

1972-2022

CAMBUS

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS
OF STUDENT-LED SERVICE



IOWA

Experiments Begin Monday

marks the inaugura- University of Iowa service free to stu- dency and staff, and t- uent rush hour serv- municipal transit line. Programs are experi- will continue through

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The increased frequency of city bus service is in the

Bus system 'better than anticipated' Survey shows shuttle eases campus traffic

By LEWIS D'VORKIN Daily Iowan Staff Writer (Editor's Note: This is the first of two articles about the success and future of the new campus shuttle bus system.)

Five hundred fewer cars drive into the University of Iowa central campus each day since the beginning of the operation of the new UI shuttle bus system, now named "Cambus."

According to the results of an on-board survey of the bus system, 31 percent of the drivers are now

Hancher Auditorium lot rather than nearer the center of campus.

The survey, released this week, was undertaken to evaluate the performance of the new bus system, and, according to Robert P. Schmitt, chairman of the Student Bus Committee, shows the present bus system has proved to be "more effective than anticipated."

Conducted March 7 and 8, the survey reports that one of out 10 people using the bus system no longer drive an automobile to longer drive an automobile to

ports fairly well the initial objectives of the bus system. It is not only providing a service to those without cars but it is also getting people out of cars and getting cars off the campus."

The survey shows that if a campus bus system was not in existence, the majority of Cambus riders would be walking. However, there would be approximately 1,000 additional automobile trips to the campus per week if the system stopped operating.

Even though apartment and private home residents do not make up the bulk of Cambus

categories provide "the shift away from the use of autos on the central campus," according to the report.

Although some riders of Cambus park their automobiles in The Hancher lot, the report states that there is no "tendency for these less university and more st

Meter income receipts during the period Jan. 26 through March 13, 1971, were approximately \$50,000. Meter income during the same period in 1972, with the bus system in operation, was approximately \$45,000.

The survey also shows that

shuttle bus system. Students account for 80 percent of the riders and a typical freshman and upper resident. Upper use Cambus extensively. An excellent



Experimental Plan Begins Jan. 24 - University To Start Shuttle

University of Iowa students, and staff will be able to use the shuttle bus system to and from many points on the campus at no charge

under a proposed shuttle bus system outlined Monday at the City Council's informal work session.

John D. Dooley, director of UI traffic and parking operations, said the experimental plan will start Jan. 24 and continue to the end of the spring semester in May. He said the start of the system is contingent on financial support from student government groups and approval from the city to operate buses on city streets around the campus. Students will drive the buses.

A feature of the program outlined by Dooley is the availability of free parking at the Hancher Auditorium lot for university-connected drivers who live more than two miles from campus. They could park free and take a shuttle bus to jobs and classes.

Six buses, to be leased from an Ottumwa firm, will be used, Dooley said, with three going in each direction around a cir-

cuit through both the east and west campuses, including all residence halls. Cost of the pilot program is estimated at \$42,900 and is to be staffed by students. The Associated Residence Halls and the Student Senate will be asked to provide a total of \$7,000 of the cost, another \$13,000 will come from federal work-study funds paid as wages to student employees, and the remainder will come from university funds, Dooley explained.

Dooley said that if the experimental system is successful, he would approach students and the UI administration with a proposal for a permanent system.

The frequency of service is expected to be from four to eight minutes from one direction or the other. Buses would operate Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

"The purpose of this experiment is to see what effect it will have on travel patterns, particularly with respect to possibly reducing the amount of vehicle traffic through the campus," said Dooley.

Only university-connected riders may use the system. Students will use identification cards and faculty and staff will use staff ID cards for entry to shuttle buses.

The pilot program will be a two-way shuttle bus system on North Clinton Street to the Hancher Auditorium, Park Road, Riverside Drive, up Hospital Avenue, then along General Hospital Avenue and across the street bridge on Madison Street back to Clinton Street. The cost of the pilot program is estimated at \$42,900.

Following the City Council's approval, the City of Iowa will provide a "detailed plan" for the bus routes and staff.

"Tripper" will be used for the bus routes.

Despite the approval of the bus system, the City of Iowa will provide a "detailed plan" for the bus routes and staff.

He added that the fee next year will be new buses per student.

The method of funding the system is unlikely, He added that the fee next year will be new buses per student.

If the City of Iowa were to operate a shuttle bus system, the fee next year will be new buses per student.

Cambus shuttle
Bus system gets a name

"Cambus Shuttle" is the new name for the University of Iowa's shuttle bus system. Rodney D. Spedel, 334 Hawkeye Court, won two free pizzas in the contest sponsored by the committee, didn't know when the insignia would be put on the buses.

"We can't make any definite plans to put the emblem on the buses until we find out if the bus system will be permanent," he said.

Future of system depends on

By LEWIS D'VORKIN Daily Iowan Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This is a second article on the future of the new campus shuttle bus system.

If the University of Iowa shuttle bus system, Cambus, is to operate next fall, students will have to pay for the system through an additional student fee, according to a Student Bus Committee (SBC) recommendation.

The recommendation, which has yet to be approved by the UI administration and the student body, does not require faculty and staff members to finance the system, Robert P. Schmitt, chairman of SBC said.

An SBC recommendation to partially fund Cambus with student fees will be presented to university officials at an SBC

meeting Monday, Schmitt said. With the added student fee to help cover the cost of operating Cambus, both students and faculty will be able to use the system free.

If the recommendation is adopted by university transportation officials, SBC will submit it to Student Senate for approval and ask that a student referendum be held before the end of the semester.

If students approve the referendum to fund Cambus with student fees it will be forwarded to the administration for final approval. However, if the referendum is defeated, Schmitt said there will be no bus system next year.

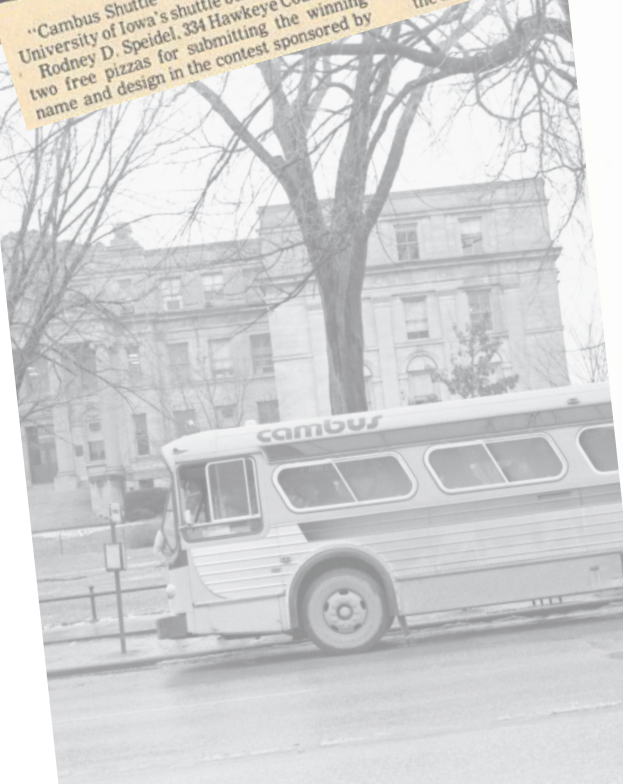
Although the committee is depending on student financial support to keep Cambus in operation, it is not going to ask UI faculty and staff to pay part of the bus system's operating costs, Schmitt said.

members because the fee has no control over the administration and Faculty Senate."

