

Diane Voss

From: Deb Schildroth
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 3:54 PM
To: Diane Voss
Subject: FW: City of Ames Transportation Update - Non agenda packet communication

Hi Diane,
Would you include this email from Brooke Ramsey at HIRTA in Council's non-agenda packet?

Thank you



Deb Schildroth
Assistant City Manager

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From: Brooke Ramsey <BRamsey@ridehirta.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 27, 2020 10:54 AM
To: Deb Schildroth <deb.schildroth@cityofames.org>
Cc: Julia Castillo <JCastillo@ridehirta.com>; Barbara Neal <barbara.neal@cyride.com>; lolson@storycountyiowa.gov
Subject: City of Ames Transportation Update

Hi Deb,

Thanks for taking the time to speak with me the other day. Below is a summary of our talking points.

HIRTA, like many of our peers across the country, experienced a significant decrease in request for transportation once the pandemic began. We've been operating on a much lower scale than ever before. However, as the Governor has lifted restrictions and our community partners begin to build their plan to resume business, HIRTA needs to communicate what our plan will look like. We've been providing weekly updates to our partners and have started to see an increase in calls and requests for rides.

HIRTA will need to take a phased approach to increase service levels in the region. Story County is different than our other 6 Counties due to the urban area (Ames) with CyRide and then the ASSET process. We opted to focus on the other six counties Phase 1 Plan first, so we could focus on a few items specific to Ames and Story County.

Prior to the pandemic, we were given some guidance regarding FTA funding. FTA 5311 funds (HIRTA receives) are specifically for rural operations and 5307 funds (CyRide receives) are for urban. As HIRTA prepares to respond to increased demand, we need to ensure we are fully compliant with regulations and fund trips done wholly within Ames

without using 5311 funds. ASSET funds can be used for trips in the City of Ames, however the funding is limited. HIRTA receives around \$40,000 in ASSET funds from the City of Ames. We've historically only drawn down 1/12th of the allotted ASSET funds each month, if we were to draw down funds as services are provided we would exhaust them in the first few months of the year. This would leave HIRTA in a position to determine how else to fund the service or not to provide service for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Another consideration would be impacts to the Dial-A-Ride service. HIRTA has contracted with CyRide to provide the DAR service for over 10 years. The partnership has been a great way to combine resources and blend funding sources to ensure the lowest cost of service to the community. If HIRTA ceases other service in Ames, the full cost of service to the DAR program will increase due to the lack of sharing expenses with other programs.

Understanding HIRTA's role in accessing the other ASSET funded agencies services, we feel a sense of urgency to provide our community partners with guidance on what HIRTA will be able to provide moving forward. They may have to look at alternative ways to get people to service, work, and other daily activities. Providers like Heartland, Mainstream and Friendship Ark will need know if HIRTA is a viable option for their Ames riders, or build an alternative plan.

We will be requesting to present to the Story County Board of Supervisors, and asking if the County ASSET funds can be amended for use in Ames, to help bridge the funding gap. This is a potential solution for FY2021, as demand for service during COVID has decreased. If the request is approved, we will still need to make some considerations for services in FY2022.

We would like to make sure the stakeholders are aware of the challenges we face, and provide any additional information they may need or want as we move forward.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you!

Brooke Ramsey

Business Development Manager



HIRTA Public Transit

515-309-9282

Sent remotely from my Surface