

**AMES AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (AAMPO)
TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION FORM**

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO THE AMES AREA MPO 2015–2019 FINAL PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN

BACKGROUND:

The federal government requires a locally-coordinated planning process for transportation issues between human/health service agencies and transportation providers. States and metropolitan planning organizations in turn, have been charged to carry out this process and as a result are required to develop a Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP). This plan provides needs-based justification for identifying passenger transportation priorities and/or strategies.

CyRide provides this coordination on the AAMPO's behalf and works with both the Story County Human Service Council and the Transportation Collaboration groups. The PTP must be updated, at a minimum, every five years. The AAMPO last approved their PTP in March 2014 and is required to submit their next full PTP to the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) in 2019. For the interim, there must be documentation of at least two coordination meetings submitted to the Iowa DOT annually by July 31 of which the AAMPO exceeds this requirement.

Projects funded with Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (5310) formula funding must specifically be identified within the PTP in order to receive this funding. Currently, the PTP identifies two projects for utilization of 5310 funding: (1) CyRide's ADA Dial-A-Ride service for its operation and (2) Bus Stop Improvements (bus shelter improvements). Any additional projects benefiting seniors or individuals with disabilities to be funded with 5310 funding requires an amendment to the PTP.

PTP Amendment

Recently, local transportation providers, CyRide and HIRTA, have identified another project type to be funded with Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (5310) funding. This project was previously identified in the PTP to be funded through another funding source but has not materialized. This project inclusion has been added on the attached pages of the PTP highlighted in yellow.

	FY2015 - FY2019		
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Federal (85%)</u>	<u>Total</u>
Replace/Expand Light-duty buses (Dial-A-Ride)	2	\$153,000	\$180,000

CyRide currently leases a light-duty bus (#7640) to HIRTA to operate its Dial-A-Ride service. This bus is currently 7 years old, well past its useful life of 4 years, and in need of replacement. If this project is approved into the PTP, CyRide would work to purchase this replacement in FY2016. It is important to note this amendment would not diminish any funding currently budgeted within the Ames CIP for Dial-A-Ride service or bus stop improvements.

In addition, it is estimated that a second bus, either for replacement or expansion for growth issues, will likely need to be purchased before the next required PTP full plan is completed in 2019. Therefore, this amendment identifies 5310 funding for the purchase of two buses through 2019. Other than this specific project, no additional changes have been made to the PTP.

The project was reviewed with the Story County Human Service Council as well as the Transportation Collaboration and was recommended to the Ames Area MPO to be amended into the PTP. The Ames Area MPO Technical Committee reviewed this amendment request at their March 17, 2015, meeting and has recommended it to the MPO Policy Committee for formal approval. However, the PTP amendment does require public input prior to formal approval by the AAMPO Policy Committee, which will occur in April.

Timeline

Amendments can be submitted at any time, if deemed necessary, before the next required PTP is due. The PTP amendment is following the schedule below:

- March 17, 2015 – MPO Technical Meeting (draft PTP review)
- March 31, 2015 – MPO Policy Meeting (draft PTP review)
- April 30, 2015 – Public Meeting (opportunity for comment)
- May 26, 2015 – MPO Policy Meeting (final PTP approval)

The AAMPO staff is providing an initial review of the PTP amendment and requesting comments and/or suggested modifications from the AAMPO Transportation Policy Committee prior to the public input meeting in April. The amended plan, along with any suggested modifications from the public and/or policy committee, will come back before the committee at their May 26, 2015, meeting for formal approval of the plan.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Review the amendment to the AAMPO 2015 – 2019 Final PTP, and set May 26, 2015, as the date for the public hearing.
2. Review and modify the amendment to the AAMPO 2015 – 2019 Final PTP and set May 26, 2015, as the date for the public hearing.

ADMINISTRATOR'S RECOMMENDATION:

The AAMPO Transportation Technical Committee reviewed and now recommends approval of this amendment to the AAMPO 2015 – 2019 Final PTP. Therefore, it is recommended by the Administrator that the Transportation Policy Committee adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby reviewing the amendment to the Ames Area MPO 2015 – 2019 Final PTP and setting May 26, 2015, as the date for the public hearing.

