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DATE: March 11, 2022
TO: Transit & Rail Advisory Committee
FROM: Amber Blake, Director - Division of Transit & Rail
Michael Timlin - Senior Manager of Mobility Operations & Deputy Division Director
Kyle French, Bus Operations Manager - Division of Transit & Rail
Jeff Prillwitz, Bus Operations Coordinator - Division of Transit & Rail
RE: Bustang Outrider Quarterly Q2 FY 2021-22

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide a quarterly and fiscal year-end Bustang Outrider update on operational and performance measures for the 2nd Quarter, fiscal year ending on December 31, 2021.

Action

Informational only, no action is required.

Background

The Bustang Outrider rural regional bus service began operation in On January 2, 2018, with a Lamar- Pueblo route operated by Senior Resource Development Agency (SRDA) of Pueblo, Inc. Outrider is funded through FTA 5311(f) funds, rather than state FASTER funds. The service is generally contracted as a pass-through grant agreement rather than a direct operational agreement with specific requirements. FTA rules allow local cash match to be replaced by “in-kind” contributions from private intercity bus unsubsidized miles operated or Transportation Development Credits (TDC) from FHWA “toll credits” flexed to FTA projects. Due to the large reduction of service by the intercity bus carriers within Colorado the “in-kind” contributions based on unsubsidized miles is no longer available. All Bustang Outrider routes are now using Transportation Development Credits.

Bustang Outrider provides essential transit services between rural and urban community service centers, and provides connections to the national intercity bus network. Bustang Outrider is considered, and is marketed as an “offspring” brand to the parent Bustang system. A separate Bustang Outrider update accompanies the quarterly Bustang update.