Attending the meeting Monday will be members of SBC, John D. Dooley, director of traffic and parking, Robert E. Engle, assistant to the president, Ray B. Mossman, bus manager-treasurer, and Richard E. Gibson, director of facilities.

"No major alternative method of funding the system is available," Schmitt said. "If students vote in favor of supporting Cambus with student fees, the system will continue indefinitely."

Although proposed student fees of \$8, \$10 and \$12 were discussed at the last SBC meeting, the final recommendation will be made Monday with university officials.





AN IDEA. AN EXPERIMENT. AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY BY UI STUDENTS

In the spring of 1971, a group of University of Iowa students began operating a small shuttle bus system between the west residence halls and the Pentacrest. The system was supported by the Associated Residence Halls and led by Tippie College of Business student Doug Couto. The ARH shuttle operated for just one semester before exhausting funds.

In fall 1971, the Student Senate-ARH Bus Committee was formed. Supported by UI President Sandy Boyd, the committee traveled to Kent State to benchmark their on-campus bus system.

In spring 1972, the campus bus experiment launched with \$43,000 in funding from the Student Senate and ARH, Federal Work Study, and UI Treasury. The system was designed to improve student access across the Iowa River and reduce personal vehicle travel and parking on campus. As part of the launch of the service, the university offered free parking at the Hancher Parking Lot, where shuttles would pick up riders to take into campus. The experimental bus system operated from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays, had six rented buses and employed 35 students.

The bus service was considered a huge success. Over 500,000 rides were provided in the 1972 spring semester. With free parking and bus access, an estimated 500 fewer personal vehicles were brought into campus each day. After a student naming contest, with a grand prize of a pizza and one semester of free rides, the name “CAMBUS” was chosen.

For the 1972-1973 academic year, the Student Senate reallocated student activity funds to help pay for CAMBUS service. The service provided over 1.1 million rides that year. With support from the university and government transit funding, CAMBUS has continued to grow into a transit system that employs 160 UI students and provides up to 4 million rides annually on 14 routes. CAMBUS has become an important piece of campus mobility and access for UI students, faculty, staff, and visitors. And it continues to be student-led and operated to this day.

***“The library is the head of the University,
the Old Capitol is the heart of the University,
but it is Cambus that holds us together.”***

- UI President Sandy Boyd

Correspondence to Dave Ricketts and Scott Giles, 1981



165 million+
rides provided
since 1972

Millions of rides. Millions of moments made easier with CAMBUS.
For 50 years, CAMBUS has been called upon to support the university's missions in academics, research, athletics, and more. CAMBUS connects campus across a river, expansive recreation fields, and to the research park campus. CAMBUS also serves an important role in making campus accessible - with all buses being ADA accessible since 1996.

TYPES OF SERVICE



FIXED-ROUTE

CAMBUS started with six buses on three fixed-routes in 1972. Today, CAMBUS has a fleet of 34 transit vehicles and 14 fixed-routes.



BIONIC BUS

CAMBUS took over operations of the university's transit service for students with disabilities in 1974.



SPECIAL SERVICES

CAMBUS operates special services to support various on-campus events, including athletics, new student orientation, meetings and conferences.



ON-DEMAND

CAMBUS began operating On-Demand service in spring 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. It became an official component of CAMBUS service over the next year.

CAMBUS TODAY

RIDES

3.7 million
average annual ridership

18,300
average daily rides,
academic weekdays

76,000
average annual rides for
university special events

8,900
average annual rides
Bionic Bus

SERVICE

747,000
average annual
service miles

82,000
average annual
service hours

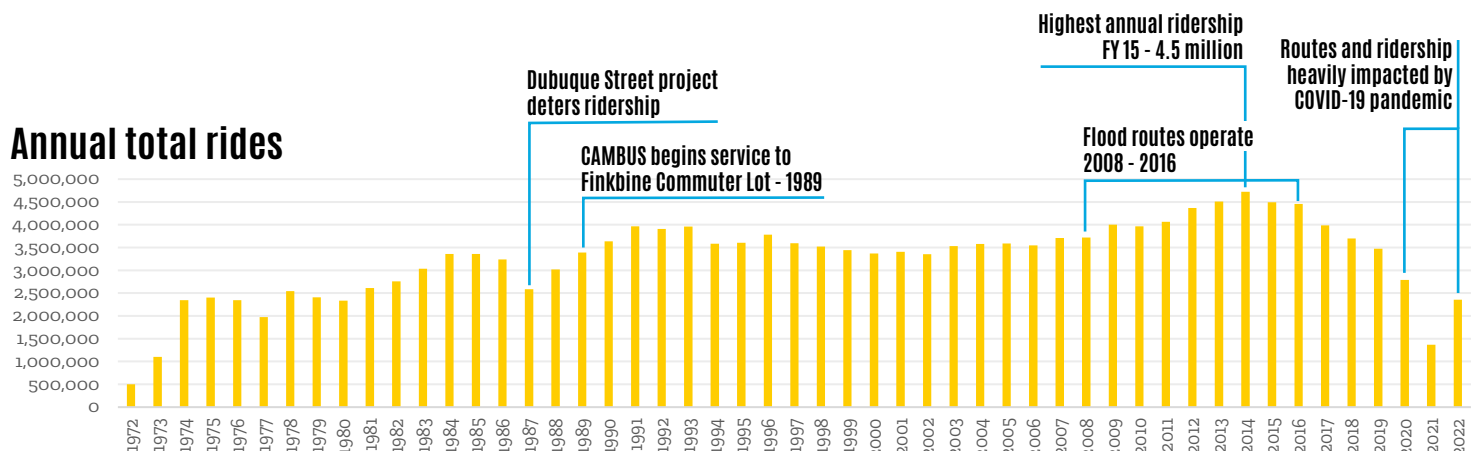
STUDENTS

160
student employees

130,000
average annual
student labor hours

DYK? The average student CAMBUS driver drives a bus over 2,500 miles each fall and spring semester.

