



February 10, 2017

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

**Plum Route Update:** On December 21<sup>st</sup>, the Transit Board voted its intent to reduce the Plum Route service level next year from a 20-minute schedule to a 40-minute schedule. This action was taken when Grove/Copper Beech management informed CyRide that it would not be renewing its contract with CyRide contributing \$113,000 to this route. In reviewing next year's budget, the board was not in a position to be able to fund this revenue loss. With this change, CyRide will additionally not be able to add "extra" buses to this route next year.

Staff will be posting flyers in the bus shelters adjacent to these two complexes during early February as well as placing information on CyRide's website, Facebook and Twitter to inform students that might be impacted by this change. If you get questions, please direct them to CyRide's website at where the survey [www.surveymonkey.com/r/Plumcomments2017](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Plumcomments2017) will be posted to share their thoughts, concerns and let them know that a public hearing will be held in February regarding this change as well. Staff is working on the specific date and location of this meeting, and will post this for employees when it is finalized, as well as publicize this for our riders.

The Transit Board is scheduled to take final action on this service reduction at their March board meeting after receiving public input. (Sheri K.)

**New Time Off Without Pay/Additional Part-Time Banked Slot Policy:** The Labor Management Committee (LMC) has been working with the number one request from the Employee Survey distributed in February 2015 – additional time off availability for part-time drivers. After lengthy discussions on how to accomplish this and still be able to fill all CyRide runs on a daily basis, the group developed a combination approach of capping the amount of time off without pay to a maximum of 40 hours per fiscal year and adding one more part-time, banked time off slot each day. A memo with more details regarding this policy change, which will be effective on July 1, 2017, will be posted in the next several weeks. Any questions about this can be directed to any of the LMC recent past/present members: Sheri Kyras, Barb Neal, Rob Holm, Jenny Bethurem, Wanda Eikenberry, Brian Grootveld, Eric Ollie, Keven Gries, Nathan Schimanek, James Crabb, Paul Klimesh, Ashley Matthews, Michael Hlavacek. (Sheri K.)

**System Redesign Update:** At the spring training meeting, CyRide shared information that its consultant was in the "options development" stage of the project. Their initial thoughts were presented to the Transit Board of Trustees at the January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Due to the complexity

of changes and gaining an understanding of their impacts, board members decided to hold a special meeting on this topic so that more discussion was possible. This meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 11, 2017 from 10 am to 1:00 pm. After this meeting, staff should have further direction on whether the planned meetings scheduled for the end of February are possible or whether more time is needed to consider/modify possible changes. The board will also consider whether they would like more time to consider these options, thereby delaying a decision on the final recommendations until next fall as opposed to the original schedule of April of this year. We will post updates as more information is known about meetings for the drivers and other activities/decisions scheduled for this study. (Sheri K.)

## ADMINISTRATION

**Safe Driver Awards Earned in 2016:** Congratulations to everyone that earned Safe Driver Awards in 2016. Sixty-eight drivers earned these awards in the past year, but each of you does a great job day in and day out. Keep up the good work! (Barb N.)