Ames Area MPO 2015 - 2019 Final Passenger Transportation Plan

March 2014

May 2015 (Amendment)



Prepared By:



CyRide's General Assessment –

Service Demand: In general, the demand for public transit within the Ames community is at an all-time high. Residents are demanding additional service routes, additional frequency on existing routes, and later evening service along corridors. The impact of CyRide's services are described in the table below in the amount of unlinked (one-way rides) ridership on CyRide. CyRide has increased ridership by 41.2% since FY2006 and served the most passengers ever in FY2013 with 5.89 million rides. Due to additional students at Iowa State in 2013-2014, CyRide anticipates ridership to be another record breaker at 6.6-6.8 million rides for FY2014. Iowa State is also expecting enrollment to increase again next year up to 35,000 students. With each additional student attending the university, CyRide can anticipate 170 rides per student for the year.

	CyRide Fixed Route (ALL Services; including Dial-A-Ride)			
Annual Numbers	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
# Riders (unlinked)	5,337,115	5,447,289	5,759,883	5,892,786
# Elderly Rides	65,148	65,412	69,825	71,628
# Disabled Rides	48,511	38,923	41,549	42,459
# Revenue Hours	110,167	113,182	113,025	113,909
# Revenue Miles	1,152,680	1,185,088	1,184,183	1,189,906
# Days Provided	362	362	359	359
Operating Costs	\$7,144,448	\$7,563,828	\$7,877,589	\$8,288,226
FTA (5307 & STA)	\$1,574,500	\$1,688,593	\$1,732,711	\$1,703,047
State	\$448,180	\$497,650	\$613,684	\$606,634

The highest demand is primarily along high residential housing or apartments within the Ames community into campus. The past few years have centered around where developers are going to build housing and how best to serve that area of the community with transit. Within the next year or two, housing has or will be built near S. 16th, Frederickson Court, Mortensen Road, and State St.

Staff: CyRide has maintained same management since 2006. CyRide did hire a Transit Planner in 2006 to help with the additional planning requirements due to the City of Ames becoming a metropolitan planning organization after exceeding 50,000 in population. However, positions within CyRide's maintenance division have not changed since 2006 when CyRide operated 49 buses. CyRide now has an overall fleet of 91 vehicles (buses, administrative vehicles, trucks). With the additional work, a larger and more varied fleet (hybrid and articulated buses) as well as the technology that is now required to maintain these vehicles, the job of maintaining CyRide's fleet has become more challenging. The transit industry uses a "rules of thumb" methodology to determine appropriate maintenance staffing levels within a transit agency. These are illustrated below along with CyRide's metric for each.

Rule of Thumb	Industry Standard	CyRide Actual
Miles of Service	1 mechanic/120,000 miles	1 mechanic/253,504 miles
Buses Per Mechanic	1 mechanic/7.62 buses	1 mechanic/15.9 buses
Buses Per Lane Worker	1 lane worker/17.92 buses	1 lane worker/41.5 buses

In January 2014, CyRide's board approved two additional lane workers, two additional mechanics and a summer trainer to help support this level of buses to be maintained and drivers to be trained in order to sustain this ridership level.

Fleet: CyRide's fleet is overall pretty young due to the influx of bus purchases since in the past six years. CyRide has been extremely successful in attaining national discretionary grants to support the purchase of bus replacement/expansion. CyRide is expecting another delivery of new buses in 2015 which will be the last of new buses for the foreseeable future.

However, CyRide is currently operating a 3 bus spare ratio to serve its passengers and is anticipating another ridership record for FY2015 after FY2014 reaches 6.6 – 6.8 million. CyRide plans to keep any bus that is purchased to replace old buses within the fleet until the enrollment at Iowa State levels off. To help anticipate additional ridership for next fall, the transit board approved for CyRide to solicit 5 used buses from hopefully warm weather transit agencies that are disposing vehicles throughout the nation. CyRide leases one vehicle to its ADA subcontractor to operate its Dial-A-Ride service. This vehicle will be 7 years old in FY2015 and past its useful life of 4 years. Systematic replacement of this vehicle within this fleet is needed every 4-8 years. In addition, another vehicle may be warranted if capacity issues arise on the Dial-A-Ride service. CyRide monitors Dial-A-Ride ridership to ensure enough vehicles are available to transport DAR passengers.

