

Castle Rock Downtown Alliance

A partnership between the Downtown Development Authority and Downtown Merchants Association

Downtown Merchants Association Mid-Year Report to Town Council 2023

Background

The Castle Rock Downtown Alliance is a partnership between the Downtown Merchants Association and Downtown Development Authority. This partnership unifies the Downtown organizations under one roof. The two organizations share one office and one staff helping to further the collective vision of a vibrant and prosperous Downtown.

The **Downtown Merchants Association (DMA)** is a non-profit organization with a seven-member board made up of Downtown business owners and property owners and has a membership of roughly 160 Downtown businesses. Their role is to function as the collective voice of Downtown businesses and to organize and produce events in Downtown aimed at bringing visitors into historic Downtown Castle Rock to increase commerce and create a sense of community in the center of Castle Rock.

Report

In 2023, the DMA put together a full slate of events aiming to go above and beyond what is included in the Service Contract with the Town of Castle Rock. The 2023 DMA Service Contract with the Town outlines 6 events which includes, the Spring Kickoff Concert, Car Show Concert, Car Show, Boots and Brews, Concert Under the Lights and Oktoberfest. In total, the DMA will produce 17 events in 2023 as well as planning and contracting with the Town of Castle Rock to provide free trolley rides during the July and holiday season, as well as carriage rides during the holiday season.

In 2023, Castle Rock and the nation continue to be impacted by inflation. Whether it is the feedback from Downtown businesses or direct experience from planning DMA events, everything from raw materials to labor costs more. During this time, the DMA has stayed focused on our mission to provide safe, family friendly entertainment to Castle Rock and its visitors, and to generate commerce, energy, and activity in Downtown Castle Rock. While costs have gone up, the DMA has stayed committed to providing free entertainment such as bands, face painters, balloon artists, bounce houses and rock walls for the public. The DMA has also not raised drink prices to date, still keeping prices at a low \$7 per drink, however inflation may drive this price up in the near future. Our hope is that these efforts contribute to what makes Castle Rock a special place to live and visit, by providing special opportunities for the community to engage with one another and build a sense of pride from the unique opportunities available.

This report provides the mid-year 2023 update on each DMA event and estimated attendance numbers. Following is the list of events and approximate attendance for each event to date:

Date	Event	Est. Attendance
May 20, 2023	Spring Kickoff Concert	3,000
June 3, 2023	Starlight Movie Night	Rain Out
June 7, 14, 17, 21, 28	Jazz In The Park	20-100 per event (5 events)
June 16, 2023	Street Party & Concert	Rain Out
June 17, 2023	Classic Rock Cruise-In Car Show	5,500

July 5, 12, 19, 26, 2023	Jazz In The Park	30-100 per event (4 events)
July 29, 2023	Boots & Brews	3,250
August 19, 2023	Concert Under the Lights	(not yet occurred)
September 16, 2023	Oktoberfest	(not yet occurred)
October 15-27, 2023	Restaurant Week	(not yet occurred)
October 27, 2023	Fangtastic Festival	(not yet occurred)

Events Recap

Spring Kickoff Concert

The air quality from the fires in Canada or threat of rain didn't stop Castle Rock from showing up to the first event of the DMA season. Spring Kickoff Concert took place on Saturday, May 20th in Festival Park from 1 – 7 PM. The concert featured local music from Sarah P. and the Dirty Logger and local favorite the John Saunders Band. The beer selection consisted of our very own local Burly Brewing as well as Lone Tree Brewing. The evening also featured signature cocktails from Mystic Mountain Distillery. Four food trucks lined Perry Street and served an estimated 3,000 guests. Families enjoyed vendor booths, free face painting & balloon art and an afternoon full of fun kicking off the summer!

Movie In The Park

Unfortunately, due to persistent severe weather, rain and lightning this event scheduled for Saturday, June 3rd in Festival Park was forced to be cancelled. Staff had anticipated approximately 1,500 people in the park to enjoy the featured movie; Puss in Boots: The Last Wish. Three food trucks, a variety of tasty treats, free face painting & balloon art, vendor booth activities and live music by Eric Lane was scheduled to begin at 5:00 with the movie scheduled for dusk. BURLY Brewing Company, Great Divide and Mystic Mountain Distillery were all contracted to be present at this event as well.

Jazz In The Park – June & July Series

For the weekly Summer Series, the DMA partnered with Castle Rock Music and renowned jazz musician, Jason Bower to perform jazz in the park each Wednesday during the months of June and July for a total of 9 events. These events are designed to be low-key and laid-back. They are not heavily marketed, there is no stage or high-end sound equipment. The idea is that every Wednesday when a resident or guest comes to Downtown Castle Rock, there is casual live music. This event has grown over last year considerably and to date has been the event that staff has received the most emails that request it to be continued.

Financially, this event series is designed to be neutral in sponsorship dollars and cost to produce. The goal for this series is focused around enhancing the Downtown experience, encouraging guests to eat dinner before or after at a Downtown restaurant or enjoy a cocktail or ice cream at the many delightful spots. This also activates Downtown by changing habits to include a trip Downtown. People are more likely to return if they have visited and had a great, safe, fun experience. This strengthens the Downtown economy and supports the great places to eat and shop that the community loves, and hopes will stay in business for their next visit.