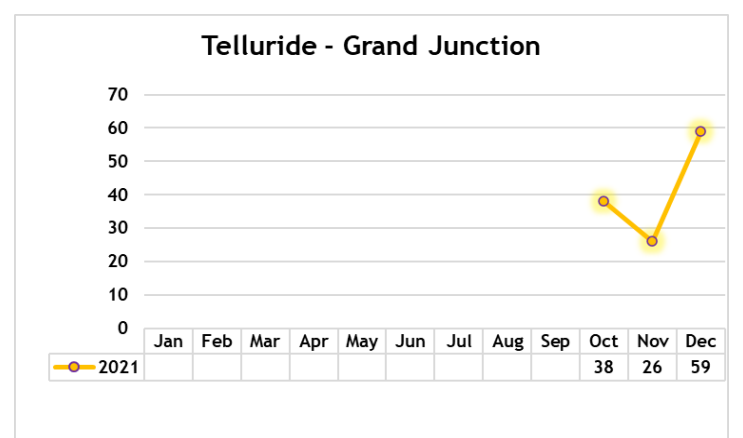
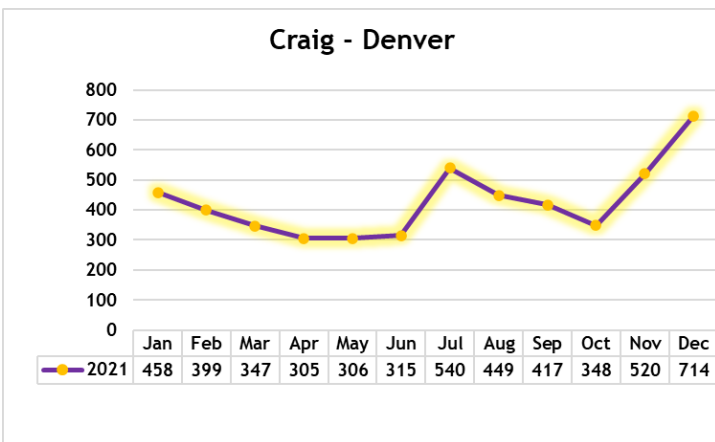
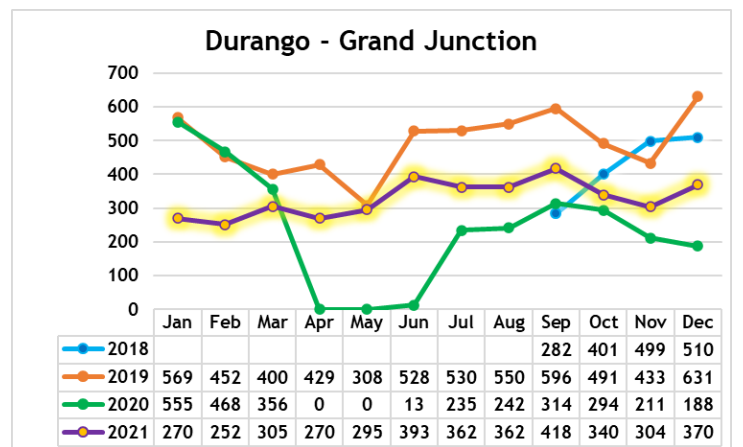
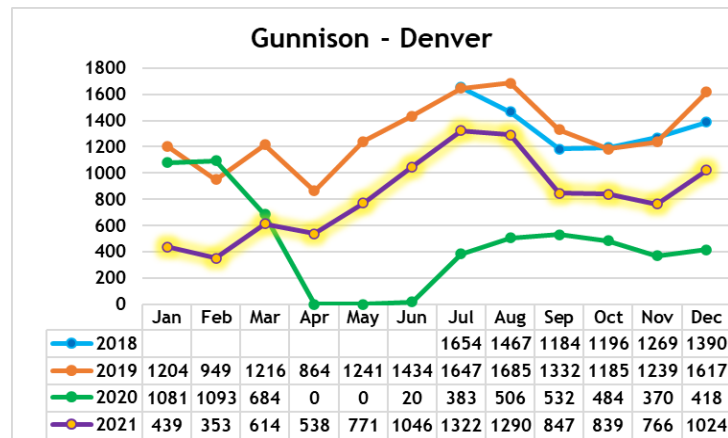
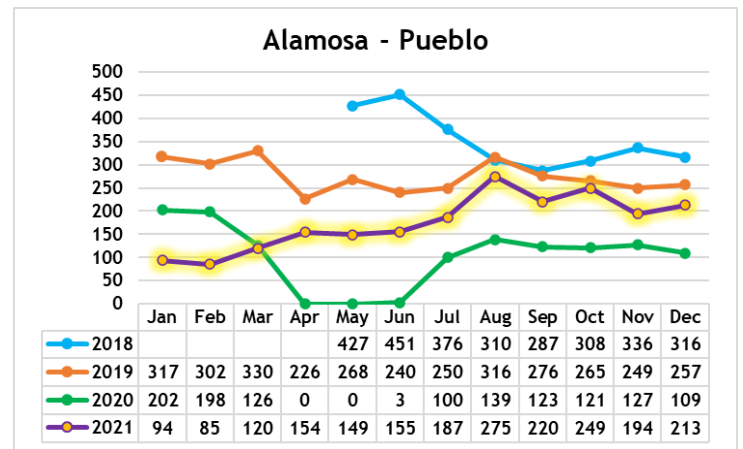
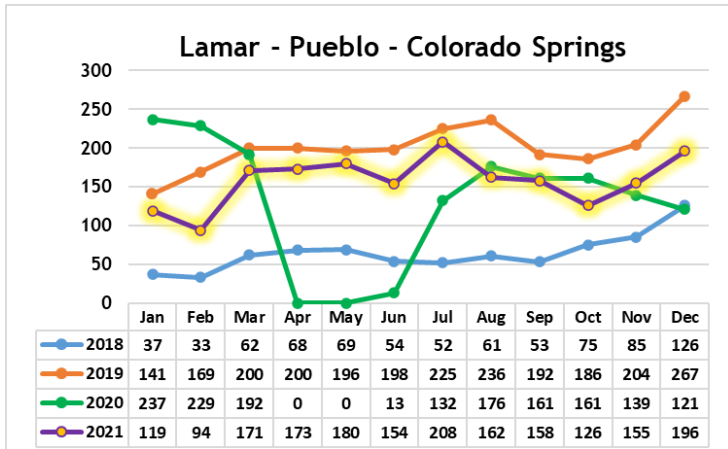
The Phase II and III routes in Operation are:

- Lamar - Colorado Springs in revenue service Monday through Friday except major holidays and operated by Senior Resource Development Agency of Pueblo, Inc. (SRDA)
- Alamosa - Salida -Pueblo is in revenue service daily and is also operated by SRDA.
- Gunnison - Salida- Denver is operating in revenue service daily and is operated by Alpine Express Shuttle.
- Durango - Grand Junction has transitioned to Outrider from Roadrunner operating in revenue service daily by Southern Colorado Community Action Agency (SoCoCAA)
- Craig - Denver is in revenue service five days a week and is operated by Greyhound
- Telluride - Grand Junction is in revenue service five days a week and is operated by Alpine Express Shuttle.

The Phase III routes preparing to launch (with a start goal of Q3 FY 2021-2022, pending vehicle delivery) are:

- Sterling - Denver / Greeley will travel between Sterling and Greeley on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, traveling via Ft. Morgan, and between Sterling and Denver on Tuesday and Thursday, traveling via Aurora, and will be operated by the Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG).
- Trinidad - Pueblo is anticipated to begin service with the Sterling line, operated by the Southern Colorado Collaboration of Governments.

Details
RIDERSHIP



Service was paused on March 29, 2020 by the Governor’s “Safer at Home” Executive Order, then allowed to resume service on June 28, 2020 after review and approval of Bustang’s “Safe Transport Operating Plan” by the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment. Ridership has been steadily increasing since the resumption of service and is approaching pre-COVID levels.

PHASE III PLANNING- Stakeholder outreach has been completed on the final four proposed routes that were presented to the Transportation Commission in December 2019 (discussion), and received approval in January 2020. The four Outrider routes to be implemented in 2021 and 2022 are:

- Sterling -Greeley and Denver via I-76 & US 34 (route will operate Sterling - Greeley on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Sterling - Denver on Tuesday and Thursday) Tentative service start date in early 2022.
- Trinidad - Pueblo via I-25. Tentative service start in early 2022.

- Grand Junction - Telluride via US 550. Began revenue service on September 27, 2021.
- Craig - Denver via US 40 & I-70 West began revenue service on January 1, 2021.
- Service stops and schedules have been determined for all Phase III routes.

The nationwide delay in deliveries of heavy-duty vehicles has impacted the start of the Sterling - Greeley and Denver service and the Trinidad - Pueblo service. Buses for these routes were originally scheduled for delivery in March of 2021. Delivery was made in the last part of August 2021. Inspections of the delivered buses showed serious quality issues with the vehicle roofs. These problems necessitated the return of the bus to the manufacturer for repairs. Buses were returned to Denver late in December of 2021. However, there are serious problems with the paint on the repaired roofs and Davey Coach will be re-painting the buses locally. Tentative, final delivery will be late March of 2022.

Next Steps

- Ace Express has been awarded the contract to operate the Craig to Denver route starting January 1, 2022.
- Calendar year 2022 operating grant agreements have been awarded to all Outrider operators. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding will be used for operations of these routes.
- Schedules and service stops for the Sterling to Greeley/Denver and Trinidad to Pueblo routes have been completed. Service start is planned for the spring of 2022.
- The Lamar to Pueblo route will start operating 7 days a week beginning January 1, 2022.
- Expand Gunnison - Denver service to the community of Crested Butte. Possible summer stop at Monarch Crest which will complement the winter stop at Monarch Mountain Ski Area.
- Service to the Grand Junction Airport with the Durango - Grand Junction Bustang Outrider Service starting February 2022. Telluride to Grand Junction route will continue to service the Grand Junction Airport.
- AECOM to continue survey of all Bustang Outrider routes for stop improvements including shelters, service stop signs. ADA compliance and wayfinding signs. Relocate several Outrider service stops in order to better service the local communities.
- Gunnison to Denver route, the service stop for Buena Vista is now located on public property at Main St. and Railroad Avenue. Previous locations in Johnson Village suffered from poor location and issues with private property owners. In early 2022 the service stop in Fairplay will move in order to better connect with Summit Stage service to Summit County.