Facility: CyRide just completed an expansion to its facility allowing inside storage for an additional 11 buses. The original facility was built in 1983 on its current site. Since that time, there have been numerous expansions via piecemeal as federal funding is available. Remaining work on the current expansion includes finalizing the flood wall/berm, electric work within the storage facility and landscaping which will occur during the spring. Once construction is finalized, CyRide will still have four to six buses parked outside and are trying to procure an additional 5 used buses due to ridership demand that will increase that even more. Therefore, over the next year, CyRide will be undergoing discussions with the board to determine if additional resources should be invested on the current property or if a second location should be selected for future expansion.

HIRTA General Assessment –

HIRTA's service assessment would be conducted within CIRPTA's PTP for the region since HIRTA's service coverage is all of the counties surrounding Polk County.

STATUS OF PREVIOUSLY RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

The Human Service Council (HSC) members had opportunity to review the status of previously recommended projects, listed above, at their October 27, 2013 meeting of which was also dispersed via e-mail. An overview of the PTP requirement was shared for those new to HSC. A summary spreadsheet of previously recommended projects from the 2014 PTP was shared with the group and the status of whether they were on-going, pending or not started which can be viewed on the following pages. At that time, yellow highlighted projects were approved, on-going or would be implemented. Bold projects were partially funded for a portion of the full project. Pending projects were highlighted in grey. Projects in white were not approved for grant funding and therefore not implemented, not requested or delayed. Justification to the community for each project follows the table thereafter. Comments were requested from the group and received. The update was also shared via e-mail out to human/health service agencies representatives not able to attend the meeting.

To summarize, Ames was extremely successful within the past year receiving grant funding to implement several transportation services and purchase buses. Major highlights include:

- CyRide NEXT BUS real-time prediction software began January 31, 2013
- Two CyRide articulated buses were delivered on February 28, 2013 (Clean Fuels Grant)
- Six CyRide large buses were ordered in December 2014 (Last State of Good Repair under SAFETEA- LU. Future State of Good Repair grants under MAP-21 are designated for rail improvements.)
- CyRide Subcontracted ADA Dial-A-Ride Services Continuation
- CyRide Facility Expansion Significantly Completed January 2014: 1) Expansion bus storage for 11 more buses, 2) flood barrier enhancements (flood gate/wall/berm) two feet above the 500-year floodplain, 3) Increase ceiling height to allow hybrids to operate throughout entire facility and lastly 4) Rehabilitation of wash/fuel bay. Remainder to complete includes flood wall/berm, inside finish work and landscaping.

IV – PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

The following are passenger transportation priorities and strategies for the next five years, as recommended by the Story County Human Service Council at their January 23, 2014 meeting **and as amended at their January 22, 2015 meeting**. These are projects that could secure grant funding over the next five year period. Please note, that any Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and individuals with Disabilities projects (Section 5310 funding) must be specifically included in the PTP. All other strategies/projects funded by other means are encouraged to include in the PTP but are not required. This process ensures a cooperative effort between human service agencies and transportation providers to focus on transportation services to achieve the best possible transportation service for the community focusing on the elderly and disabled populations.

The PTP committee, made up of transportation providers and human/health service agencies, provided consensus to forward the following priorities and strategies forward and recommends this plan to the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for formal approval. The AAMPO must review and approve the projects and overall PTP plan **as amended** for submittal to the Iowa Department of Transportation.

1. **Dial-A-Ride Service (Section 5310):** This need was identified as a base need for the community for those individuals that cannot ride the fixed-route system but can rather ride CyRide’s Dial-A-Ride door-to-door service operated under subcontract currently to Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA). CyRide is mandated by the federal government as part of the American’s With Disabilities Act (ADA), to provide this complementary fixed-route service for person’s with a disability. This demand response service operates the same hours and days as the CyRide’s fixed-route transit system. More demand will be warranted from the community in future years. Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and individuals with Disabilities funding (Section 5310 funds) can be utilized by transit agencies to subcontract out their ADA service however; they cannot provide the service themselves and receive the funding. Therefore, it is more economical to subcontract and coordinate with another provider. **Approximate annual funding = (\$237,500 total; \$190,000 federal)**

