Transit Board Meeting
AGENDA

AMES TRANSIT AGENCY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CYRIDE CONFERENCE ROOM – April 17, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER: 5:00 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes from March 27, 2025
3. Public Comments
4. Award of Contract for Purchase of Mobile Column Hoists
5. State Grant and Public Transit Infrastructure Grant (PTIG) Applications
6. Monthly Report
7. Summer Meeting Dates / Times
8. Adjourn

Ames Transit Agency
Board of Trustees

MARCH 27, 2025
AMES TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Ames Transit Agency Board of Trustees met on March 27, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the CyRide Conference room. President Norton called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. with Trustees Boland, Junck, Lee, Rolwes, and Schainker present.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 20, 2025, MINUTES:

Trustee Junck made a motion to adopt the February 20, 2025, Transit Board minutes as presented; Trustee Lee seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: 0) Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

HIRTA CONTRACT AND ANNUAL CUSTOMER SURVEY:

Director Neal requested approval to continue subcontracting CyRide's complementary paratransit service, Dial-A-Ride (DAR). CyRide is currently in a three-year contract with HIRTA for DAR services, with the option to extend the contract by two additional years. FY 2026 would represent the third year of the contract. Three areas were presented to the board to assist in the decision-making process: the annual DAR survey results, performance measures, and the proposed contract rates.

In summary, the DAR survey results showed that 85.8% of respondents were satisfied with HIRTA's service overall. This number is down from 92.9% last year; however, with only 14 people responding, CyRide is cautious about drawing a broad conclusion. CyRide will continue conversations with HIRTA about feedback on scheduling and the app. HIRTA has added drivers to help address customer concerns about ride availability and long ride times.

For performance measures, CyRide proposed modifying two performance goals. First, the cost per passenger goal should be updated to $21.00 to reflect the new contract rate. Second, the number of passenger rides occurring before or after the pick-up window should be increased to 1,315 occurrences or less. HIRTA was aggregable to these modifications.

HIRTA has expressed interest in continuing to provide DAR services on CyRide's behalf. They have proposed a 3.5% rate increase for weekdays and 0.25% on nights and weekends.

Director Neal presented an amendment to the HIRTA contract. HIRTA requested an amendment to allow them to carry Physical Damage insurance on the CyRide-owned vehicle they use. CyRide does not require this type of insurance, but HIRTA would like to carry it, which requires an amendment to the contract. The insurance would be at HIRTA's expense, and the amendment clarified that they would be responsible for all costs associated with the coverage.

Director Neal recommended approval of Alternative #1, to approve the amendment and continue the contract with HIRTA, which has proven to be a cost-effective approach to serving individuals who need specialized transportation. It maintains consistent service for passengers while avoiding the high cost associated with CyRide directly operating the service.

Trustee Schainker made a motion to approve Alternative #1; Trustee Boland seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: 0) Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF ARTICULATED BUS PURCHASE CHANGE ORDERS:

Director Neal requested approval of bus specification change orders for the purchase of the two 60' articulated buses. At the meeting on September 19, 2024, the board approved the purchase of two 60' articulated buses from New Flyer of America Inc. of St. Cloud, MN, for a base price of $972,010 per bus. The board approved a not-to-exceed amount of $1,967,741 since vehicle pricing is not finalized until late in the process. Since then, CyRide worked with New Flyer to finalize vehicle specifications to ensure the buses are consistent with the rest of the fleet. Approximately $108,000 in changes have been identified for the two buses or approximately $54,000 per bus. To support the changes, CyRide recommended using funding from the 40' Bus Replacement Reserve Fund. The buses are scheduled to begin production in August 2025.

Director Neal recommended approval of Alternative #1, to approve the proposed change orders and establish a new contract amount of $2,052,362.58 for the purchase of two 60' articulated buses with New Flyer of America Inc. of St. Cloud, Minnesota. Approving the change orders would ensure the new buses are consistent with CyRide's fleet and built for long-term durability, as well as supporting the goal of the #23 Orange route being operated entirely with articulated buses.

