

CyRide Signals

March 12, 2020

ADMINISTRATION

Welcome: Chris Crippen joined CyRide's administrative team as the Assistant Director of Operations on February 19, 2020. Chris is no stranger to the Ames or CyRide having worked in this community for 24 years! Chris previously worked as a transit driver beginning in September 1996 and was promoted to a CyRide dispatcher in July 1998. Chris left CyRide and began working with the Ames Police Department (APD) in May 2000. Chris was with APD for 20 years where she was a Police dispatcher and a Police Sergeant. We are now excited to have her back at CyRide and if you haven't already done so, please welcome Chris back to CyRide and give her a friendly wave when you're out and about the Ames community. Chris drives an Altima and a Jeep!



COVID-19 Update: The World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 a global pandemic this week. Iowa State University and the Board of Regents in an attempt to prioritize health and safety decided to conduct classes after spring break online only. President Wintersteen is strongly encouraging students to stay home for these two weeks. The week of March 30, the university will reassess and decide if online classes should be extended. This decision will impact operations of routes for CyRide.

Because classes will be conducted online, it is likely that we will be carrying significantly fewer people on our buses and will not need to run our normal level of service during that time. As a result, the following changes are on track to be effective during the first week after spring break:

1. No extras will be run
2. Overtime is eliminated
3. Orange route will run according to break schedule

Initially, all other transit service routes will run as normal after Spring Break week. CyRide will be observing ridership during the first few days of that first week and will then decide if further changes need to be made based on those observations.

Many drivers will have shifts affected by these initial changes. We are reaching out to the drivers who will be most affected by these cuts (in other words, the drivers who would lose the most hours). We are planning on having alternative ways for drivers to obtain some hours for those who want them. We will be meeting throughout this process and discussing the feedback received from drivers as we finalize plans moving forward.

Time-off-without-pay restrictions will be lifted during this time so that those who want time off can take it without penalty. In other words, any time off without pay that is taken during these two weeks will not count toward your yearly 40-hour limit. Guaranteed time off procedures will remain as normal. Please review the transit boards for memos listing additional details.

We will be continually evaluating how service is working during this two week period. We know there has been a lot of uncertainty and we want to keep anxiety down as this situation evolves. We are hoping this will be limited to only two weeks and university classes can resume as normally scheduled beginning April 5th. (Barb N.)

Run Pick Schedule: The time for drivers to select their desired work schedule for the upcoming year is fast approaching for both the summer and fall school year! Run pick will take place in the small meeting room by the mailboxes where it was done last year. After spring break, ISU students will have online classes only, but drivers will still be required to pick their runs. Run pick will not be cancelled due to the COVID-19. If you will not be back in Ames, then please plan accordingly or call for assistance prior to run pick starting. If you have any questions about run pick rules or in how the process works overall, please talk to any supervisor or Rob Jennings.

For the summer schedule, full-time drivers are scheduled to start picking their runs on **Monday, March 23rd** after spring break. All summer runs will be posted for drivers to view during spring break. After full-time drivers have finished picking their shifts, the remaining runs will be posted for part-time drivers to start selecting their schedule. **Part-time run pick is scheduled for Thursday, March 26th through April 8th.**

For the fall schedule, run pick is scheduled to begin on **Friday, April 10th for full-time drivers** and **Thursday, April 16th for part-time drivers**. The fall runs will be posted a week prior to the full-time pick. There will be a considerable amount of runs posted for the fall school year, so please take some time to look at the options before it is your turn to choose your desired schedule.

Key points for a successful run pick:

- Put your schedule options together before it is your time to pick
- Know the run pick rules
- You can pick when it is your turn or if the driver before you has picked
- Know which supervisor or trainer is available to help verify your pick when it is your time to select your desired work
- Be prepared
- Ask questions before it is your turn - any supervisor or Rob J.

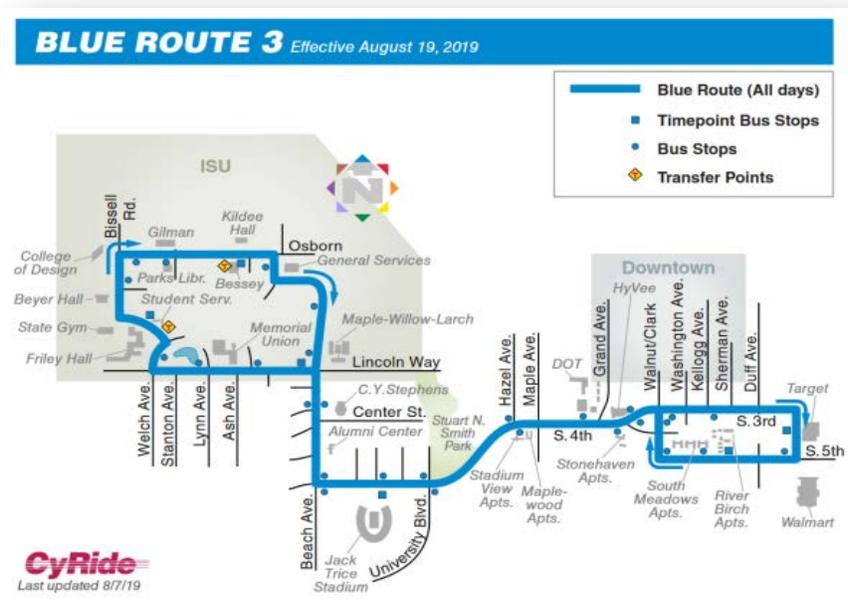
CyRide Ridership Update: Ridership is on its fourth straight year of decline with this year's trend continuing downward. For the first six months of FY2020 ridership was down 9.0% or 286,408 rides compared to last year. Ridership tends to fluctuate based on Iowa State University enrollment. This year ISU enrollment decreased by 1,600 students and each student generates approximately 164 rides on CyRide. Additionally, we believe more students have chosen apartments closer to campus and ridership patterns have shifted.