Phil Hodges	30 yrs.	Ashley Mathews	4 yrs.	Russ Moore	1,040 hrs.
John Packwood	27 yrs.	Mallory Parmerlee	4 yrs.	Phillip Rockwell	1,040 hrs.
Chris Williams	25 yrs.	Matt Kenney	3 yrs.	Nate Wing	1,040 hrs.
Glenn Crosswait	24 yrs.	John Vachris	3 yrs.	Mitchell Rosburg	1,040 hrs.
John Sorbo	21 yrs.	Grant Olsen	3 yrs.	Mikah Fitzgerald	1,040 hrs.
Paul Klimesh	19 yrs.	Aleksey Kostyushko	3 yrs.	Michael Lowe	1,040 hrs.
Nathan Shimanek	17 yrs.	TC Dieckmann	2 yrs.	Michael Asbe	1,040 hrs.
Karen Goodman	17 yrs.	Michael Hlavacek	2 yrs.	Mark Rooney	1,040 hrs.
David Safina	15 yrs.	John Cramer	2 yrs.	Kristin Drellack	1,040 hrs.
Ron Pool	13 yrs.	Emily Asche	2 yrs.	Jonny Meyer	1,040 hrs.
Adam Wiederholt	12 yrs.	Andrew Ragusi	2 yrs.	John Nordyke	1,040 hrs.
Tedd Devick	11 yrs.	Alex Mauer	2 yrs.	Issac Deford	1,040 hrs.
Eric Ollie	11 yrs.	Adam Duke	2 yrs.	Greg Rudolph	1,040 hrs.
Pat Hansen	9 yrs.	Tanisha Holmes	1 yr.	Clifford Argo	1,040 hrs.
Yvette Gahring	8 yrs.	Skylar Hosch	1 yr.	Cameron Watson	1,040 hrs.
Kevin Gries	7 yrs.	Ron Morrison	1 yr.	Andrew Holden	1,040 hrs.
Nick Shimanek	6 yrs.	Penny Mayer	1 yr.	Jeremiah Cornell	1,040 hrs.
Jason Lippard	5 yrs.	Katie McNulty	1 yr.	Wendy Howard	1,040 hrs.
James Crabb	5 yrs.	Jenny Pausback	1 yr.		
Ted Mathews	4 yrs.	Eric Dunlap	1 yr.		
Natasha Harsh	4 yrs.	Donna Olson	1 yr.		
Dave Happe	4 yrs.	Craig Sheehy	1 yr.		
Charles Long	4 yrs.	Bethany Madden	1 yr.		
Becky Soukup	4 yrs.				

**One Million Miles Driven:** Congratulations to Ron Pool and Adam Wiederholt for attaining their one-million mile awards in 2016! Ron has been a bus operator with CyRide for 13 years while Adam has driven with CyRide for 12 years. Way to go Ron and Adam! (Barb N.)

**Federal Triennial Review:** Every three years, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducts a review of CyRide to determine whether we are administering our FTA-funded programs in accordance with regulations. In 2014, CyRide received a clean review with no deficiencies identified which is extremely uncommon. This year's review consists of delving into 17 areas listed below and is conducted in two phases: a desk review and then an on-site review.

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|--|---|
| 1. Financial Management and Capacity   | 11. Public Comment on Fare Increases and Major Service Reductions |
| 2. Technical Capacity                  | 12. Half Fare   |
| 3. Maintenance                         | 13. Charter Bus   |
| 4. Americans with Disability Act (ADA) | 14. School Bus  |
| 5. Title VI                            | 15. Security  |
| 6. Procurement                         | 16. Drug-Free Workplace and Drug and Alcohol Program              |
| 7. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise   | 17. Equal Employment Opportunity                                  |
| 8. Legal                               |   |
| 9. Satisfactory Continuing Control     |   |
| 10. Planning/Program of Projects       |   |

CyRide submitted its desk review package to FTA's consultant in December 2016, answering over 600 questions and providing 250 documents as required for evidentiary support of compliance.

The on-site review, and potentially any enhanced reviews (more in-depth audits of a particular area of concern), will be conducted over two days on May 1-2, 2017. If areas of concern are found within the 2017 review, CyRide will be allowed time to implement any necessary changes to policies or procedures placing our agency back into FTA compliance. (Shari A.)