Trustee Junck made a motion to approve Alternative #1; Trustee Boland seconded the motion (Ayes: 6 Nays: 0) Motion carried.

MONTHLY REPORT:

Fuel Contract: CyRide's fuel contract RFP will be prepared and presented for board approval in the upcoming months.

Recent Legislative Updates: CyRide staff have been actively working at the state and federal levels to support ongoing transit funding and policy improvements.

Token Transit: Token Transit has continued growing, with 191 passes sold to 75 users thus far.

Spring meeting dates:

- April 17, 5:00 p.m.

Adjourn: Trustee Lee made a motion to adjourn at 5:20 p.m.; Trustee Junck seconded the motion. (Ayes: 6 Nays: 0) Motion carried.

Michael Norton, President

Cheryl Spencer, Recording Secretary

April 17, 2025
Award of Contract for Purchase of Mobile Column Hoists
CyRide Resource: James Rendall

BACKGROUND:

CyRide uses vehicle hoists as part of regular fleet maintenance. These hoists lift buses off the ground, providing access to essential components for repairs. CyRide currently has both in-ground fixed hoists and two sets of mobile column hoists.

Mobile hoists offer greater flexibility in the maintenance division by providing additional lifting capacity and the ability to safely lift all vehicle types, from small cutaway and RV-style vehicles up to 60' articulated buses. With more hoists available, maintenance staff will have better access to equipment and improved flexibility to complete repairs. Articulated buses require six lifting columns, and CyRide currently has a single in-ground hoist capable of lifting this vehicle type. Adding a set of six mobile column hoists would help reduce repair wait times. The Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) includes $75,000 in the current fiscal year for the purchase of six mobile column hoists.

On March 27, 2025, CyRide, in coordination with the Purchasing Division, issued Request for Quotation (RFQ No. 2025-149) for six mobile column hoists. The base specification requires battery operation, wireless communication, and a minimum lifting capacity of 18,500 lbs. per column. Bids were due April 11, 2025. CyRide received nine bids, summarized in the attached bid tabulation. Midwest Lift Works LLC. of Jordan, Minnesota, was the lowest bidder that met all specifications, for a total cost of $88,920.

The five lower bids were determined to be non-responsive for the following reasons:

- Liftnow Automotive Equipment Corporation: overall lifting height too low
- D&E Equipment Solutions Inc: overall lifting height too low
- Rack'M Up Equipment Distributors: safety lock spacing too wide
- ARI-Hetra: incorrect type of lifting mechanism
- Pump and Meter Service: overall lifting height too low

The bid provided by Midwest Lift Works LLC exceeds the budgeted amount by $13,920. CyRide proposes delaying the Cooling Tower Loop project to address the shortfall, which has $50,000 programmed in the current capital plan. These funds would be reallocated to support the mobile column hoist purchase.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve award of contract for six mobile column hoists to Midwest Lift Works LLC of Jordan, Minnesota, for a total cost of $88,920.

2. Direct staff to proceed according to Transit Board priorities.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Transit Director recommends approval of Alternative #1, to award a contract to Midwest Lift Works LLC for a total cost of $88,920. These hoists are used daily in the Maintenance Division and provide essential flexibility for lifting and workspace configuration. Increasing the number of mobile column hoists will improve repair timing and enhance the department's ability to maintain CyRide's fleet.

Event Number	2025-149	**Organization**	City of Ames Purchasing
Event Title	Mobile Column Lifts	**Workgroup**	Purchasing
Event Description	Requesting Quote for Six (6) mobile column lifts	**Event Owner**	Quinn Eggink
Event Type	RFQ	**Email**	quinn.eggink@cityofames.org
Issue Date	3/27/2025 03:54:37 PM (CT)	**Phone**	(515) 239-5128
Close Date	4/11/2025 02:00:00 PM (CT)	**Fax**	

