to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Staff will then submit a Request for Bid for this project with a start date of August 2008 with formal committee participation.
- Corridor 2: ISU Campus to Downtown Ames – Maintain Current Service
- Corridor 3: 13<sup>th</sup> Street to Proposed Mall – Extend Standard Bus Service to Regional Retail Site. Staff will develop a service proposal and grant application for a May 2008 deadline to the Iowa Department of Transportation for Job Access and Reverse Commute Funding.
- Corridor 4: South Duff – Maintain Current Service
- Corridor 5: Mortensen Road – Add Articulated Buses. Staff is currently in the bidding process to update the Facilities Master Plan to determine if the current Ames Bus Facility site can be adapted to include articulated buses, hybrid buses, bike racks on buses, increased bus capacity, etc for the future of transit in the Ames community.
- Study Area #1: North Grand Mall – Maintain Current Service

- Study Area #2: Add Service for NW Growth Area (Fieldstone) after substantially developed

If you have questions regarding this process, please contact Shari Atwood at 239-5539. (Shari A.)

**Passenger Transportation Development Plan (PTDP)** – CyRide staff has been working on a locally developed coordinated transportation plan between transportation providers and the human services agencies in Ames. This is an annual required document that each metropolitan area is required to complete. CyRide provides the staff to develop this document for the Ames Metropolitan Planning Organization. This affects CyRide as any projects funded by the federal or state government for transportation projects are required to be in this plan prior to grant funding approval according to the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Staff has been working through the Human Services Council this year as part of their program to develop the PTDP. This has brought more participation to the plan on the part of human service agencies by bringing the process to an already established group. The process should document gaps in transportation services in the Ames area, how services could be operated more efficiently and capital needs for equipment for transportation providers. Transportation providers include public transit agencies, private charter companies and human service agencies providing trips for their clients within agency owned vehicles.

Last year, the PTDP planning process documented need for the Yellow/Gray route for mid-day service to the residential area near the Kate Mitchell area and Brown Route north requests for added trips during the weeknight/summer. The document also illustrated need for replacement of aged and non-accessible buses within CyRide's fleet. Overall, the document allowed additional Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC), Special Needs Funding, and New Freedom funding to gain over \$250,000 in federal funding for operating and capital needs that CyRide would not have received if this document completed.

New service needs that have been added for FY2009 include service and a bus to the E. 13<sup>th</sup>/Lincoln Way/Dayton areas of town and out to the new proposed mall. Another possible project includes a regional service operated by Heartland Senior Services from Ames to Iowa City for medical purposes. The conceptual Iowa City Service draft is posted on CyRide's website for those interested. Both of these projects have been identified within the plan however still need to ascertain the local funding commitment in order for grant funding to be requested.

It is important to note that projects developed in the PTDP process still need to go through additional planning stages of attaining local commitment and being incorporated into a Transportation Improvement Program through the Ames MPO prior to being submitted for within grant applications. The PTDP will be approved by the Ames MPO through meetings in March for final submittal to the Federal Transit Administration and Iowa Department of Transportation on April 1, 2008.

For additional information on the FY2009-FY2012 PTDP process, please visit CyRide's website at or contact Shari Atwood at 239-5539. (Shari A.)

## **OPERATIONS:**

**Tough Snow Warning:** 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 damaged several mini-bus step wells last year. (Barb/Jenny)

**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, and weather conditions will affect the interior temperature of your bus. 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 will 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. (Barb/Jenny)

**School Tours:** It is that time of year, CyRide will be helping pre-school and grade school students become better bus riders.

CyRide offers two individual programs: a Pre-Riders program designed for younger children and an Independent Riders program designed for older children. Each program includes a bus wash, safety talk, and several promotional items. If you are interested in being involved in school tours, please let George, Tom B, Jenny, or Barb know. (Barb and Jenny)

**Uniforms:** I know it seems like spring – but I fear winter has not yet left us, so in order to be prepared for more unpleasant weather, you can get some extra uniform items to keep you warm – if necessary. If you would like a stocking hat or sweater, talk to Joanne. If we do not have one on hand, we can order one for you. You should always be wearing CyRide issued items. No other jackets, caps, hats, etc. should be worn when driving. It is fine to wear your own coats, jackets, etc to and from work. However, when you report to the Dispatch window and go out to your bus you should have only your CyRide uniform on. (Barb and Jenny)