In January, the 9% downward trend rose slightly to only a 6% loss as there were three more class days in January 2020 versus January 2019. The months of February, March, and April were slated to all have comparable class days. However, with Iowa State University deciding to hold only online classes after spring break, ridership is going to be significantly down. (Rob J.)

2020 Census “Claim Ames”: The U.S. Census has long been an important data source for transit planning and forecasting. Census data showing work commutes and the modes used are especially relevant to transit. Demographic and socioeconomic information from the Census also plays a crucial role in transit planning. CyRide receives federal funding based on population and population density. Census data dictates the funding allocations coming from federal and state governments to CyRide. It is important Ames is accurately represented to maximize the potential of these revenue sources to CyRide. April 1st, 2020 is national Census Day, and CyRide wants every resident typically living in Ames to be counted. This Census will allow you to fill out your form online (first time ever), telephone or U.S. Mail. You should receive your form in your mailbox by the end of March so make sure to get counted and “Claim Ames!”. We are working with the City of Ames get out the message to everyone that resides in Ames throughout the majority of the year to “[Claim Ames.](https://www.cityofames.org/about-ames/claim-ames-census-2020)” Go to <https://www.cityofames.org/about-ames/claim-ames-census-2020> for more information! (Barb N.)

Agency Safety Plan: We have been hard at work over the past six months developing a new, federally mandated document called the Agency Safety Plan (ASP). This document lays out all of our safety related procedures, policies, and processes throughout the entire agency. Safety has always been and will always be a huge part of this organization, which means that compiling all of the components of this document has been and continues to be a pretty big undertaking. In addition, the FTA rules for this document require the creation of some completely new safety documents, processes, and procedures. What does this mean for you? Not much right now, but you may notice some changes coming up this spring and summer that will impact safety related training, forms, memos, notifications, and practices. The deadline for certification of this document is July 19th, 2020. We will keep you updated on how these changes will affect you as development continues throughout the spring and summer. (Jason, George, and Kevin)

#3 Blue Route and #14 Peach Route Modifications: At the December 20th Transit Board meeting, the board approved a permanent route modification to the #3 Blue Route to follow its current detour alignment. The Board also approved a reduction in service levels to the #14 Peach Route from 30 to 40 minutes due to a limited budget.



OPERATIONS

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. 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. (Jason, Tom, and George)



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. (Dorothy and Toto)



CyRide Roadeo: The CyRide Roadeo, our annual 'friendly' bus driving competition, is scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 23rd held here at CyRide. It consists of driving a 40-foot bus through an obstacle course (cones and barrels) and scoring points by performing some of the same maneuvers we face every day on the road. It is a lot of fun and a great opportunity to get to know some of your fellow coworkers. It is also the only time you can hit things with your bus without needing to fill out paperwork! Bring your friends and family for some laid back fun and free food! (Kevin)

Passenger Counts on the Tablets: Per the discussion in the spring meeting, we're continuing to work with testing passenger counts on the tablets. We received quite a few drivers interested in helping out with this project, which is awesome and very much appreciated. Our tests so far have shown that is difficult to enter information on both the tablet and the normal tally counter simultaneously, so we're working on a way to enter data only on the tablet during the testing period. Since this information is critical to operations, we're planning on having a very small group do more testing during Spring Break when things are quieter. Keep an eye out on the memo board and Signals for more updates on where things are at with this project. (Keith)

Odyssey of the Mind: Odyssey of the Mind World Finals will be held in Ames again this summer from Tuesday, May 26th through Saturday, May 30th (the week after CyRide's Rodeo). As always this will be a very busy time for us and we will need as much help as we can get. There will be plenty of hours available, so be sure to stick around if you like money! (Kevin)

HIRING AND TRAINING

New Instructors: Eight drivers took the opportunity to enroll in the Instructor Training Program offered over semester break in January. The group participated in classroom sessions and on-the-road training. We want to welcome and congratulate Greg Brodie, Joe Brodie, Jose Del Valle Molina, Logan Jensen, Tyler Morrison, Tim Schnaidt, Andrew Smith, and William Thomas. (Tom, Jason, and Jenny)



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 to far from the curb, try slowing down your turn. (Tom, Jason, and George)

FLEET AND FACILITIES

Bus Shelter at Lincoln Way and Beach:

We received several complaints regarding lack of lighting at this bus shelter at the southeast corner of Lincoln Way & Beach. Originally, a shelter light was not installed due to complications with wiring, underground trenching, and multiple utility conflicts in the area and solar lighting was not considered due to multiple trees and bushes in the area. We worked with ISU, the City of Ames and the electrical contractor to provide light to this shelter. (Rich L.)