Responding Supplier	City	State	Response Submitted	Lines Responded	Response Total
Liftnow Automotive Equipment Corp	Yorktown Heights	NY	4/10/2025 11:11:37 AM (CT)	2	$69,906.00
D&E Equipment Solutions Inc.	BRONSON	IA	4/10/2025 04:05:00 PM (CT)	2	$70,672.86
Rack' M Up Equipment Distributors (Energicity Corp)	Wooddale	IL	4/10/2025 01:49:18 PM (CT)	2	$72,960.00
ARI-Hetra (ARI Phoenix, Inc.)	Sharonville	OH	4/11/2025 10:37:22 AM (CT)	2	$75,089.62
Pump and Meter Service	Hopkins	MN	4/11/2025 09:49:00 AM (CT)	2	$87,639.10
Midwest Lift Works llc	Jordan	MN	4/9/2025 09:28:13 AM (CT)	2	$88,920.00
Automotive Lift Services (Ragsdale LLC)	Ames	IA	4/10/2025 02:43:11 PM (CT)	2	$91,455.54
Mohawk Lifts LLC	Amsterdam	NY	4/1/2025 10:12:15 AM (CT)	2	$103,907.34
BENDPAK INC	AGOURA HILLS	CA	3/28/2025 06:11:37 PM (CT)	2	$165,770.00

Please note: Lines Responded and Response Total only includes responses to specification. No alternate response data is included.

April 17, 2025
State Grant and Public Transit Infrastructure Grant (PTIG) Applications
CyRide Resource: Shari Atwood

BACKGROUND:

CyRide annually submits grant applications to the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) to support operating and capital needs for the transit system. The following summarizes the proposed applications to be submitted by May 1, 2025, for funding during the FY 2026 budget year, subject to Transit Board approval.

OPERATING	Funding Type	State / Fed	Total	State / Federal	Local
State Transit Assistance[1]	STA		$1,131,803	$1,131,803	$0
Dial-A-Ride - ADA Service Contract with HIRTA	5310	80%	$331,250	$265,000	$66,250
Assistance for Vehicle Annunciator Annual Service Fees	5310	80%	$132,980	$106,384	$26,596
Subtotal Operating			**$1,596,033**	**$1,503,187**	**$92,846**

CAPITAL	Funding Type	State / Fed	Total	State / Federal	Local
Signage (Infotainment) in Buses for Annunciators	5310	80%	$114,711	$91,769	$22,942
Bus Stop Shelters	5310	80%	$80,000	$64,000	$16,000
8 - 40' Heavy-duty Replacement Diesel Buses	5339	85%	$5,696,000	$4,841,600	$854,400
Steam Clean Bay Articulated In-Ground Bus Hoists	PTIG	80%	$750,000	$600,000	$150,000
Subtotal Capital			**$6,640,711**	**$5,597,369**	**$1,043,342**

Total State Grant Application			**$8,236,744**	**$7,100,556**	**$1,136,188**

State Transit Assistance (STA)*:* The State Transit Assistance (STA) funding of $1,131,803 is assured funding with no local match requirement. This formula funding is provided by approximately $19.3 million in vehicle registration fees and is available to all transit systems in the state. CyRide's FY 2026 budget estimated $1,000,000 in revenues from this source because this figure can fluctuate throughout the year based on car sales.

[1] Estimate based on approximately 5.85% of available STA funding for fixed route operations.

Elderly and Disabled Section 5310 Funding*:* CyRide will receive $527,153 in Section 5310 federal funding. Approximately half of this amount will support Dial-A-Ride services, with the remainder allocated to bus shelters, infotainment bus signage, and annual service fees to support the vehicle location and annunciator systems. Overall, the Section 5310 funding is projected to increase by approximately 10% over the previous allocation of $477,670 due to higher formula funding levels made available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

The requests for Section 5310 funding are as follows:

- **Dial-A-Ride**: This funding will support CyRide's ADA service contract with HIRTA for FY 2026 as a traditional project for Section 5310 funding. Expenses for the first six months of FY 2025 for Dial-A-Ride have averaged approximately $24,375 per month. Therefore, CyRide recommends requesting the full amount of CyRide's Dial-A-Ride budget for FY 2026 to $331,250 ($265,000 federal) to accommodate this ridership level for this program.