**Website Upgrade:** CyRide will be redesigning its website and upgrading our content management system (CMS) software with our current vendor, Vision Internet, to be implemented hopefully by the beginning of school this fall. The last time CyRide performed an update of its website was back in August 2011. This upgrade will not only allow for a redesign of its website but also its hosting and support program as well. The specific benefits to the upgrade are as follows:

- The website will be responsive to the size of monitor and automatically scale information to different devices utilized by customers (tablet, computer, smart phone, etc).
- Updating of bus schedules/timetables will be easier to manipulate and more intuitive for CyRide staff.
- The Ames Area MPO and CyRide websites that CyRide staff update will utilize the same software.
- The City and CyRide can share training resources for the same website software.
- The knowledge base of the Vision system is shared with more than forty individuals within CyRide and the City of Ames.
- Future upgrades to newer software versions will be free under visionLive.
- Improved features and interactive elements have been added that will enhance CyRide websters' customer experience.

The most dramatic improvement will be to CyRide's schedule pages. Currently, CyRide places its timetables on an FTP server and iframes that content into the website which makes content of the timetables much more complicated to manipulate. After the upgrade, the content will all be housed directly within the CMS software making it easier for various staff to update content as it will be similar to a Word file. Additionally, the new CMS will allow operations with the ability to easily place an alert on the website, Twitter and Facebook within one post and provide the ability to change content on a page housing our schedules if necessary.

If you have examples or have ideas on how to enhance or improve CyRide's website, please email those URL's and/or ideas to [satwood@cyride.com](mailto:satwood@cyride.com) or come talk with one of CyRide's "Core Project Team" members which includes Julie Brouard, Rob Jennings and Shari Atwood. (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. (Jenny and Rob)

**CyRide Collision Procedures:** As a reminder a collision report must be completed whenever:

- There is contact between a CyRide vehicle and a fixed object.
- There is contact between a CyRide vehicle and another vehicle.
- There is a personal injury that involves a CyRide vehicle.

Steps to follow after a collision:

1. STOP the bus (no matter how minor the collision.)
2. Check for injuries.
3. Notify the dispatcher (no matter how minor the collision.)

The dispatcher will need to know the specific location and direction of the vehicles and whether there are injuries.

4. Write down the license plate number of all other vehicles that were involved.
5. Distribute **Customer Courtesy Cards** (located in the "pink" collision packet on your bus) to all passengers and witnesses and collect them when they are completed.
6. Set out emergency triangles if needed to help direct traffic flow.
7. **Do not move the bus** until a supervisor or police officer directs you to move.
8. Remain near the radio in case base or mobile needs to contact you.
9. Notify base when you are "freed up".
10. Complete a collision report as soon as you return to base (even if there is no apparent damage).

The "pink" collision packet located on the bus will have these steps listed for you as well as the vehicle registration and proof of insurance needed when an officer arrives at the scene. (Jenny and Rob)

**Parking Buses Outside in Cold Weather:** As a reminder, when the outside temperature is 20 degrees F or colder, keep your **diesel** bus idling when parking it 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. (Jenny B and Rob)

## **HIRING AND TRAINING**

**New Instructors:** Five drivers took the opportunity to enroll in the Instructor Training Program offered over the semester break. The group participated in classroom sessions and on-the-road training. We want to welcome and congratulate Isaac Deford, Mikah Fitzgerald, Wendy Howard, Mark Rooney, and Cameron Watson on their completion and new positions as New Driver Instructors. (Mia, Tom and George)

**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 (see photo at right) 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. Keep your bus straight and mind the line! Your fellow drivers will appreciate it. (Mia, George and Tom)



**Perfecting Your Skills “Setup Turns”:** Setting up turns 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 feet 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. (Mia, Tom and George)

**Hiring & Training - 2016 in Review:** In the year 2016, 116 applicants qualified for and took the hiring test. Of those that took the test, 108 passed and were eligible to move on to the interview. Of those who passed the hiring test, 100 candidates showed up to an interview and 95 of those were placed on the hiring list passing the interview. In 2016, only 44 applicants

from the hiring list got their permits and started (6 of those were from a late 2015 hiring test). Of the 57 people on the hiring list that did not start, 17 (29.8%) declined their offers; 33 (57.9%) either had unworkable schedules or were offered a position but never got their permits; 7 (12.3%) were still pursuing their permits as of 12/31/16 and were expected to start in early 2017. Recognizing the large number of people who are offered a position but never get their permits, we started offering \$250 in starting bonuses to new drivers to create an extra incentive in obtaining a permit and starting. (Mia)