Average figures represent 2017-2019, prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.





STARTED BY STUDENTS IN 1972

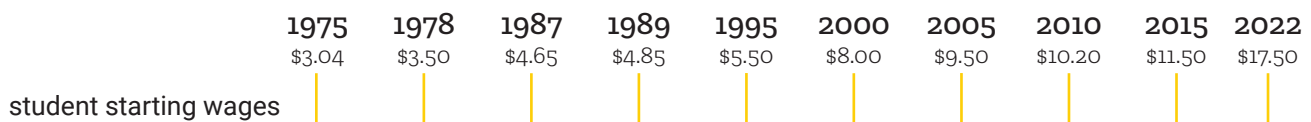
STILL STUDENT OPERATED TODAY

Many things have changed in CAMBUS' 50-year history, but one thing has not - the transit system is operated and supervised by university students. In 1972, CAMBUS announced that the "bus experiment" would provide over 35 student jobs. Today, CAMBUS is proud to provide 160 student jobs that pay well, are accommodating to student schedules, create community and belonging for employees, and offers meaningful real-world job experience student will take with them in their future endeavors.

Growing from 35 student employees to 160 has come with challenges. System expansion has led to more drivers over the years, and their responsibilities have grown as well. Since 1992, drivers have been required to have a Commercial Driver's License. Driving has become more challenging as the campus and the community have developed into a dense urban environment. Over the years, the question has been asked, "wouldn't it make sense to hire full-time drivers?"

Remaining student-operated has been a conscious decision by the university and CAMBUS. The student employee relationship is mutually beneficial to the university and students. CAMBUS provides student jobs with an experience like no other, and fees that students pay for the university to operate the transit system go right back into student wages.

The student-operated concept also keeps the system ever-evolving. Over 60 students are hired and trained at CAMBUS each year. Each student brings new ideas and concepts directly from their classes and studies and explores them in a real-world application at CAMBUS. Student employees at CAMBUS have developed databases, CDL training content, and programs that rival that of what is found at other public transit systems. Sometimes it's hard to determine who has benefited more from the student employee relationship - the students, CAMBUS, or the university. We'll just say that we've all come out on top.



160

student positions today, including drivers, support, and supervisors

3,000+

students employed by CAMBUS since 1972

10

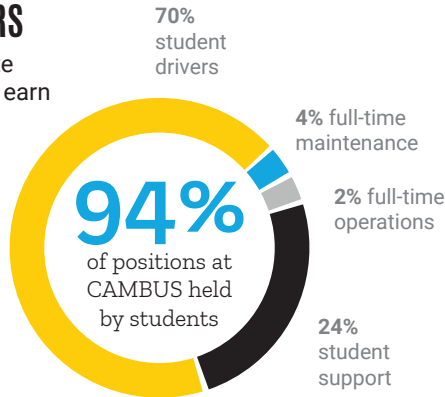
CAMBUS scholarships awarded to student employees in 2022 at \$1,000 each

THE MANY ROLES OF CAMBUS STUDENT EMPLOYEES

Every position at CAMBUS provides UI students with professional development that will serve them beyond their time at the university.

FIXED-ROUTE AND BIONIC DRIVERS

All student employees start as fixed-route drivers. During the training process, they earn a Class B Commercial Driver's License with Passenger Endorsement and Airbrake Restriction removed. After four months of a satisfactory work and safety record, drivers may apply to drive for Bionic paratransit services.



PROMOTED POSITIONS

For 50 years, students have supervised the day-to-day operations of the transit operations by advancing into "support roles". Student support roles closely resemble those of full-time professionals in the field, particularly the five student supervisors.

Level 2 positions

- Administrative assistant
- Maintenance assistant
- Dispatcher
- Trainer

Level 3 positions

- Dispatch and bionic supervisor
- Training and safety supervisor
- Maintenance supervisor
- Scheduling supervisor
- Personnel supervisor

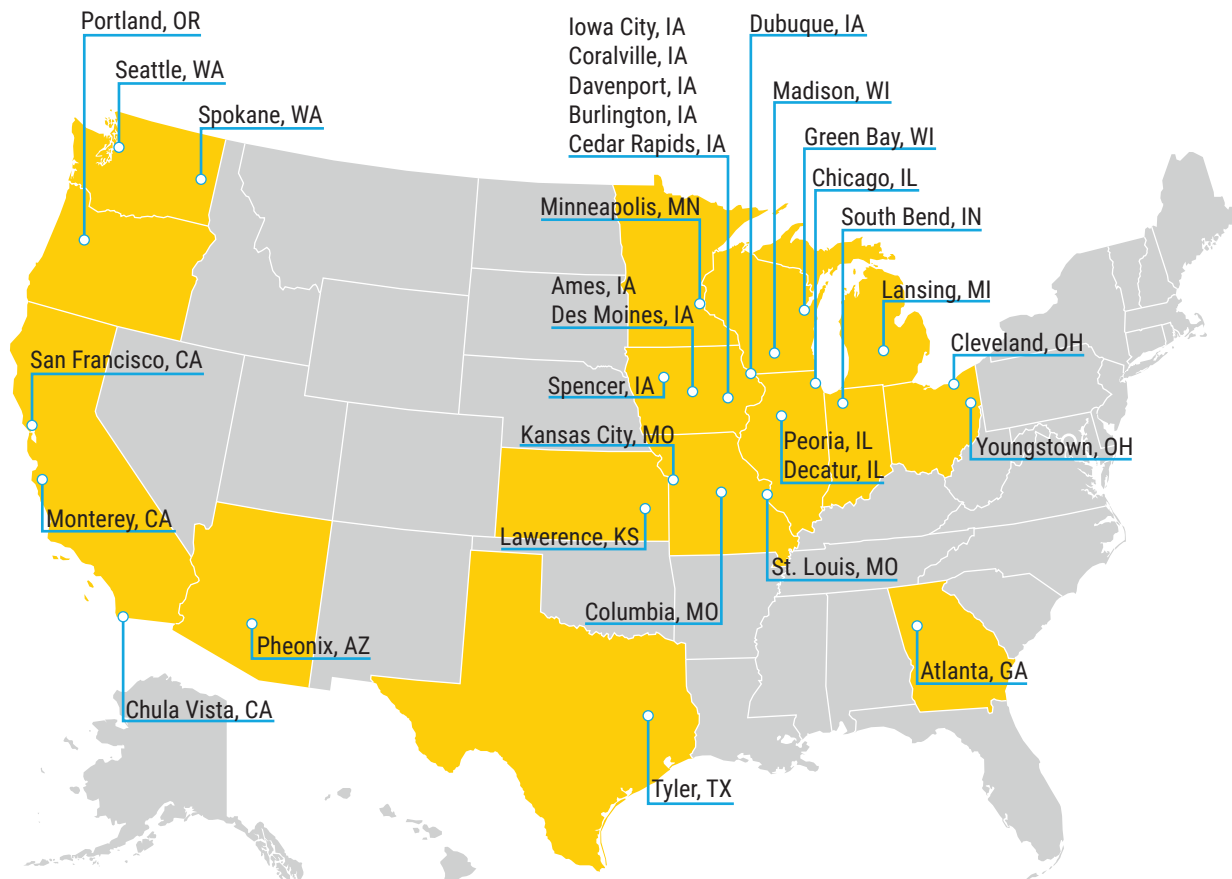
DEVELOPING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

More than driving a bus. Working at CAMBUS equips student employees with a variety of skills that will serve them in their academics and future careers.