- **Automatic Vehicle Locator/Automatic Vehicle Annunciator (AVL/AVA) Annual Service Fees**: CyRide will continue to request annual automatic vehicle location, automatic bus stop annunciator, and automatic passenger counter maintenance fees under preventative maintenance for Section 5310 funding. The overall costs for these service fees are currently in the operating budget at $125,000 per year, which will instead be supported with 80% federal funding through Section 5310. CyRide estimates the costs for this preventative maintenance will rise in 2026 to $132,980 total ($106,384 federal) and has increased the grant request to reflect that.

- **Signage Added to Bus Interiors (Infotainment) Displaying Arrival Predictions**: More prominent signage will be added to some buses to provide a visual display of approaching stops, combined with the existing automatic voice annunciators. This will help passengers who are new to the system and assist with accessibility and ease of access. The equipment will also enable periodic advertising on equipped buses. CyRide requested $98,661 ($78,929 federal) in the 2024 state grant application. CyRide recommends requesting an infotainment budget of $114,711 ($91,769 federal); this will allow us to equip approximately 15 more buses and is currently programmed into the FY 2026 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

- **Bus Stop Amenities (Concrete & Shelters):** CyRide will add two additional bus shelters in FY 2026, selected from the following location depending on approval from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process:

    - Lincoln Way/Elm Ave #5521: Fitch Family Aquatic Center #1 Red (shelter)
    - Petco/SE 5th #6591: #3 Blue (shelter and concrete)
    - Target #6601: #3 Blue (concrete to improve ADA access)
    - Welch/Turnaround at Towers #8860: #6 Brown & #25 Gold (shelter)
    - Lincoln Way/Lynn Ave #2020: #1 Red (shelter)

The two locations requiring concrete work will likely need additional analysis during the NEPA process for approval. As a result, Lincoln Way/Elm Avenue, the Welch Turnaround, or Lincoln Way/Lynn Avenue locations may be approved more quickly for formal grant submission at the state level. Bus stop improvements are considered a non-traditional project, as they enhance accessibility to the fixed-route system and align with CyRide's Bus Stop and Shelter Design plan. The CIP has $80,000 programmed for bus shelter improvements for FY 2026.

Section 5339 or Public Transit Management System (PTMS)/ICAAP Funding: Section 5339 funding for eight 40' heavy-duty buses is only partially included in the CIP, as funding received from the State of Iowa for bus replacements is competitively awarded. CyRide will be notified if its buses are selected for replacement at the end of FY 2026. Buses can be federally funded at 80% (ICAAP) or 85% (Section 5339), depending on the funding source. CyRide currently has 31 buses beyond their useful life, with 22 eligible for replacement through this funding source. Based on past awards, requesting the replacement of CyRide's oldest and most heavily used buses is expected to result in funding for approximately four buses in FY 2026.

Significant apportionment increases under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) may allow the Iowa DOT to fund more buses than in previous years; however, future apportionment levels may change depending on federal priorities. Requesting more buses than those included in the CIP does not obligate CyRide to accept additional vehicles. Prior to any buses being purchased, an item would be brought to the Transit Board for consideration detailing the number of vehicles to buy and the local funding to be used in the acquisition. CyRide currently has approximately $3.3 million available in the capital reserve fund for bus replacement projects.

Public Transit Infrastructure Grants (PTIG) Funding: Public Transit Infrastructure Grant (PTIG) projects are competitively selected at the state level. CyRide will be notified of selection decisions during FY 2026, and if awarded, work will begin by the fall of 2026. Typically, public transit receives approximately $1.5 million for PTIG projects statewide, and each transit agency may receive up to 40% of the overall amount allocated by the State of Iowa. PTIG funding is supported by the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF), which comes primarily from gaming revenues.

