



COLORADO
Department of Transportation
Division of Transit & Rail
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DATE: May 13, 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 Q3 FY2021-22

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide a quarterly and fiscal year end Bustang Outrider update on operational and performance measures for 3rd Quarter, fiscal year ending on March 31, 2022.

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 of Pueblo, Inc. Outrider uses a different funding source, FTA 5311(f), rather than state FASTER funds, and is generally contracted as a pass-through grant agreement rather than as 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 will now use Transportation Development Credits for the “in-kind” match.

Outrider provides essential service transportation from rural to an urban community services center as well as a connection to the national intercity bus network. Outrider is considered as, and is marketed as an “offspring” brand to the parent Bustang system. For these reasons, a separate 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.

Details

Service was paused effective 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 in early 2022.
- Trinidad - Pueblo via I-25. Tentative service start in early 2022.
- Grand Junction - Telluride via US 550. Started revenue service on September 27, 2021.
- Craig - Denver via US 40 & I-70 West Started revenue service on January 1, 2021. A new operator commenced operations on January 1, 2022. Service and customer satisfaction have seen significant improvements under this new operator.
- On January 1, 2022 service on the Lamar to Colorado Springs route has been expanded to seven days a week.
- Crested Butte has been added to the Gunnison to Denver service.
- Durango to Grand Junction route is now servicing the Grand Junction Airport.

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. Buses have recently been delivered, inspected and accepted. The buses are now being prepared for Outrider service including the installation of Bustang Outrider wraps, installation of fareboxes and installation of wi-fi units.

Next Steps

- Opening events and outreach to communities which will be serviced by the Trinidad to Pueblo and Sterling to Greeley and Denver routes.
- 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.
- Begin planning and outreach for Phase IV routes. A great deal of interest is being expressed for Bustang Outrider service on I-70 east.
- Work with Pueblo Transit to improve maintenance of Outrider buses operated by SRDA on the Lamar to Colorado Springs and Alamosa to Pueblo routes.
- Work with the individual Outrider operators to increase marketing of their routes. Continue to explore events and organizations that can assist in publicizing Bustang Outrider.
- Complete installing new wraps on Outrider buses. The original wraps have deteriorated due to Colorado's harsh climate and were badly cracking and in need of replacement.