Hawkeyes shaping public transportation across the country

Communities across the country have benefitted from CAMBUS employees who chose to pursue careers in public transportation and city planning after learning more about the industry in their student job.



BIONIC BUS

BEFORE IT WAS BIONIC OR CAMBUS

The beginning

The university service to provide transportation services to students with disabilities began in November 1975 outside of CAMBUS. The service used a station wagon rented from UI Motor Pool (today, Fleet Services) and staffed by student volunteers from various student organizations. At the time, the service primarily served university students for travel to and from classes, doctor's appointments, meetings with advisors, and part-time jobs. Students paid a monthly fee to use the service.

In the 70s, fees for using the Bionic Bus varied and were sometimes optional. Since the late 70s, the service has been fare-free.

Learning as we go

While the service was well-intentioned, the reliability of the service was an issue, due in part to the voluntary nature of those who staffed the service. In December 1975, a grant was awarded to the service by the Johnson County Board of Supervisors. The grant money was to be used to secure a full-time, salaried employee to operate the service and improve the efficiency and reliability of the service.

In January 1976, the service attempted to use a fixed-route model to improve reliability. By March 1976, it was apparent that a fixed-route model was not the answer and the service changed to a demand-response model. The demand-response model proved to better meet the needs of the student riders and improve the efficiency of the system.

System growth

The 1976-1977 academic year saw rapid growth of the service and it became evident that the one station wagon would not continue to meet the needs of the student riders.

12,134
record ridership year for Bionic
1993

Federal assistance

In February 1977, the service was awarded a federal grant to purchase an accessible mini-bus and hire additional drivers for the service. The new mini-bus was put into service in June 1977 and increased the efficiency of the system due to its larger capacity. The vehicle was able to carry six ambulatory riders and six

wheelchairs. Though the service was not under CAMBUS at the time, all maintenance, fuel, and oil costs associated with the mini-bus were provided through CAMBUS.

In September 1977, the grant program was terminated due to restructuring at the federal level. The university picked up the costs of operating the service, including driver wages, through the fall 1977 semester.

Restructuring

In January 1978, a reorganization took place to keep the service functioning. One of the original drivers was maintained to supervise the system and seven part-time drivers were hired.

CAMBUS

In 1978, the service was officially moved under the umbrella of CAMBUS and was named "Bionic Bus" by the riders.

The name "Bionic Bus" drew from the popular 1970s TV shows "The Bionic Woman" and "The Six Million Dollar Man".



Bionic bus as seen in the UI 1990 yearbook

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law in 1990. It is a civil rights law to prevent discrimination of people with disabilities in public settings and among services that are publicly funded - such as public transportation.

The ADA law required public transit agencies to accommodate people with disabilities on their services - meaning vehicles and drivers had to be equipped

to help people with disabilities. It also required that transit agencies that could not accommodate riders on fixed-route services provide complementary paratransit service.

Bionic Bus operates under all ADA requirements and CAMBUS is proud to have been offering the service since the 1970's, long before it was required by law.

DYK?

Former U.S. Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa authored and sponsored the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

320,000+
rides provided on
Bionic Bus
since 1990

BIONIC BUS FLEET AND SERVICE

While they were wheelchair accessible, Bionic Buses 1 - 7 all used lifts at the rear of the vehicle. Buses 8 and 9 were both low-floor and featured ramps at the front and rear of the vehicle. The ramps and their locations made the buses more efficient and flexible in delivering Bionic Bus services.

Though they offer convenience and flexibility, low-floor mini-buses are the exception. Most mini-buses today still use lifts, which are more prone to mechanical failure and take longer to board and alight riders. CAMBUS has prioritized using low-floor, ramp-equipped mini-buses on Bionic Bus services for their convenience, flexibility, and efficiency.



Bus #'s	Model Year	Make	Bought New/Used	Purchase price (each)
Bionic I	1976	Ford Collins ¹	New	Unknown
Bionic II	1980	Thomas Mini-Bus	New	\$26,023
Bionic III	1982	Ward Mini-Bus	New	\$30,029
Bionic IV	1987	Bluebird Mini-Bus	New	\$55,298
Bionic V	1987	Ford El Dorado	Used	\$2,200
6-7	1993	Champion CTS	New	\$64,159
8-9	1998	Orion II ²	New	\$196,335
10	1998	Orion II ³	Used	\$61,934
11	2006	Optima Opus	New	\$249,929
12-13	2000	Orion II ⁴	Used	\$3,000
14-16	2013	Gillig Low-Floor ⁵	New	\$378,975
17	2020	New England Wheels Front Runner	New	\$125,172

¹ First Bionic Bus ² First low-floor Bionic Bus ³ From Dubuque
⁴ From Center Point ⁵ Used on fixed-route and Bionic

DYK?

Bionic riders must meet certain ADA requirements and be certified to use the service.

Bionic Bus provides rides for eligible riders to and from grocery stores, entertainment venues, healthcare appointments, social activities and more - in addition to class and work.

Through required to provide rides similar to where fixed-route operates, Bionic goes above-and-beyond minimum federal requirements to provide rides throughout Iowa City and Coralville.

