

**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 the staff on the AAMPO's behalf for this coordination 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 Ames Area MPO last approved their PTP in March 2014 and is required to submit their next full PTP to the Iowa DOT in 2019. During the interim, there must be documentation of at least two coordination meetings to be submitted to the IDOT annually by July 31st of which the Ames Area MPO 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. Any additional projects benefiting seniors or individuals with disabilities to be funded with 5310 funding require an amendment to the PTP plan.

Due to changes in the amount of shelters which have been installed, transit stop amenities have been identified for increased Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (5310) funding. This project was previously identified in the PTP to be funded at \$50,000 total annually and is proposed at \$200,000 total annually. This project inclusion has been added on the attached pages of the PTP highlighted in red.

	FY2015 - FY2019	
	Federal (80%)	Total
Transit Amenities/Bus Stop Improvements	\$160,000	\$200,000

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the amended AAMPO 2015 Passenger Transportation Plan.
2. Approve the amended AAMPO 2015 Passenger Transportation Plan with Transportation Policy Committee modifications.

ADMINISTRATOR'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Ames Area MPO Transportation Technical Committee has reviewed the amended AAMPO 2015 Final Passenger Transportation Plan and unanimously recommends approval. During the public input period, no revisions were requested by the public.

Therefore, it is recommended by the Administrator that the Transportation Policy Committee adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving the amended AAMPO 2015 Passenger Transportation Plan.

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. 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 (HIRT). 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 (HIRT)			
	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 been 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).~~ **Approximate annual funding = (\$200,000 total; \$160,000 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 bus 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 DialA-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 = (\$180,000 total; \$153,000)**

4. **Van Replacement/Expansion (Section 5310):** In January 2015, a Demand Response Service Action Plan (<http://www.cityofames.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=20699>) and Communication Plan were finalized under the guidance of a task force to develop process improvements for the door-to-door public transit service to the general public within Story County/Ames. While, the plan identifies 23 specific actions to improve demand response county-wide public transit service, many of these improvements can also benefit CyRide's Dial-A-Ride service provided to ADA-eligible disabled individuals as both transit services are operated by the same transit provider.

Specifically under Action Item #23 in Appendix H, the Demand Response Service Action Plan identified dedicating one "unscheduled" vehicle each day to address unforeseen operational issues to ensure smooth operation of service. The need was to keep demand response public transit service on time alleviating concerns from passengers. Again, this service improvement need was seen as something to improve not only HIRTA's service but CyRide's Dial-A-Ride service as well. Therefore a possible funding source for the purchase of the vehicle is 5310 (elderly and disabled funding) impacting the demand response services within the Ames community. The vehicle would be operated to keep the service within the City of Ames on schedule as much as possible and/or assist where needed. Although the action plan identifies a bus to operate this service improvement, recent discussions have identified the unscheduled vehicle as an accessible van. The useful life of this vehicle is four years as recommended by the Federal Transit Administration and therefore, would need replaced within the life of this PTP.

CyRide estimates up to two accessible vans being purchased between FY2015 – FY2019 for either replacement/expansion within this PTP with the estimated costs identified below. CyRide and/or HIRTA would be required to fund the 25% local portion of the vehicle. **Approximate funding per van = (\$57,500 total; \$42,925 federal) OR Approximate maximum funding = (\$115,000 total; \$85,850)**