



# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and Ames City Council

**From:** Steven L. Schainker, City Manager

**Date:** June 24, 2022

**Subject:** Cyclone Welcome Weekend

The Saturday before the first day of Iowa State classes has become known as “801 Day.” As you are aware, this unofficial “celebration” has morphed into a raucous day-long event that has resulted in numerous complaints from residents in the community.

Fearing that some of the behavior exhibited during this day will result in injury to the participants, the Mayor, Police Chief, and I have been working with ISU President Wintersteen and her administrative staff in an attempt to create a new event that will encourage more positive behavior on this day.

As a result of these discussions, the University is planning to introduce a new program entitled, “Cyclone Welcome Weekend” on Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup>. This two-day event will be designed to welcome new and returning students to Ames and ISU at the start of the 2022-23 academic year through fun and safe events.

Events being considered include entertainment, sporting competitions, games, food experiences, and access to deals and discounts throughout the City, just to name a few.

While the bulk of the responsibility for this event will reside with Iowa State University, the City has been asked to assist in the following four ways to help ensure a fun and safe weekend.

1. Contribute \$5,000 towards the cost of hosting the Cyclone Welcome Weekend matched by a \$5,000 contribution each from the Ames Chamber of Commerce and ISU.

*The City's contribution could be approved from the City Council's Contingency Account to help the University to defray a small portion of their overall costs for the welcoming event.*

2. Change the *Municipal Code* to increase the penalties for a nuisance party during the first weekend prior to the start of ISU classes from \$100 for first violation and \$200 for any repeat violation to \$750 for the first violation and \$1,000 for any repeat violation.

*The City Attorney could be asked to prepare an amendment to the Nuisance Party ordinance to reflect the increased fines. The staff would suggest that this amendment be worded more broadly to impose the higher fines for other times of the year, but only with prior approval from the City Council.*

3. In the University-Impacted neighborhoods where there is alternative-side parking, change the *Municipal Code* to allow for an illegally parked car to be towed immediately during the first weekend prior to the start of ISU classes.

*Here again, the City Attorney could be asked to prepare an amendment to the Parking ordinance that would specify those specific streets where immediate towing would be allowed during this welcoming event and, perhaps, other situations where prior City Council approval is obtained.*

4. In order to facilitate exposure of the ISU students to other major entertainment, social, shopping areas in the City, assign a CyRide bus to an express route from the Memorial Union to the Farmers Market from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. and from the Memorial Union to the Mall from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. during the first weekend prior to the start of ISU classes.

*I have been advised that CyRide cannot provide a shuttle that runs a direct route between the Union, the Farmer's Market, and the Mall, because it could be construed as a charter. In general, before any public transit system receiving Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding, like CyRide, can provide this type of charter service, all of the 89 registered private charter operators in the Ames area must receive an opportunity to provide the service.*

*The goods news is that CyRide could market the Red route service. On Saturday, August 20, this standard fixed route runs every 20 minutes from West Ames to the Mall, following a route that is very close to a direct route between the three locations. Service on this route starts at 7:00am and operates until 10:00pm. This route would be free to ISU students as part of their activity fees. (See Attached Route Map)*

As promised, Ex-Officio City Council Liaison, Bryce Garman, attempted to obtain feedback from the ISU Student Government chief officers. The comments from the three who responded to his request included:

*"The main concern that I have is towing immediately. If we do that when there are a lot of people around, then this will create more problems. I think immediate fine with the possibility of towing on Sunday would be more beneficial!"*





*"To be completely honest, I don't see the "Cyclone Welcome Weekend" really working that well. The increased fines and such are probably a good start, though I am worried enforcement may end up hitting those that aren't actually the source of problems, but that's an enforcement issue rather than a policy one. The events and such though I don't think will draw*

*many away from the 801 day parties, and, while there will be engagement, it won't be the students and individuals that are the ones causing problems. I think the money that will be spent on the welcome weekend won't really go that much towards actually stopping or curbing the growing issue of out of control parties. Some way to try and combat non-ISU students coming to party may be the biggest thing."*

*"President Ludwig: As for the penalties for parties, I do have some hesitancy. The 500% increase, while a deterrent in theory, may not work as a deterrent unless people in the community are very aware of the policy, which I suspect these houses will not be. If the city is going to move to this new fine structure, I would like to know if they intend to communicate with houses that have a history of violations. Similarly, I am curious if there is a plan in place to communicate the new parking regulations for that weekend. In previous discussions with Chief Newton, I was under the impression that there were plans to communicate with these neighborhoods and put up signs, but I didn't see anything in the memo provided and want to be sure. Other than communication concerns, I am hopeful that our efforts will improve safety and reduce noise complaints during this first weekend back."*

**Given the large number of citizen complaints we receive during this weekend, and the stress it places on our Police Department to respond to the excessive number of calls for service, this attempt to redirect the focus of this weekend is worthy of our support!**

# RED ROUTE 1 Effective August 19, 2019

-  Red Route (All days)
-  Timepoint Bus Stops
-  Bus Stops
-  Transfer Points