Fiscal Year 2022

5,193

Rides provided on Bionic Bus service

29%

of rides accommodated a person using a wheelchair or scooter

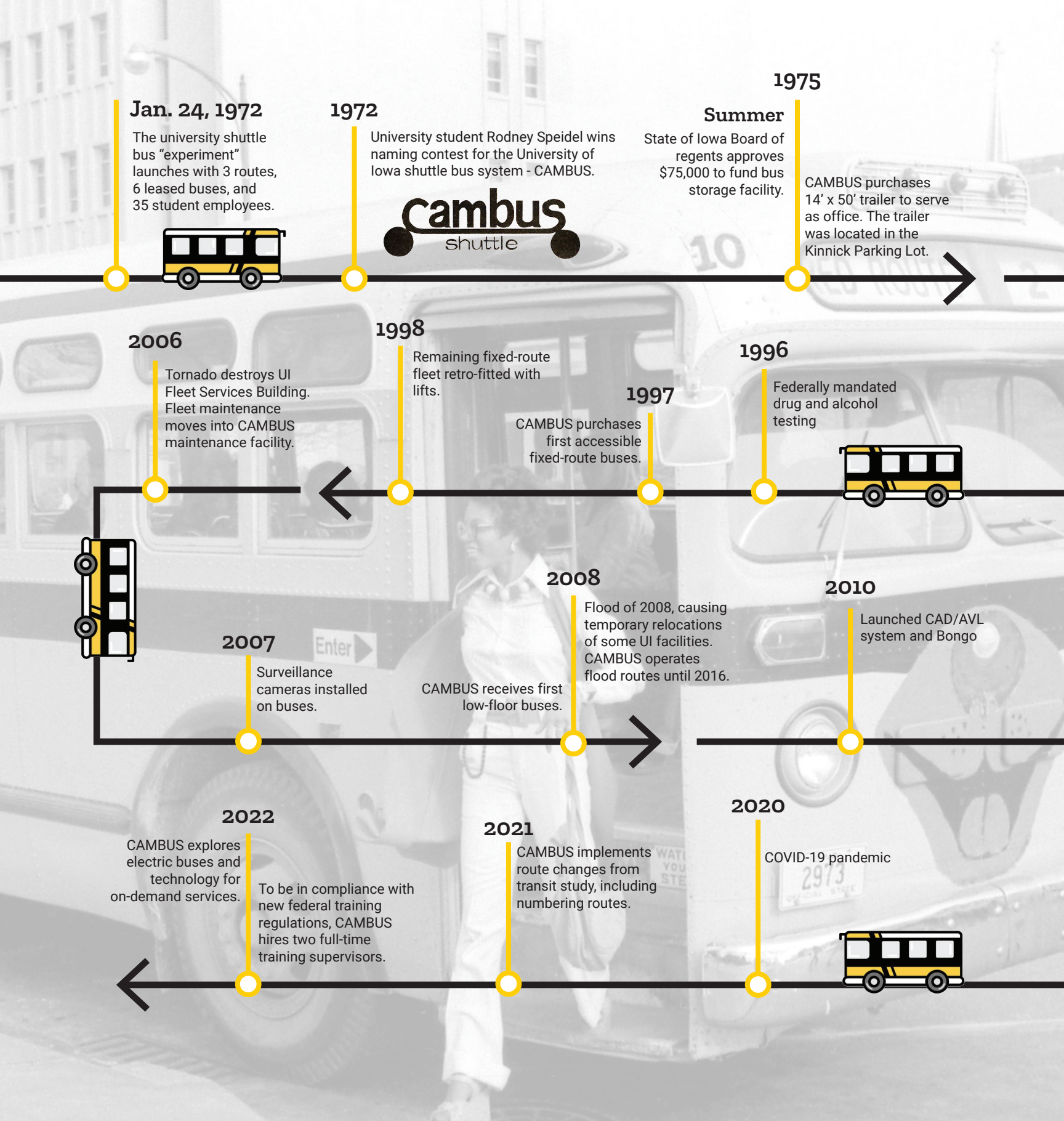
Rain or shine, day into late evenings, Bionic served 94 riders in 2022

57
faculty/ staff

37
students



22,425
miles of service driven - that's 90% of the way around the Earth!



Jan. 24, 1972

The university shuttle bus "experiment" launches with 3 routes, 6 leased buses, and 35 student employees.



1972

University student Rodney Speidel wins naming contest for the University of Iowa shuttle bus system - CAMBUS.



1975

Summer

State of Iowa Board of regents approves \$75,000 to fund bus storage facility.

CAMBUS purchases 14' x 50' trailer to serve as office. The trailer was located in the Kinnick Parking Lot.

2006

Tornado destroys UI Fleet Services Building. Fleet maintenance moves into CAMBUS maintenance facility.

1998

Remaining fixed-route fleet retro-fitted with lifts.

1996

Federally mandated drug and alcohol testing

1997

CAMBUS purchases first accessible fixed-route buses.



2008

Flood of 2008, causing temporary relocations of some UI facilities. CAMBUS operates flood routes until 2016.

2010

Launched CAD/AVL system and Bongo

2007

Surveillance cameras installed on buses.

CAMBUS receives first low-floor buses.

2022

CAMBUS explores electric buses and technology for on-demand services.

To be in compliance with new federal training regulations, CAMBUS hires two full-time training supervisors.

2021

CAMBUS implements route changes from transit study, including numbering routes.

