



## Castle Rock Downtown Alliance

*A partnership between the Downtown Development Authority and Downtown Merchants Association*

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### **Downtown Development Authority Annual 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 Development Authority (DDA)** is a governmental entity that functions as an extension of the Town guided by a seven-member board that is appointed by Town Council. The DDA is charged with furthering development and place-making in Downtown Castle Rock using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and is guided by a Plan of Development. The Plan of Development provides guidance from Town Council on the mission of the DDA and encourages the DDA to pursue “development projects” which include projects to beautify Downtown, increase commerce in Downtown and development projects which impact the experience in Downtown Castle Rock in a positive way.

#### **Report**

In the first half of 2023, staff received unsolicited positive feedback about how exciting Downtown Castle Rock has become from several residents. Additionally, surrounding communities have reached out to openly express envy and inquire as to how to replicate our vibrant Downtown in their community. While change can cause challenges, the positive feedback, and the volume of people in Downtown in the first half of the year indicates strong support for what Downtown Castle Rock has become.

Another topic of Downtown this year has been the weather. The year started off with a historically cold and snowy winter, impacting retail and restaurant traffic. One local business owner noted 4 weekends in a row where cold, snowy weather arrived at the start of the weekend, keeping people from going out. As we moved into spring and summer, it was noted by the local news that it was the rainiest June in 58 years. Despite a cold start to 2023 and a rainy spring and early summer, many businesses have reported having full patios and exceptional foot traffic in late summer.

In addition, the DDA is excited about several notable projects currently proposed or under construction including:

- The proposed City Hotel project, preserving the oldest building in Castle Rock as well as bringing a high-end lounge and boutique hotel.
- The View project, currently under construction, which will bring 100 public parking spaces to the north end of Downtown.
- The recent partnership between the Town and Douglas County School District, which will bring another 55 public parking spaces to the north end of Downtown.
- The soon-to-open new Douglas County Library in Downtown, which will also include a new parking lot adjacent to the library that will have 218 parking spaces, containing an additional 85 parking spaces over the previous library parking lot.
- The Perry Street Social District adaptive reuse redevelopment project, which aims to bring new dining and entertainment to 4<sup>th</sup> and Perry Street.

- The opening of an expanded patio at Castle Café and the proposed expansion at Scileppi's.
- As well as two new dining establishments including the Courtyard Social and Snarf's Sandwich Shop.

This report documents many of the efforts, programs, and projects that the Downtown Development Authority has worked on this year in pursuit of creating and maintaining an active and vibrant Downtown.

### **Downtown Projects and Programs**

The following section of this report provides information on DDA projects and programs.

#### *Façade Improvement Program*

The DDA actively encourages private sector partners to utilize the Façade Improvement Grant Program. This program encourages Downtown business and property owners to renovate facades to improve the overall appearance of Downtown Castle Rock. While the Town code does not require that facades in Downtown Castle Rock have a specific appearance, the DDA Façade Improvement Program encourages attractive façades that fit with historic architecture and bring a quality look to Downtown.

In 2023, the DDA has not yet received a Façade Grant Application, however DDA staff met with a historic property owner in July and anticipates an application in the fall. Updates are provided below for projects that were approved in 2022.

- In June of 2022, the DDA received a façade grant application for historic Castle Café / Next Door Bar, located at 403 Wilcox Street. This application proposes to make improvements to the space directly adjacent to 217 4<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side of the restaurant by adding an outdoor dining patio to service customers of a new restaurant concept replacing the Next Door Bar. The patio will add a unique addition to Downtown Castle Rock in the breezeway space that was unsightly and more importantly, unused. The new patio will feature an outdoor fireplace and lounge area that will feature hanging chairs along with table service seating for 30 guests. Materials will include stucco, stonework, pavers, entry and exit doors along with a wooden pergola. The DDA Board voted to approve the façade grant application with up to \$1,000 for design and \$5,000 for construction. Once construction began, flaws in the west facing exterior wall were discovered requiring the vines to be pulled back. With the now exposed concrete block wall the property owner has expressed the desire to treat the wall with a large mural to complement the patio. Construction is expected to be complete in the fall of 2023.
- In August of 2022, the DDA received a façade grant from the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce/Chamber Foundation for their historic property at 420 Jerry Street also known as Victoria's House. The application proposed updates to the façade including the replacement of the siding and painting the façade white, which is believed to be the original color of the house when it was built in 1889. The exterior improvements will include updating the cedar siding, cedar shake for the upper level, and lap wood siding following the goal to have a historic restoration of a historic building. The DDA Board voted to support the facade grant with up to \$5,000 for construction. The project was completed in early 2023 and in April, the DDA Board approved grant funds to be distributed to the Castle Rock Chamber Foundation.
- In March of 2022, a façade grant request was introduced to the DDA Board for 611 Wilcox Street, known as The Silo (formerly Victorian Center). This project proposed updated paint on all