**End of Shift Procedures:** When you return to base to park your bus at the end of your shift be sure to put the bus in neutral and set the parking brake. Please close all windows and roof vents, move the driver's seat back and put the steering wheel up. Also, walk through your bus and pick-up any transfer slips, rubbish or lost items. Doing the above will make the laneworker's life easier when they clean and refuel your bus. (Barb and Jenny)

## **HIRING AND TRAINING:**

**New Instructors:** With the students on break and a majority of the buses in the garage, six drivers took the opportunity to enroll in the Instructor Training Program offered over the break. The group participated in classroom sessions and on the road training. We want to welcome and congratulate John Feekes, Kevin Gries, Chuck Pille,

Aaron Thompson, and Eric White on their completion and new positions as New Driver Instructors. (Tom B/George)

**Slide Practice:** We finally got the ideal weather conditions to have everyone who was hired since last winter out to the parking lot to complete slide practice. This helps to learn the skills needed to control your bus on slick roads. Thanks to everyone who participated in this practice. (Tom B/George)

**Make Your Voice Heard on the PA:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 mandates that drivers announce transfer points and major bus stops. This is Federal law. CyRide drivers are required to announce the following bus stops:

- North Grand Mall
- City Hall
- Kildee Hall/Bessey Hall
- Beyer Hall/State Gym
- 11<sup>th</sup>/Duff and 12<sup>th</sup>/Duff (the hospital and clinics area)

Please use your PA to announce these stops as it greatly helps our passengers who are unfamiliar with our system or are impaired. (Tom B/George)

**New Hires:** There are many new faces here at CyRide. Thanks to everyone for extending a warm welcome to all who have been hired in the last few weeks. There will be many more new faces before the fall schedule begins. We are looking for qualified applicants. If you know people who may be interested in working here at CyRide, encourage them to apply. It could be worth \$50. (George)

**Spring Meetings:** We had record attendance for the return of our spring safety meetings. Over the next few months we ask that everyone focus on driving safely in the garage and in crosswalks with goals of reducing preventable collisions by 5% and reducing negative customer comments by 2%. Collisions in these areas can have a huge impact on CyRide and our drivers. If we are successful in the challenge, the training department will treat everyone to a day of dough-nutty goodness. (Tom B/George)

<b>Reduce Risk in the Garage</b>	<b>Reduce Risk in Crosswalks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be aware of movement</li><li>• Obey 3mph garage speed limit</li><li>• Cover your brake</li><li>• Watch your mirrors</li><li>• Double check parking brake</li><li>• Concentrate until parked</li><li>• Get out and check if tight</li><li>• ASK FOR HELP</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set mirrors properly</li><li>• Reduce speed entering crosswalks</li><li>• Visually scan the area</li><li>• Cover the brake</li><li>• If in doubt, WAIT</li></ul>

## **FLEET AND FACILITIES**

**Office Addition:** The office addition has been progressing along quickly. With so many workers designated to our project, they have made up some ground and expect the building to be complete as originally planned by late March. Occupancy will most likely happen mid April. (Rich)

**Gillig Order:** Four new Gillig Lowfloors will be ordered and will arrive late July to early August. The driver interface is very similar to the 1999's, but many of the maintenance issues that we have with the 1999's have been resolved. These new buses will be the first CyRide buses that meet 2007 emissions standards. The new emission standards require the use of a particulate filter in a catalyst muffler, when the particulate filter plugs, a "regen" will need to occur. The frequency of "regens" is unknown. They will depend on engine load and temperature of the exhaust. Since the exhaust needs to stay hot, the new engines will have an anti-idle feature. As we continue to learn more about this technology we will pass on information that may affect operations. (Chad)

**Webasto (Auxiliary) Heater:** Please turn off the webasto (auxiliary) heater switch after the engine has reached normal operating temperature, if the webasto is needed to maintain temperature, please shut off the webasto well before reaching the garage to let it complete its cool down cycle. The webasto automatically shuts off once coolant temp reaches 160 degrees. Turning off this switch after it automatically shuts off ensures that the webasto will not re-fire while starting a cold engine in the garage. (Chad)

**Orion VII Tire Scrub:** The Orion VIIs (units 01-04) continue to have excessive curb contact with the right rear tire. We have had one failure and one that was caught just before failure due to the rubber being scrubbed so thin. Each tire costs \$350. These units are clearly worse than any other vehicles in the fleet. Please pay special attention to the curb if you are driving an Orion VII. If you have any ideas how to prevent further damage please let the shop know. Thanks! (Chad)