	Dial-A-Ride (HIRTA)			
	Provides door-to-door ADA service within the Ames city limits.			
Annual Numbers	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
# Revenue Hours	2,551	2,503	2,665	3,204
# Revenue Miles	30,498	31,122	34,108	35,445
# Days Provided/Yr.	362	362	359	359
# Riders (unlinked)	9,745	9,101	10,853	9,468
# Elderly Rides				
# Disabled Rides	9,745	9,101	10,853	9,468
Operating Costs	\$136,856	\$142,717	\$162,094	\$144,023

2. **Transit Amenities/Bus Stop Improvements (Section 5310):** Improving the accessibility of CyRide’s bus stops as well as CyRide’s image is of importance to CyRide and their Board of Trustees. Shelters have be prioritized within a bus stop plan for the community to be funded from this identified funding in the next few years as long as funding is available to improve accessibility. These improvements also include lighting within the bus stop improvement as only a few bus stops currently have lighting within the shelter. Many passengers result to lighting up the schedule display within the shelter in the evening hours with their cell phone or a street light. Future shelters would incorporate lighting.

In addition, real-time schedule information has been a request within the Ames community for many years. This technology was implemented in February 2013 with LED digital signage at certain major transfer points on Iowa State University campus. Additional LED signage for real-time bus information can be incorporated into CyRide’s system making it easier for seniors and the disabled know when their Next bus will be arriving. CyRide intends to place these signs at major transfer locations. **Approximate annual funding = (\$50,000 total; \$40,000 federal)**

3. **Small Light-Duty Bus Replacement/Expansion (Section 5310):** CyRide's complementary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service called Dial-A-Ride, is a door-to-door service serving individuals with a disability within the City of Ames. Passengers eligible for Paratransit service as defined by the (ADA) can ride this service. This service requires small light-duty accessible vehicles to operate door-to-door within the City of Ames. The useful life of these vehicles is four years as recommended by the Federal Transit Administration. CyRide currently leases one light-duty vehicle to its ADA contractor to help operate this service. The remaining vehicles are provided by the contractor directly as they also operate the regional public transit service for Story County. CyRide needs to systematically replace this vehicle leased to its contractor at a minimum of four years and maximum of every eight years.

Additionally, this funding may be utilized to purchase expansion vehicles as needed for its ADA service as ridership for Dial-A-Ride increases. Specifically, CyRide cannot deny Dial-A-Ride passengers a ride due to vehicle capacity issues. CyRide must ensure a ride to its passengers within a two hour window (one hour before/after requested pickup/drop off) of the passengers' request. As of FY2013, Dial-A-Ride ridership has remained fairly stable. However, this may change as more and more disabled individuals turn to Dial-A-Ride for that "guaranteed ride" within the two-hour window. Section 5310 funds can be utilized by transit agencies to purchase replacement and/or expansion buses to operate its ADA service. Expansion vehicles may be necessary within this next five-year period as demand increases and CyRide would need to respond and provide additional vehicles if required. CyRide estimates up to two light-duty buses being purchased for either replacement/expansion within the PTP between FY2015 – FY2019 with the cost identified below. **Approximate funding per bus = (\$90,000 total; \$76,500 federal) OR Approximate maximum funding 2015-2019 = (\$180,000 total; \$153,000)**

The remaining projects/strategies on the following page are not required to be coordinated through the PTP but have been expressed as needs within previous meetings over the years or throughout the past year:

Previous needs were shared with the Human Service Council at their October 24, 2013 meeting and were requested to provide additional needs and possible strategies within the next few months. This information was also shared at the UWSC's Transportation Collaboration Committee. **The additional or refined needs and strategies/projects are identified in red on the following pages and were shared with the group in subsequent meetings and/or via e-mail. Those strategies that have been implemented or partially implemented are identified in blue.** Please note that no additional core needs were defined but only possible strategies/projects were added to meet those core needs. The needs were accumulated from the public through public meetings and/or through communications with transportation providers and human service agency representatives. Note that these possible strategies have not all been recommended but if federal/state/local funding became available for the specific project – it could be recommended into the program rather easily as it's already defined as a need.