**Trainers New Office Space:** In late January 2017, CyRide's trainers officially moved into their new offices which were extended from their old area through the wall and into the old uniform closet. The uniforms have been relocated to the locked storage area on the west side of the building. Specifically, Mia, Tom and George all have their own desk space with a fourth space for future expansion.



"The pictures still need to be hung on the walls, but we're settling in fine to our new space. Stop by if you haven't yet and grab a piece of Valentine candy!" says George. (Shari A.)

## FLEET AND FACILITIES

**Relief Vehicle Replacement:** The 2012 Ford Escape relief vehicle is scheduled for replacement this year. The current consensus for a replacement vehicle will be another SUV instead of a "green" vehicle to replace the current Escape as this is the preferred vehicle for Operations especially to maneuver through snow during the winter months. (Rich)



**Bus Shelter Repair Update:** Repairs were completed on the West Hy-Vee bus shelter last week. The shelter was struck by a car last October. There are two area contractors that have experience constructing and working on our shelters. We were on the waiting list at both companies. Last week, we finally got to the top of one of the lists and repairs were made from parts that were in stock at CyRide. Many drivers have also noticed that the roof has needed to be replaced on the shelter at Dickinson and Steinbeck for some time. Repair delays here were caused by other repair projects taking a higher priority with the labor we have available and long roof manufacturing lead times. Please keep in mind that we have been short lane workers which delays shelter and bus stop work. There is also only one fiberglass shelter roof manufacturer that we've found in the United States and they have a six to eight week lead time on their roofs. With that said, the new roof has been here for several weeks now and we are waiting for warmer weather to install it. Temperatures have to be above 50 degrees for the roof adhesive to work properly. (Rich)

**Digital Radio Upgrade:** CyRide is switching from analog to digital mobile radios. Our analog radios are almost 20 years old and can no longer be supported by our radio contractor, Electronic Engineering. The switch will allow for more features and options to be made available to CyRide. Some features that are being considered are the ability to request private radio calls with supervisors, emergency alert notifications and the inability to "walk on" other radio calls. The change will only affect about half our fleet's radios. The part of the fleet that is not affected is already digitally compatible. The current plan is to make the change over to the digital system during Iowa State's Spring Break. (Rich)

**Bus Wash:** There were a handful of buses that were serviced but not washed last week due to the bus wash breaking down. The bus wash is approximately 15 years old and in need of frequent repairs to keep it operating. A new bus wash has been budgeted for 2018, but we'll have to get by with the old one until funding is available. (Rich)

## **BREAK ROOM COMMITTEE CORNER**

**CyRide Soup Day Tradition Continues:** The soup event began in 2000 and will be 17 years strong that CyRide has continued the employee soup day. This year's "CyRide's Soup Day" will be held on Monday, March 6 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Now, for employees that are wondering what this event is; the very first event begun with just a few crockpots of soups and fewer employees than we have now. We asked that employees prepare a crockpot of soup or some other food item, appetizer, salad, dessert, fruit, chips, pickles, etc. to fill the table top and share with others.

Our largest number of variety of soups was 2012 when CyRide employees out did themselves and prepared 22 different varieties of soups to share. The committee sets the date for Monday so you have the weekend to prepare your favorite recipes or create a new recipe to share. Employees always enjoy the treats or other food items that complement the soups and fill that sweet tooth need, which we all agree is a bonus. Thank you in advance for participating!

Your Breakroom Committee members are: Yvette Gahring, Karen Goodman, Dave Happe, Donna Olson, Tim Thien, Emily Nguyen, John Vachris, and Joanne Van Dyke.