4 sides of the building, new signage, a new black asphalt shingle roof, updated lighting, removal of current railing and updated paint on the portion of the railing that will remain, new paint for all tenant doors and trim, and updated tenant address letters. The DDA Board voted to support the façade grant financially with up to \$1,000 for design and \$5,000 for construction once the project is complete. This project has been completed; however, the application has not submitted a request for grant payment.

The DDA also offers a Micro Façade Grant Program that provides a reimbursement award of up to \$1,000 for small businesses. The Micro Grant Program was designed to provide a streamlined process for smaller improvements. For example, the program may eliminate more complex application requirements such as elevations/renderings, Design Review Board approval, etc., depending on the scope of the desired work. No Micro Façade Grant Applications have been received thus far in 2023.

#### *Downtown Enhancement Grant Program*

In the fall of 2022, the DDA Board and Town Council approved the Downtown Enhancement Grant Program which is designed to enhance the environment and public experience in Downtown Castle Rock by encouraging and supporting investment in small scale development projects including façade improvements, expansions, additions, alleyway investments and adaptive reuse projects. Often smaller scale developments contribute to the preservation of character and history with the reuse and/or expansion of buildings, and this program is designed to encourage these types of investments. Two of the Façade Grant applicants that had applied in 2022 re-applied for the Downtown Enhancement Grant Program once the program launched. Those projects remain under active construction.

- In November of 2022 Perry Street Social District proposed at 404 Perry Street formally applied for the Downtown Enhancement Grant and the application was brought to the DDA Board. The project is currently proposed to consist of multiple phases, which once completed will include the redevelopment and reuse of the three existing buildings on site. The redevelopment of the site is proposed to include a redesigned building on the north side of the block which will house a taphouse/restaurant paying homage to Castle Rock history, a redevelopment of the SE corner of the property to include a modern adaption of shipping containers and second floor deck dining establishment, and an adaptive reuse of the Whittier House to remove the non-historic addition and transform it small bistro/deli concept. The DDA Board unanimously supported the project and approved a grant of up to \$50,000 to be paid upon completion of the project. In the first half of 2023, the project went through a change in ownership structure and began on site preparation/demo. In addition, the project owners expressed a desire to make changes to the plans for the white canopy in the center of the project. The project is currently working with the Town of Castle Rock to follow the public process required for adjustments and changes to the proposed plan. As a part of the new proposed changes to the white canopy, the Perry Street Social District ownership made their remaining payments to the DDA to complete ownership transfer from the DDA to Perry Street Social District.
- The second application for an Enhancement Grant was received in December 2022 for a project proposed at Scileppi's at the Old Stone Church for the property at 210 Third Street. This project consists of a 4,000 SF addition to the east side of the existing restaurant that will include a new kitchen and pizzeria as well as a 2,500 SF basement. As previously reported, the expansion will allow for an additional outdoor patio for dining that will be a highlight of the property. New masonry, ornamental metal and wood details on the façade will complement the historic stone church. The DDA Board unanimously supported the project and approved a grant of up to

\$50,000 to be paid upon completion of the project. The project is completing all the requirements needed for the Town of Castle Rock and construction is expected to begin later this year.

#### *Flowerbox Program*

The DDA flowerbox program aims to add to the sense of small-town charm and enhance the look and feel of the Downtown streetscape. Efforts such as this have been shown to have an impact on business success and economic activity. This program does not use any Town General Fund tax dollars and is paid for through DDA Funds, private businesses, and property owners. The DDA coordinates the pickup and delivery of all flower boxes with Town Staff.

