



CASTLE ROCK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Submitted to: Mayor Gray and Town Council
Report by: Pam Ridler, Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce
Submitted: August 1, 2022
Re: Castle Rock Chamber's January-July 2022 Mid-Year Reporting

The Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce's mission:

- Support, encourage and promote businesses in our community.
- Be a "voice" for businesses to local and regional governments.
- Foster a livable, vital community where quality of life, community character and positive growth are possible; and
- Educate business, government entities, youth and individuals regarding business acumen, leadership and entrepreneurial development.

The scope of this Contract for Services with the Town of Castle Rock, the Chamber is responsible for coordinating the efforts of Business Support Services/Workforce programming, Community Marketing and Tourism efforts which include community signature events.

I. BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMING

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE:

- A. The **eXcelerate Business Development** continues to foster entrepreneurial activity by providing the essential information, infrastructure and resources required for successful business development and growth. The Chamber has been offering services and information at little or no cost to both start-ups and established businesses in Castle Rock for more than twenty-three years. We strategize and plan relevant training events, workshops, and other programs to educate and equip business owners, executives, managers, and their employees in addition to providing one-on-one business consultations.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Business Assistance Programing:

- ***One-on-one business consultations*** with expert volunteer counseling to date: 13 (+46%) businesses and/or start-ups with 16 hours of services. The value of volunteer services is \$800 to date. Consultations from are held in person and virtually.
 - ***Business trainings--BizBuilder Lunch 'n Learns, Horizon Breakfasts and Women of Influence luncheon series*** continue to grow in popularity. To date we have conducted 15 training events with 337 participants (virtually & in person). Business volunteers have contributed a value of over \$4,569 of in-kind professional staffing.
- B. **Workforce Readiness—Talent Pipeline DC** focuses on workforce readiness efforts, which is a multi-industry lead program and serves to champion a stronger Castle Rock through collaborative partnerships between business, government, and education communities. Together, we foster a pro-business environment supporting a strong workforce and talent pipeline for the success and sustainability of our local businesses. We work on a collaborative conversation regarding the

workforce needs of our businesses and the opportunities to support educators, students, and families for a strong talent readiness pipeline into the future.

- We are preparing to kick off a pilot program this fall called *Tours for Teachers* on October 13th which is designed for educators to gain a better understanding of the current and future workforce needs and trends within the local economy. The program includes an orientation, three learning days hosted at area employers' at their locations, independent assignments, and exploration.
- Have begun the process of creating Industry Collaboratives we are targeting healthcare, construction, and technology industries.
- Partnered with ADWorks in coordinating and promoting four virtual Job Fair events.
- Continue to host Job Boards promoting businesses' open staffing positions.
- Hired new workforce development coordinator who is currently in training with ADWorks & US Chamber Foundation-Talent Pipeline Management.

**Town funding is received in the amount of \$15,622 for Business Assistance programming.*

***Volunteer staffing is valued at \$50-\$100/hr. for professional volunteers.*

II. **SPECIAL EVENTS & TOURISM PROJECTS**

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE:

A. Community Event Management

Community character and events have been identified by our residents through the Town's surveys as reasons why they love Castle Rock. Community events celebrate our hometown feel atmosphere. The Chamber takes pride in leading several of the community signature events with the assistance of the Town, police/fire, Downtown Alliance, and volunteer business staffing. The Chamber continues to work towards improvement and increased quality by providing family-oriented entertainment and to capture and record data to evaluate the return on objectives of these events.

The Chamber's Contract of Service with the Town includes organizing, promoting, and implementation of the Douglas County Fair Parade (July 30), Colorado Artfest (September 10 & 11) and Starlighting (November 19) events.

Other community events the Chamber has conducted in 2022 to date:

Castle Rock Winefest (July 16, 2022) recently celebrated its 18th. The event was held at a new location, Bison Park due to Butterfield Park being under construction. This event has been identified as the eastern slope premier wine tasting event attracting wine lovers from across the state. The goal is to encourage cultural activities including the promotion of Colorado wines, day long entertainment and local shopping to increase the economic impact to Castle Rock's local and economy and marketing exposure.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES *WineFest*:

- Ticket sales with multiple partnerships, the 2022 WineFest was a success with a total of 2,170 attendees (-4%) in 2021 event which included tickets purchased in 2020 (event was canceled)
- Social media impressions were 45,165, Event Page Reach 17,844, and 1,505 responses.

- Current media adv for three publications, community mailers and radio interviews in the Denver and Colorado Springs markets.
- Staffing—121 volunteers estimated at 4 hours value equity of \$16,832**

*Town funding is not included for direct support of the Castle Rock WineFest special community event, however 6.4% of the Event/Program staffing and operations funding according to the staffing % to particular event/programs.