New Relief Vehicles: Two Ford Escape hybrid SUV's will be ordered shortly to replace aging relief vehicles. The new Escapes should arrive in three to four months. At the suggestion of a driver, a hybrid minivan is being considered for the next RV to be ordered. (Rich L.)

Construction Projects: CyRide has three construction projects to be aware of this summer. The Cherry Turnaround at the west end of Mortensen Road will be graded and seeded this spring. Once the grass is established, the City of Ames Parks and Recreation Department will assume mowing responsibilities for CyRide. Kevin Gries lobbied tirelessly to make this project happen, so please thank him.

The Ames Middle School Turnaround will be repaved this summer. Plans call for the construction work to start on June 8 and be completed by July 31. This project will also replace the block retaining wall at the stop with a poured concrete wall.

Finally, most of you are aware that we will be replacing rooftop heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units this summer. This project should not have much of an impact on operations, but please be aware of construction workers in the facility once the project gets underway this summer. (Rich L.)

Bus Procurements With Approved Funding: A list of twenty bus purchases is shown below of which CyRide has received grant funding for over the next few years along with their respective buses they will replace. Many of these projects are still awaiting ‘formal grant approval and contracts’ from the Iowa DOT or Federal Transit Administration prior to beginning the procurement process.

The majority of the vehicles will be purchased off of the state contract with the exception of the battery electric (BEB) and articulated buses. The BEB project will require CyRide to define bus specifications and release a request for proposal for this project. This will be requested after the Iowa DOT has issued awards for round two of the Volkswagen grant funding in July 2020. Specifically, CyRide requested \$390,000 to provide the local match of these battery electric buses, dispensers, and chargers. As a result of this possible funding, CyRide will not begin the BEB project until then the Volkswagen awards have been made by the Iowa DOT. The anticipated delivery or purchase order period is noted beside each bus procurement. (Rich L.)

# of Buses	Bus Type	Vehicles Replaced/Expansion	Delivery/Purchase Notes
3	40' HD Buses	711,712,716	Delivered in Summer 2020
1	60' HD Bus	7130	Awaiting formal grant approval; Issue PO in Spring 2020
6	Minibuses	333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338	Awaiting contracts from Iowa DOT; Issue purchase order in July 2020
3	40' HD Buses	7117, 7133, Lilac Rt. Expansion	Awaiting contracts from Iowa DOT; Purchase in July 2020– June 2021
1	60' HD Bus	7124	Submit grant in 10/2020; Issue PO in Spring 2021?
2	40' Battery Electric Buses	778, 779	Beginning bus specifications development; issue bus bid request for proposals after Volkswagen Round 2 award in July 2020;
4	40' HD Buses	7132, 7123, 715, 1141	Awaiting contracts from Iowa DOT; Purchase in July 2022
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BREAK ROOM COMMITTEE CORNER

The Breakroom Committee's Purpose is to:

Offer events for "CyRide Employees" through the year and the four events are:

- September – Cook Out to Welcome Back and Get To Know Your "New" Employees
- December – Holiday Party
- March – Soup Event
- May – CyRide Employee Rodeo

These events are all made possible by you, CyRide employees, who purchase items from the vending machine. The Breakroom Committee receives a commission from the vending company for items purchased from the sandwich, snack and pop machine; funds from the "M&M" candy machine; and employees returning their pop can and bottles to the recycle bin instead of the trash can. The bottles and cans are then sorted and returned to the recycling place in Nevada by one of our breakroom employees, Karen Goodman. A big **"thank you" to Karen** for recycling our cans as this is not a pleasant job. Another big thank you to committee members who give their time to keep the coffee area clean and filled with supplies; stage for breakroom events; and other duties completed.

Thank you to all the employees and committee members for your contributions, time, and support with day to day duties to make CyRide and the Breakroom a pleasant place for you to enjoy your break, lunch, or conversations. We value employees' suggestions and support.

The Breakroom committee members are Yvette Gahring, Karen Goodman, Dave Happe, Rich Lane, Emily Nguyen, Donna Olson, Sara Scheiding, Trevin Ward, and "new members, Rob Jennings and Jean Christensen". Joanne Van Dyke, who is retiring at the end of March from CyRide, is "signaling" off for the last time.

Joanne VanDyke Retirement Party: We want to express our **"heartfelt thanks" to Joanne** for everything she has done in her 29+ years for the Breakroom Committee and CyRide! For all future parties held in the breakroom (including her retirement party), Joanne can sit down, relax and enjoy! Make sure to join us on Tuesday, March 31, 2020 between 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. to congratulate Joanne and celebrate her retirement.

