



Submitted to: Mayor Jason Gray and Castle Rock Town Council
Report by: Stacy Garmon, Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce
Submitted: July 31, 2023
Re: Castle Rock Chamber's January-July 2023 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.
- 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, Talent Development, Community Marketing and Tourism efforts and community signature events.

I. **BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMING**

eXcelerate Business Professional Development continues to foster entrepreneurial activity by providing the essential information, infrastructure and resources required for successful business development and growth. The Chamber offers services and information at no cost to both start-ups and established businesses in Castle Rock. We strategize and plan relevant training events, workshops, and other programs to educate and equip business owners, executives, managers, and their employees.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Business Assistance Programing:

- Professional Development training and major speaker events for business owners and their employees: seven (7) events were conducted with 126 attendees.
- Seminar topics and presenters include Goal setting, Colorado Secure Savings, Business Finances and Increasing Profits, Emotional Wellness, Chick-fil-A Top of the Rock Customer Service, and Increasing your Marketing Strategy with the Power of Branding.
- One-on-one business consulting with expert volunteer assistance – A total of 8 hours of business counseling have been held with two (2) start-up/new businesses. We collaborate with the Douglas County Library and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to provide appropriate services, recommendations, and business mentoring.

Workforce Readiness | Talent Pipeline DC focuses on workforce readiness efforts, which is a multi-industry led program and serves to champion a stronger Castle Rock through collaborative partnerships between business, government, and education partners. 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.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Talent Pipeline Douglas County:

- The Chamber implemented an Industry Collaboration Group focusing on healthcare and education. The **Healthcare Collaborative Task Force** (HCTF) is a business-driven effort to address urgent workforce needs of the healthcare industry, using long term strategy and policy on workforce and talent related issues. Healthcare providers at all levels collaborate with education and training providers to improve the supply and diversity of the local healthcare workforce. The Healthcare Collaborative Task Force includes members from both the healthcare sector as well as our education partners; ACC Sturm Campus, Douglas County School District, Colorado State University, Brookside Inn, Advent Health Castle Rock, Sky Ridge Medical Center, A/D Works, Home Instead, DC Early Childhood Council, and Bridgewater Living Castle Rock.
- We led a successful inaugural **Tours for Teachers program** in Fall 2022. This program 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 employer locations, independent assignments, and exploration. During Spring 2023, the Program was planned and applications for Fall 2023 will be available in August.
- The Chamber continues to partner with A/D Works on virtual & in person **Job Fairs** located at ACC Sturm Campus.
- The Chamber will continue to host the premier Castle Rock Job Boards promoting businesses' open staffing positions. This service is available to both members and non-members of the Chamber to promote the opportunity for our residents to work for local businesses.

II. SPECIAL EVENTS & TOURISM PROJECTS

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 atmosphere. The Chamber takes pride in leading several of the community signature events with the partnership of the Town, CR Police Department, CR Fire Department, Downtown Alliance, and volunteer staffing. The Chamber continues to work towards improvement and increased quality by providing family-oriented entertainment, capturing and record data, and evaluating 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 29), Colorado Artfest (September 9 & 10) and Starlighting (November 18) events.

Community event the Chamber has conducted in 2023 to date:

Castle Rock Winefest (July 15, 2023) recently celebrated its 19th year. 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 wineries, day

long entertainment and local shopping to increase the impact on Castle Rock's economy and marketing exposure.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES for Winefest:

- The 2023 Winefest was a success with a total of 1,200 attendees, 61 volunteers, 25 wineries, 3 breweries, 26 vendors, 3 grape stomp bins, 4 stomper winners, 3 Chamber staff, and 2 bands.
- Social media impressions: Facebook impressions were 45,202 and Instagram impressions 7,858.
- Media promotion was in three print publications, Castle Rock resident mailers, social media, weekly emails, and radio interviews in the Denver and Colorado Springs markets.

*Town funding is not included for direct support of the Castle Rock WineFest community event, however, we wanted to report due to the economic impact on the community.

Douglas County Fair Parade (July 29, 2023) which kicks off the Douglas County Fair and Rodeo celebrates its 68th year. The Fair Parade exemplifies old-fashioned, hometown charm showcasing Castle Rock businesses, 4-H, veterans, high school marching bands, rodeo queens and dignitaries, and our first responders. Our goal is to feature our hometown ranching heritage and highlight our business community.

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

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

To facilitate impactful community marketing, the Castle Rock Chamber continues to manage the VisitCastleRock.org website and Community Events Calendar with ongoing content curation. 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. This site is visually engaging and interactive for the user (both residents and visitors) and allows local businesses, non-profit organizations, vendors, and event planners to submit their events to the Castle Rock community calendar. The goal is to keep our residents connected and give them a sense of community with enhanced social, cultural, and recreational experiences.

Cross marketing efforts have continued with our community partners – the Town of Castle Rock, Downtown Alliance and Douglas County, with the goal of expanding our communities' events exposure. Creation of the annual Castle Rock Livability magazine will be published in print and available digitally on the Chamber's website. This magazine showcases Castle Rock's strengths through photography and professionally written stories of Castle Rock's community character.

The Chamber boasts superior customer service that embraces our new residents and visitors to the community with friendly assistance. The **Castle Rock Visitor Center**, housed in the Chamber's offices, 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.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Community Marketing (January-July)

Our efforts to maintain our resident/community following and to emerge throughout the community as ‘the source’ for community information and events will continue as a top priority.

- Community Events Mailer (spring edition and fall edition), collaboration with Town of Castle Rock, Downtown Alliance, and Douglas County, were mailed to all Castle Rock residents promoting upcoming events and activities.
- VisitCastleRock.org page views to date are 28,788 users, with 85% organic users.
- Social media presence for Visit Castle Rock: Facebook page reach is 61,000 followers and Instagram with 2,409 followers.
- The Chamber sent seventy-eight (78) member e-newsletters to over 7,500 active contacts with 42% open rate promoting Castle Rock Community events, Town/County News, Legislative/Under the Dome updates, latest business resources and news, Member Happenings and Community Resources.
- Shop the Rock new resident packets – 1,123 new resident informational packets were mailed to new water hookups to encourage shopping for products and services in Castle Rock, keeping tax dollars local.
- The Castle Rock Visitor Center welcomed 178 visitors and new residents to date.

IV. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – Leadership Douglas County Program (LDC)

In its 24th year, LDC’s goals are to inspire participants in the work they do; strengthen participants personally and the organizations they serve; and facilitate a heightened sense of community connection to encourage individuals to take positions of civic and organizational leadership in the community.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Leadership DC:

- LDC was created to ensure our community would continue to identify, educate, and motivate current and emerging leaders to improve Douglas County through personal and collective commitment. LDC seeks motivated, capable men and women from diverse professional backgrounds and supports best practices in setting standards of excellence.
- LDC completed its 24th class in June 2023, graduating eighteen (18) class participants. Fourteen of the eighteen class members either live and/or work in Castle Rock and are comprised of local businesses, non-profit, and public sector organizations. The program has graduated 438 LDC alumni since 2000.
- An LDC Alumni program was the 2022-23 class project, and we connected with over 320 previous graduates. The LDC Alumni program mission is to connect local and regional leaders for the enhancement of our community.
- The 2023-2024 LDC Class will have 24 participants, the highest class participation since inception.