**Volunteer event staffing is valued at \$29.95/hr. source CO Tourism Office/Independent Sector

Douglas County Fair Parade (July 31, 2021) which kicks off the Douglas County Fair and Rodeo celebrated the 65th year (1955 est-2020 canceled) for the parade in downtown Castle Rock. The parade exemplifies old-fashioned, hometown charm which showcases 4-H, veterans, marching bands, rodeo queens, dignitaries and our First responders. Our goal is also to feature our hometown ranching heritage and our business community.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES for the *DC Fair Parade* have yet to be determined since data had not been gathered and analyzed prior to this report being submitted.

*Town funding received in the amount \$2,437 for DC Fair Parade, \$8,200 for Artfest and \$8,873 for Starlighting events.

**Volunteer event staffing is valued at \$29.95/hr. by the CO Tourism Office/Independent Sector

III. **COMMUNITY MARKETING, ADVERTISING AND SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION**

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE:

- A. To facilitate community marketing by continuing to manage the VisitCastleRock.org website and Community Events Calendar with the VisitCastleRock.org/events and ongoing content curation. This site is visually engaging and interactive for the user and allows local organizations, vendors, and event planners to submit their events to the community calendar for posting with the objective to promote community activities. The goal is to keep our residents connected and give them a sense of community with enhanced social, cultural and recreational experiences.

In an effort for our residents and visitors to receive a positive emotional and intellectual impression of our community, it is our intent to create wonderful experiences which will encourage a live, work, shop, play and stay environment. We continue to have success with the visually engaging and interactive VisitCastleRock.org community website. This site allows local organizations, vendors and event planners to submit their events to the community calendar for posting.

Cross marketing efforts have been created by working with our community partners with the Castle Rock Events Managers group, with the goal of expanding our communities' exposure. Production of our annual Livability magazine will be published in print and digitally later this fall with an interactive mobile version. This magazine showcases Castle Rock's strengths through photography and professionally written stories of Castle Rock's community character.

- B. The Chamber boasts superior customer service that embraces our new residents and visitors to the community with friendly assistance. The Chamber's *Visitor Center* acts as the Town's one-stop-shop for all things Castle Rock offering a welcoming and helpful face always ready to assist Monday through Friday from 9 am-5 pm.
- C. Have been distributing VisitCastleRock.org promotional rack cards to local hotels, Colorado Visitor Centers, and welcome mailers. *Picture Yourself Here* promo highlighted year-round activities/festivals, open space/parks, restaurants/retail and promoted CastleRockEvent.com. We

are currently in the process of creating a new fall campaign Shop Local / Tourism Rack cards to promote VisitCastleRock.org and events page.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Community Marketing (January-July)

Our efforts are to maintain our following and to emerge throughout the community as “the source” for community events will continue as a top priority.

- VisitCastleRock.org page views currently are 61,077, with 90.8% being new users.
- The Business Directory website hits are 549,801 (+131%)
- Event Calendar Pageviews 15,503 page views with 73 public events posted since the beginning of the year.
- Saw an increase on the Play page of our VisitCastleRock.org website: 8,013 (+29.5%)
- Social media presence on Facebook increased: Visit Castle Rock page reach 19,935 (+47.4%) with 194 New likes (+39.6%) and Instagram reach 929 (+29%)
- Increased Facebook followers across 3 community pages to 16,793 (+5%) compared two months prior.
- Increased Twitter followers to 1,466 (+4%) compared two months prior.
- Increased Instagram followers to 2,119 (+17%) compared two months prior.
- The Chamber sent 68 different ecards to 110,322 emails with 38% open rate to promote various local events, Town/County News, Under the Dome updates, latest Business news, Member Happenings and Community Resources.
- Mailings of 2,675 (+2%) new residents’ packets which are mailed monthly to new water hookups to encourage shopping for products and services locally.
- Visitor Center—To date the Chamber has welcomed 5,021 (+3%)

**Town funding received in the amount of \$23,600 for community marketing.*

IV. VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Douglas County Program (LDC):

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE:

LDC is designed to identify, educate, and motivate current and emerging leaders who will strengthen and enhance the experiential program of personal growth and skill development through this 10-month program.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Leadership DC:

LDC completed its 23rd class in June graduating 14 class participants (class size was intentionally kept small due to COVID) 11 of the 14 class members either live and/or work in Castle Rock representing local businesses, non-profits, and the public sector.

- The program has graduated a total of 420 graduates since 2000.
- During January to July of 2022, LDC included 569 hours, volunteer/panelists. Class participant hours approx. 1,310 hours (includes class project time) The hours above performed by 85 different volunteers, contributing a value of \$28,428.
- 2022-2023 has not been selected in time of this report.

**Town funding is received in the amount of \$2,215 for this program.*

***Professional Volunteer staffing is valued at \$50-100/hr.*