2020

COVID-19 pandemic



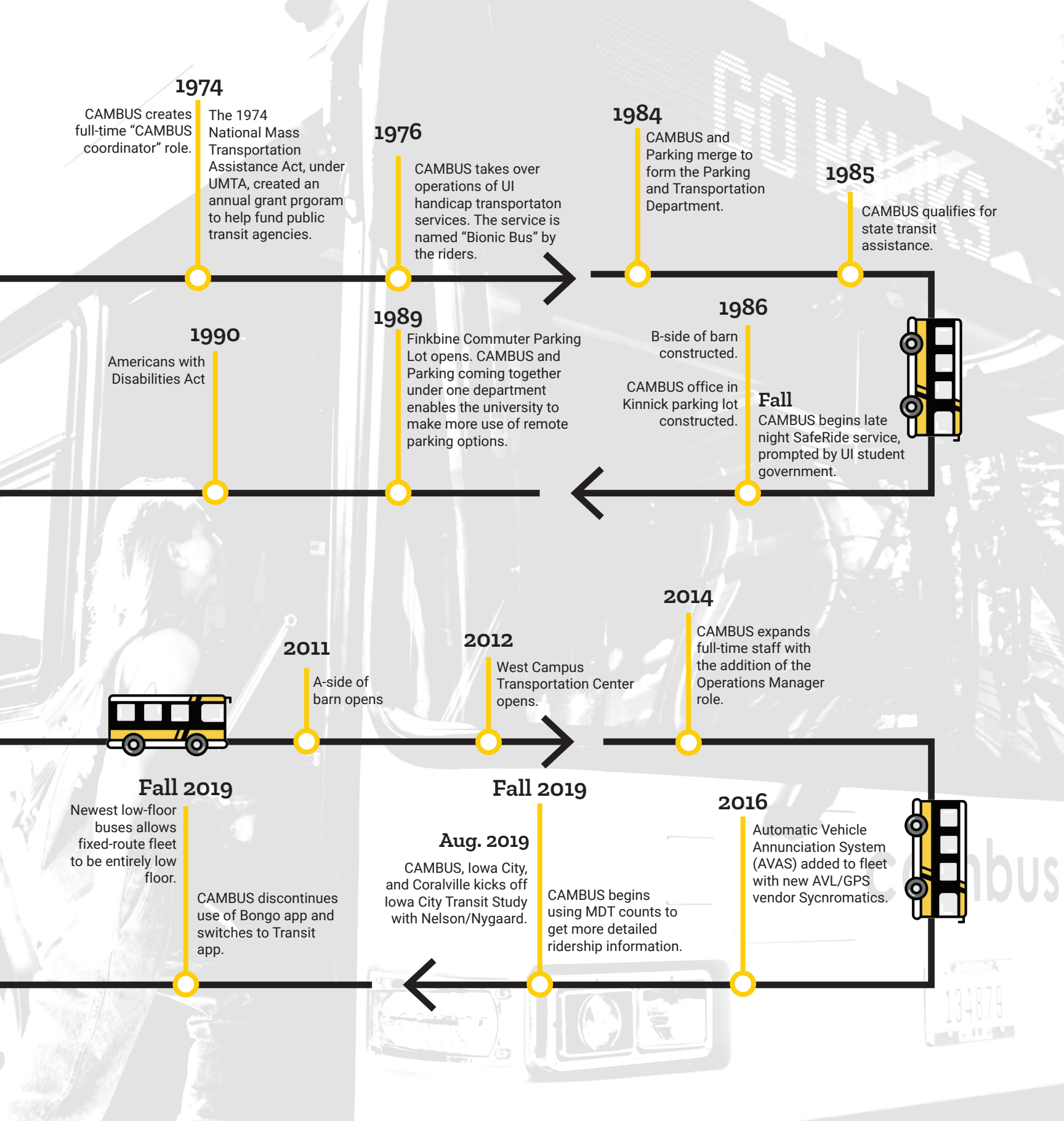
2006 Tornado

On April 13, 2006, an F2 tornado touched down in Iowa City causing widespread damages, including to the CAMBUS Maintenance Facility and the UI Motor Pool (today, Fleet Services) facility. Since then, fleet services maintenance operations have been based out of the CAMBUS Maintenance Facility. Combining CAMBUS maintenance and

fleet maintenance into one building allowed for the current technician configuration, which includes 3 full-time CAMBUS technicians, and 2 technicians that work part-time for fleet services, and part-time with CAMBUS. Cross training maintenance technicians has allowed for flexibility within the operations.

2008 Flood

The 2008 flood caused extensive damage to UI buildings along the river, including the Iowa Memorial Union and buildings used for arts and theatre programs. Academic programs impacted were relocated to other temporary locations until buildings were restored or rebuilt. CAMBUS service was essential to connecting students to these temporary sites in downtown Iowa City and along Highway 1 through 2016.



1974

CAMBUS creates full-time "CAMBUS coordinator" role.

The 1974 National Mass Transportation Assistance Act, under UMTA, created an annual grant program to help fund public transit agencies.

1976

CAMBUS takes over operations of UI handicap transportation services. The service is named "Bionic Bus" by the riders.

1984

CAMBUS and Parking merge to form the Parking and Transportation Department.

1985

CAMBUS qualifies for state transit assistance.

1990

Americans with Disabilities Act

1989

Finkbine Commuter Parking Lot opens. CAMBUS and Parking coming together under one department enables the university to make more use of remote parking options.

1986

B-side of barn constructed.
CAMBUS office in Kinnick parking lot constructed.

Fall

CAMBUS begins late night SafeRide service, prompted by UI student government.

2014

CAMBUS expands full-time staff with the addition of the Operations Manager role.

2011

A-side of barn opens

2012

West Campus Transportation Center opens.

Fall 2019

Newest low-floor buses allows fixed-route fleet to be entirely low floor.

CAMBUS discontinues use of Bongo app and switches to Transit app.

Fall 2019

Aug. 2019

CAMBUS, Iowa City, and Coralville kicks off Iowa City Transit Study with Nelson/Nygaard.

CAMBUS begins using MDT counts to get more detailed ridership information.

2016

Automatic Vehicle Announcement System (AVAS) added to fleet with new AVL/GPS vendor Synchromatics.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In March 2020, COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization. In the coming weeks, the university responded by sending many employees home to work remotely, and moving all classes to a virtual format. CAMBUS student employees were among the only student employees left on CAMBUS and provided critical transportation services to support university operations, including UI Hospitals and Clinics.

As campus continued to adjust operations over the next two years - including offering hybrid classes, CAMBUS continually adjusted services to meet the needs of the university. CAMBUS also updated cleaning and disinfecting procedures, including the use of UV light disinfecting technology.

CAMBUS FLEET

Federal funding formulas provide grants for up to

80%

of the cost of a new bus

The remaining 20% is paid with CAMBUS funds.



12 YEARS

Useful life of a heavy-duty bus

No. Buses	Bus #'s	Model Year	Make	Bought New/Used	Purchase price (each)	Notes
12	50 - 61	1977	Flxible	New	\$65,000	First new buses purchased
3	15 - 17	1977	Flxible	Used	\$4,500	From Iowa City Transit
2	62 - 63	1982	Neoplan ¹	New	\$144,455	
15	64 - 78	1989	Gillig Phantom	New	\$153,525	First full-size buses.
3	79 - 81	1979	Grumman Flxible	Used	\$12,000	From Rochester
5	82 - 86	1997	Gillig Phantom ²	New	\$226,923	
2	87 - 88	1986	Gillig Phantom	Used	\$13,661	From Austin
5	89 - 93	1989	Gillig Phantom (35 ft.)	Used	\$4,500	From Madison
1	11	2006	Optima Opus (30 ft.)	New	\$249,929	Used on fixed-route and Bionic
12	94 - 105	2008	Gillig Low Floor ³	New	\$320,350	
3	106 - 108	2009	Gillig Low Floor	New	\$326,497	
8	109 - 116	2011	Gillig Low Floor	New	\$364,116	
2	117 - 118	2013	Gillig Low Floor	New	\$394,745	
3	14 - 16	2013	Gillig Low Floor (30 ft.)	New	\$378,975	Used on fixed-route and Bionic
1	119	2018	Gillig Low Floor	New	\$418,510	
3	120 - 122	2019	Gillig Low Floor	New	\$446,154	Allowed fleet to be entirely low-floor.

¹ First with AC and power steering ² First wheelchair accessible fixed-route buses ³ First low-floor, ramp accessible, clean diesel.