CyRide is requesting PTIG funding to replace an aging in-ground hoist located in the Steam Cleaning Bay and expand capacity by adding a second hoist in the same area. The existing hoist, installed in 2010, is past its 15-year useful life and cannot accommodate an articulated bus. Articulated buses were added in 2012 to serve the #23 Orange route, which now carries 1.1 million passengers annually. CyRide will reach its goal of 10 articulated buses in its fleet in September 2025. If awarded, this project would fund two new in-ground hoists capable of lifting two 40' buses independently or operating in sync to lift one 60' articulated bus for underbody steam cleaning. Currently, there is no way to clean the undercarriages of articulated buses as the existing in-ground hoist cannot lift them. The portable hoists are not waterproof and cannot be used in the wet environment of the Steam Cleaning Bay.

The Steam Cleaning Bay, located in lane 4, measures approximately 24 by 120 feet (2,880 square feet) and is an integral part of the CyRide facility. It serves as the main route for drivers to access parking in lanes 3 through 7 and exiting the garage for service. Mechanics use this space to power wash dirt, sand, and salt from bus engines before beginning repairs. The existing hoist, which has broken down twice in the past year, creates significant operational disruptions when out of service, as buses can become stuck in the air, delaying or halting vehicle circulation, fueling, and service start times.

This project would include the following improvements to lane 4 of the Steam Cleaning Bay.

- Remove the existing hoist, surrounding concrete, and slab
- Prepare new footings and trench drains for two hoist areas, including slab and vapor barrier replacement
- Paint the steam cleaning area
- Purchase and install two new in-ground hoists capable of independent or synchronized operation to lift both 40' and 60' buses
- Add plumbing and electrical work, including LED lighting for the second hoist area

If funding allows, additional improvements may include:

- Raising the HVAC ductwork in the bay
- Replacing the sand/oil interceptor and adding a remote monitor
- Replacing the curtainwall of windows and performing exterior work to improve natural lighting

CyRide's FY 2026 CIP currently includes $750,000 total ($600,000 federal; $150,000 local) PTIG funding for Phase 2 of the Fire Suppression System project. However, due to the operational needs related to articulated bus maintenance and the uncertainty of costs for Phase 1 of the Fire Suppression System project, which has not yet been bid, CyRide is prioritizing the hoist project for this year's PTIG application.

A public hearing will be held on Monday, April 28, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. to discuss this application with the community. Since the grant is due on May 1, 2025, CyRide is bringing this to the Transit Board for approval in April and will follow up in May with any written or oral comments from the public that may impact these projects.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the FY 2026 State Grant and Public Transit Infrastructure Grant (PTIG) applications as presented.

2. Modify the FY 2026 State Grant Application based on Transit Board priorities.

3. Reject the grant application and do not submit a state funding request for FY 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Transit Director recommends approval of Alternative #1, to submit operating and capital grant applications to the Iowa DOT. These applications support transit services in the Ames community and lower the overall local commitment to identified projects.

April 17, 2025
Monthly Report
CyRide Resource: Barbara Neal

1. Bus Shelter Digital Displays

Over the summer months, CyRide plans to retrofit additional bus shelters on campus with digital displays showing live bus prediction information. These new screens will be similar to those installed at the Upper Friley and Student Services bus stops. Passenger feedback on these displays has been very positive, and CyRide looks forward to expanding this amenity to additional locations where electrical power is available to support the technology, working in coordination with the Iowa State University facilities department.

2. International Bus Roadeo

On Sunday, April 6, CyRide driver Brian Grootveld represented Ames and Iowa at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) International Bus Roadeo in Austin, TX. Brian earned this opportunity by placing first at the Iowa Public Transportation Association (IPTA) Bus Roadeo in June 2024. The competition showcased operating skills in driving, safety, and precision maneuvers. We are proud of Brian's accomplishments and his recognition on the national level.

3. APTA Mobility Conference

From April 6 through April 8, Chris Crippen and I attended APTA's Mobility Conference in Austin, TX. This annual event brings together transit professionals to discuss evolving topics in bus and paratransit operations, including service planning, scheduling, workforce development, and the use of artificial intelligence in transit applications. The conference also featured a large vendor showcase, where we connected with existing partners and explored new products and technologies that may support future CyRide initiatives. It was a valuable opportunity to stay current on industry trends and innovations.