

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR CYRIDE LOW OR NO EMISSION GRANT APPLICATION

BACKGROUND:

CyRide has been studying the feasibility of deploying electric buses in the community for over a year. CyRide has been utilizing the consulting services of the Center for Transportation & the Environment (CTE) with their findings reported to the Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees. After considering CTE's reports on electric buses and the necessary supporting infrastructure, the Board of Trustees recently approved submitting a federal grant application for electric buses. The grant program is called the FY2019 Low or No Emission Grant and it is administered by the Federal Transit Administration.

The FY2019 Low or No Emission Grant is a highly competitive grant process. Transit agencies from around the country compete for the same pool of available funds. Applications from agencies that enjoy strong local support from community partners have traditionally been viewed more favorably in the evaluation process. Therefore, CyRide is requesting the attached letter of support be signed by the Mayor so that it can be included in the grant application.

If CyRide is fortunate enough to have the grant approved by the Federal Transit Administration, the grant would fund the purchase of two electric buses. It would also fund the engineering, design, and construction of supporting infrastructure within the CyRide facility. Other grant eligible expenses include driver and mechanic training, plus consulting services during the deployment of electric buses. The total amount applied for is \$1,660,180 in federal funding, which would require a maximum local match of \$455,620. CyRide has identified potential local funding sources should the grant be approved.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize the Mayor to submit the attached letter of support for CyRide's FY2019 Low or No Emission Grant application.
2. Reject Alternative #1 and do not authorize the attached letter of support for CyRide's FY2019 Low or No Emission Grant application.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Federal Transit Administration FY2019 Low or No Emission Grant application provides for an exciting opportunity to bring electric buses to the community. The project is consistent with the Council's goal to enhance sustainability within the community. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.



April 23, 2019

Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Ames Transit Agency (CyRide) Letter of Support

Dear FTA Representative:

On behalf of the City of Ames, I would like to share my support of the Ames Transit Agency's (CyRide's) FY2019 Low or No Emission Grant application for electric buses, facility modifications, training, and supporting equipment, as well as consulting services to ensure a successful outcome. The City Council fully supports CyRide's project and the approach it has taken to not only become familiar with this bus technology, but also to understand what it takes to deploy electric buses. This project aligns with the Council's goal to enhance sustainability within the community, as well as the City's Sustainability Task Force whose mission is "...to develop sustainability plans that will help achieve cost-effective energy reductions in the various sectors of the community through the focus on electrical energy consumption...."

The City of Ames, with a population of 67,000, is a small urban center in the rural State of Iowa. Being just slightly over the Federal Transit Administration's "rural" transit system designation, it was important to the community to ensure that an electric bus deployment could be successful in Ames. CyRide's approach has been a thoughtful process to determine the feasibility and identification of possible benefits regarding electric buses in the Ames community before considering a federal Low or No Emission application. This journey, supported with local dollars, was guided by an industry expert - Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE). Further partnering with CTE on this project if a grant award is made will allow their experience, and lessons learned in deploying similar projects, to complete a successful and timely project in Ames.

This is an exciting project for the community and I encourage the Federal Transit Administration to strongly consider the Ames Transit Agency's 2019 Low or No Emission Grant application to complete a project that can be the stepping stone to larger endeavors in sustainable public transit in this small, Midwestern community.

Sincerely,

John Haila, Mayor
City of Ames