CURRENT FLEET

29

40' heavy-duty buses

3

30' heavy-duty buses

2

mini-buses

Fleet Expansion

Over the past 50 years, the CAMBUS fleet has expanded from 6 buses to 34. Increased fleet numbers has allowed CAMBUS to expand service to include Bionic Bus, the Research Park campus, and commuter parking lots.

1975

First year CAMBUS made application to the Urban Mass Transit Administration (now the Federal Transit Administration) to purchase buses with federal funds.





1972: The first fleet

The first fleet of CAMBUS were leased from Ottumwa, Iowa. They were 1954 GM model buses. University of Iowa art students hand painted each bus with a different "face" to add personality to each bus.



1982 NEOPLAN

The Neoplans featured many firsts for the CAMBUS fleet:

- ➔ First with air conditioning and power steering
- ➔ First "new look" buses - with the flat, square front
- ➔ First with a white roof



"MOVE OVER, SMILEY . . . This is my side of the road!" Buses at the University of Iowa in Iowa City are seldom expressionless — clever art students brightened up the drab, ordinary vehicles with a little point and a lot of imagination. Now the delightful works of art add humor to campus life as they shuttle students around.

CATCHING THE NATIONAL EYE

On a spring day in 1975, a call came from the Parking Office. A photographer from the National Enquirer wanted to take a photo of two painted buses. CAMBUS student supervisor Randy Boyd headed down to the garage with another student employee to grab a couple of buses. They staged them on westbound Burlington Street while the photographer set up his shot from the pedestrian bridge between Hillcrest Residence Hall and Boyd Law Building.

In addition to the National Enquirer, the buses with painted faces caught national attention in the 70s with photos appearing in publications in Kalamazoo, Michigan and Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.



GILLIG PHANTOM

After the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, all publicly funded transit vehicles were required to be wheelchair accessible. The 1997 Gillig Phantoms were the first fixed-route vehicles CAMBUS purchased with lifts. The 1989 Phantoms were later retro-fitted with lifts.



The 1989 Gillig Phantoms were the first full-size buses added to the fleet. They featured wider aisles and double-wide doors, allowing for higher capacity and quicker boarding and alighting.



GILLIG LOW FLOOR

The 2008 Gilligs were the first low-floor buses, with ramps for accessibility rather than lifts. The 2008 and newer Gilligs are considered "clean diesel", with technology that reduces particulates, or soot, from the exhaust.



2019 GILLIG LOW FLOOR

The 2019 Gillig Low Floor buses allowed CAMBUS to retire the remaining Phantoms - making the entire fixed-route fleet ramp-access. They also had new features, including curbing lights, new seats, and an updated paint scheme.



FACILITIES

CAMBUS Maintenance Facility, 2020
A-side (left), B-side (center)
featuring new facade of B- and C-sides

CAMBUS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The CAMBUS Maintenance Facility (CMF), more affectionately known amongst CAMBUS staff as “the barn” has existed in its current location since 1975. It has had two additions built onto it and undergone two major renovations. After the 2006 tornado destroyed the UI Fleet Services Building, fleet maintenance was moved into the north portion of the facility.

The facility is divided into three sections: the northmost third, and original facility is the “C-side”. The middle section is the “B-side”, and the newest addition to the south is the “A-side.”

A-SIDE (2011)

With construction finishing in 2011, the A-side allowed for all buses to be stored indoors, with additional capacity of 12 full-size buses, or 9 full-size buses and 4 mini buses. The roof includes solar panels that feeds to the power grid. Prior to the A-side, about 20% of the fleet was parked out doors.

B-SIDE (1985)

Constructed in 1985, the B-side primarily houses maintenance operations including the pit and a set of mobile bus lifts. The parts room, offices, breakroom, lockers and bathrooms are located between the B-side and the C-side.

C-SIDE (1975)

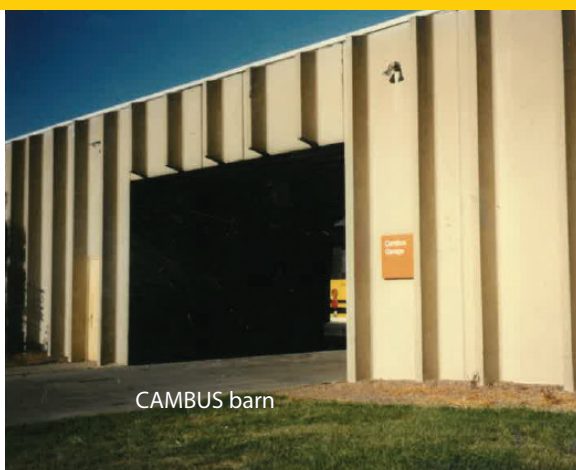
CAMBUS received approval from the State of Iowa Board of Regents in 1975 to build the first portion of the maintenance facility with a budget of \$75,000. The facility was originally designed for angled bus parking. It was an all-in-one “open floor plan” facility - bus storage, maintenance, and break room.

Renovation

The 2019 renovation was made possible with state grant money to improve several spaces within the facility. The renovation included new bathrooms, an office for the maintenance supervisor, improved technician work stations, a larger breakroom with kitchenette, and improved locker and shower facilities. The renovation also replaced garage doors on the B- and C-sides that featured more glass to increase natural light in the facility. Lastly, the renovation updated the facade of the east facing side of the building.

Expansion Study

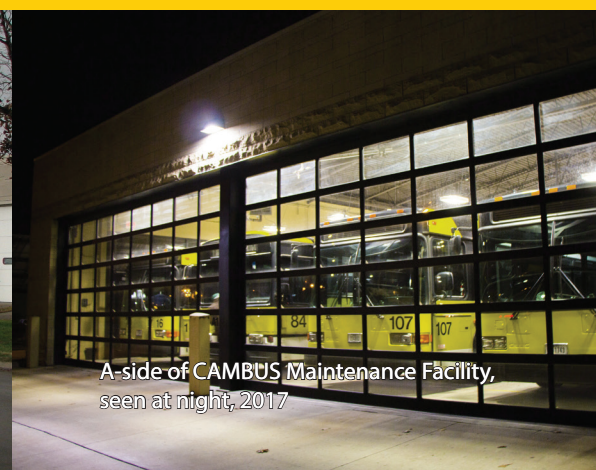
The expansion study kicked off in spring 2022 to determine facility needs for electric bus charging infrastructure, additional bus storage, and improved maintenance areas.