Street Party & Concert/Car Show Kick Off

This event was scheduled to take place on Friday, June 16, 2023, on Wilcox Street from 3rd Street to 5th Street. Unfortunately, due to severe lightning, flooding and relentless weather, the event was cancelled. This decision did not come lightly, and was based on many discussions with

board members and community leaders on the morning of the event that focused on the safety of the community, vendors and entertainment providers and the most appropriate decision was made.

The Cari Dell Brown Trio was scheduled to return for a second year to perform her classic rock favorites. Thirty plus classic cars planned to line the streets, event attendees would have been able to enjoy brews from Burly Brewing Company, Rockyard Brewing Co., Great Divide Brewing Company, Wild Blue Yonder and cocktails from Mystic Mountain Distillery. Five food trucks and three dessert/snack vendors were booked to line Wilcox St. while inflatables, a rock wall and games were to be dispersed throughout the county lawn ready to provide free entertainment to the community. With the cancellation of this year, staff and the Vintage Car Club of Castle Rock will look to reignite this event next year!

Classic Rock Cruise-In Car Show

Downtown Castle Rock and the Vintage Car Club of Castle Rock celebrated the 15th Annual Classic Rock Cruise-In Car Show on Saturday, June 17, 2023. The event featured 300+ classic and exotic cars displayed on Wilcox Street from 3rd to 5th Street. Kids and families enjoyed free inflatables, a rock wall, face painting, and a balloon artist. Shelvis and the Roustabouts who performed a hit show in 2021 for the Car Show returned and kicked off the event's musical entertainment opening up for The Atomic Drifters who performed classic rock hits enjoyed by all ages. Libations from Burly Brewing, Great Divide, 4Noses Brewing Co. and Cocktails by Mystic Mountain. There were six different food trucks and six dessert/snack vendors serving a variety of cuisines. At the same time, the Downtown businesses, restaurants, and patios once again experienced one of their busiest days of the summer (per Castle Café) from the steady crowds who gathered Downtown for this Castle Rock signature event.

Boots & Brews

A community favorite, the Boots & Brews event was held on Saturday, July 29, 2023, following the Douglas County Fair Parade which serves as a kickoff to the Douglas County Fair. Downtown was packed with Castle Rock families eager to see their favorite float, catch a piece of candy or cheer on friends and family in the parade. At the conclusion of the parade, families gathered in Festival Park to listen to Colorado's emerging country star Kayla Ruby and the high energy headliner Wirewood Station. Guests also enjoyed a mechanical bull, face painting and balloon artistry. With amazing weather, the DMA tapped 27 kegs provided by BURLY Brewing, Rockyard Brewing, Great Divide Brewing Co., Los Dos Potrillos, and Wild Blue Yonder. Mystic Mountain Distillery served over 630 unique cocktails.

Downtown Businesses Engagement

The DMA continues to increase and improve social media activity on the Downtown Castle Rock social media pages. This marketing strategy has allowed us to collect real-time feedback on our events and marketing and helped us to better connect with the Castle Rock community. This social media presence provides Castle Rock with an online presence that demonstrates to the world online that Castle Rock is a safe, vibrant, happy, healthy community full of great events, great people, and a great downtown.

At events this year and on social media, the DMA organized gift card giveaways to Downtown businesses. These provide marketing to small businesses in Downtown on social media and by helping to encourage event goers to stop into the small businesses in Downtown. This may change a habit or two,

creating a new customer of a Downtown small business. The DMA plans to organize additional future gift card giveaways at events and on social media.

Summary

The 2023 DMA Event Season is off to a great start despite record rainfall across Colorado's Front Range. 9News reported that June 2023 was the rainiest start to June in 58 years. That said, the community is eager to get out of the house and enjoy beautiful Colorado evenings in Downtown Castle Rock any chance they get! On the evenings that the Movie Night and Car Show Concert were cancelled, Downtown restaurants and covered patios were filled with people despite the downpouring of rain. The events that have occurred have experienced record attendance and a genuine excitement to be out and about in Downtown Castle Rock. Thanks to the Town of Castle Rock for their continued support of Downtown Events! It is regularly shared with DMA Staff at events that community events are something that makes Castle Rock such a special place.

Contact:

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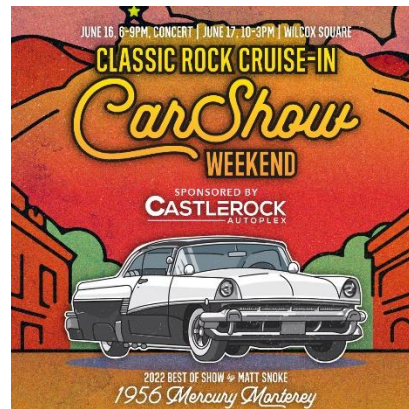
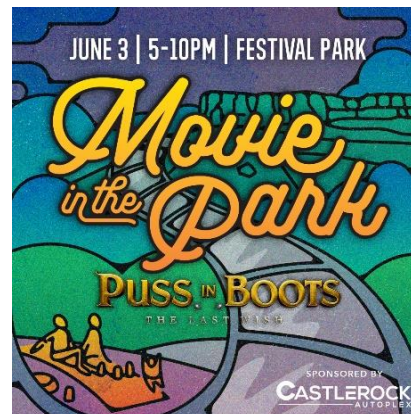
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Attachments

Attached are several examples of the marketing materials from DMA produced Downtown events during the first half of the event season, as well as a few photos.



Spring Kickoff Concert



John Saunders Band (local CR band) in Festival Park



Jazz in the Park (1 of 9 this summer)



Car Show



Boots and Brews