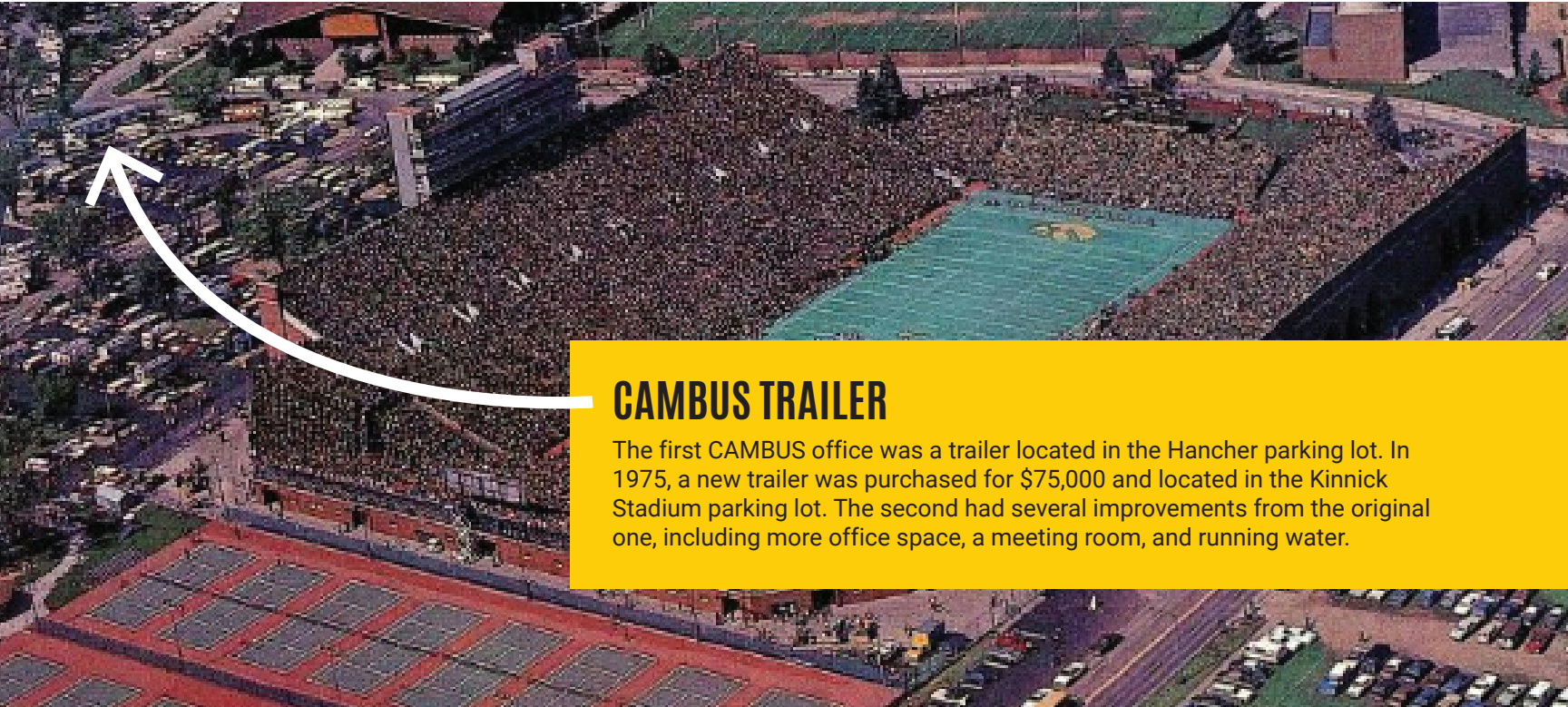
CAMBUS barn



CAMBUS Maintenance Facility,
prior to 2019 renovation



A-side of CAMBUS Maintenance Facility,
seen at night, 2017



CAMBUS TRAILER

The first CAMBUS office was a trailer located in the Hancher parking lot. In 1975, a new trailer was purchased for \$75,000 and located in the Kinnick Stadium parking lot. The second had several improvements from the original one, including more office space, a meeting room, and running water.

OFFICE ON EVASHEVSKI

The CAMBUS office on Evashevski Drive was approved for construction in 1985. The building provided increased square footage and office spaces. In addition to CAMBUS offices, the Parking and Transportation director's office was located in the CAMBUS building until 2012.

The office included a breakroom, bathrooms, student supervisor offices, full-time offices and work areas, and dispatch. The office was served by Red Route, Blue Route, and Night Pentacrest routes.



WEST CAMPUS TRANSPORTATION CENTER

The West Campus Transportation Center was completed in 2012 and houses most Parking and Transportation units: CAMBUS operations, Commuter Programs, Parking Operations, and Parking Services. The construction of the WCTC, which brought together the parking office and CAMBUS office, was an enabling project for other university endeavors including UI Stead Family Children's Hospital and a new football training facility.

The CAMBUS office on Evashevski was demolished to make space for a new Hawkeye Football training facility. Hospital Parking Ramp 2, which housed the parking offices, was taken down to build the UI Stead Family Children's Hospital. The parking ramp was reconstructed as an underground parking ramp.

The project also required that the South Hospital bus stop be relocated to the WCTC. South Hospital had space to accommodate two and a half buses. WCTC was designed with transit operations in mind with eight saw-tooth bus cut-outs that helped alleviate bus stop congestion.



Iowa City, Cambus, Coralville team up to study public transit

November 12, 2019

The Iowa City Climate Action Plan stresses the importance of getting cars off the road and encourages residents to make use of more sustainable forms of transportation, including public transit. The...



Opinion: Cambus Bionic is essential for transportation for those with disabilities

December 2, 2019

Transportation can be difficult in Iowa City, especially for people who have a disability. Luckily, the Cambus Bionic bus service is here. Riders with cognitive disabilities might struggle with sitting...



Cambus kicks off new 'Cultural' route

August 22, 2016

By Jordyn Ramsey jordyn-ramsey@uiowa As students pack up their backpacks and head onto Cambus for their first day of classes today, so will students at the Cultural and Resource Centers. Today, University...



Iowa Transportation Commission approves \$600,000 for UI Cambus

July 12, 2017

The agency approved the funding for a rehabilitation of the UI Cambus maintenance facility on Tuesday. ISU also received \$405,000 for three in-ground vehicle hoists for its CyRide bus system.



UI Cambus celebrates 50 years of student-run service

Kate Perez, News Reporter • March 20, 2022

The University of Iowa Cambus system, a fully student-serviced operation, is celebrating 50 years. The bus system was founded in 1971 and started service in 1972. Students can rise through different...



'Iowa wave' is installed on five Cambus rooftops

Grace Hamilton, News Reporter • November 18, 2020

What started as an idea in a Facebook group soon became reality after Cambus managers installed waving hand graphics onto Cambus roofs, representing the university's famous 'Iowa Wave' tradition. The...



Cambus introduces new Transit navigation app to replace Bongo

December 5, 2019

Users navigating the Cambus system will now have a new option to track the location of buses and plan their trips using the new Transit app, which will replace Bongo, the previous Cambus app. Users...