For the 2023 season, the DDA partnered again with Tagawa Gardens for the planting of all flower boxes. Tagawa Gardens proved to be a reliable partner over the last 3 years, and they plant many of the boxes from seed in March at their greenhouse so that the boxes will be in full bloom at delivery in May. A total of 41 businesses ordered boxes, with 8 small boxes, 90 medium and 48 large boxes rented. Flower boxes are also placed around 8 Downtown patios to provide beautification and protection around the patios.

The DDA also offered watering service for the flower boxes to businesses who opted into the service. Watering service was provided to 20 businesses.

#### *Patio Program*

Before the DDA was created, the Town, in partnership with several interested business owners, brought in Walkable Communities Inc. to evaluate Downtown Castle Rock. This organization provided guidance to the group on building a thriving downtown which was built on years of research and studies conducted by Walkable Communities Inc. One of the recommendations from this exercise was to invest in the infrastructure of wider sidewalks to encourage pedestrian activity with street-side patios. Using this research, the DDA designed a way to construct temporary street-side patios similar to those utilized by other neighboring communities.

This now long-standing program has continued to have great success in Downtown Castle Rock. The program allows restaurants to utilize sidewalk and patio space for additional dining options which has increased the vibrancy and interest for pedestrian activity. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to positive feedback for patios to remain year-round, modifications were made to the program to allow for outdoor patios to remain in place year-round and encroachment agreements as well as liquor licensing automatically renews. This change eliminates unnecessary DDA and Town Staff time to renew agreements and documentation each year and saves the business owners filing fees at both the Town and State, saving as much as \$600+ a year for each business.

In 2022, the DDA evaluated the wear and tear that had occurred on DDA Patios and with the Town of Castle, made significant investment and upgrades. In some cases, pouring permanent concrete patios realizing the ultimate goal of wider sidewalks (Castle Café and B&B Café) and in other cases replacing wood patios prone to wearing out, with a new concrete paver system (Z'Abbracci's and Provision). In 2023, Public Works planned concrete and bump out improvements at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> and Jerry Street, and with this work, a new bump out with a brick/paver inlay was installed in front of Angie's Café. This bump out will provide traffic safety requirements needed by Public Works at this intersection and will also provide right-of-way space that can be used by Angie's Café as a patio that is permanent in nature. The brick/paver inlay design at this intersection matches the bump out at the mid-block of Wilcox between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> as well as the bump outs at Town Hall and follows the recommendations in the Downtown Streetscape Palette.

Two of the wood patios remain downtown, one at Crowfoot Coffee which will likely be replaced in 2024, and the other at wood patio remains at Scileppi's and the DDA plans to wait to make upgrades until their proposed restaurant expansion is complete. Castle Rock Bike & Ski's patio has been removed as the business has relocated to a different location where the patio is not needed.

In many cases, a summer visitor to Castle Rock may spend the majority of their time in Castle Rock on a Downtown patio, and their impression of the health of Downtown Castle Rock, will be in part be based on this experience. These investments are just a small part of being a world class community and contribute to the experience of visitors and the strength of the local economy.

Several years ago, staff began tracking the addition of private outdoor dining options in Downtown. This effort was done to gauge the popularity of the DDA patio program and as a metric of a healthy economy. The growth of patios since then has been outstanding. Since last year, two more outdoor dining options have been added to the list, including Courtyard Social and a proposed patio at Snarf's Sandwich Shop in the fall. The full list include of outdoor patios includes Z'Abbracci's (major upgrade in '22), Angie's (major upgrade in '23), Scileppi's (major upgrade planned for '24), Wild Blue Yonder, Castle Café (major upgrade in '22), B&B café (major upgrade in '22), The Office, The Backyard/Battle Mountain Brewery, Union Bistro, Vista Vino, Iron Mule, Ecclesia, Great Divide Brewery and Roadhouse, Glacier Ice Cream, Sugar Spoon, Tribe, Dos Santos, Block and Bottle, and B's Craft Deli. Roughly 9 years ago, only about a fifth of these patio options existed and many of the restaurants and the actual restaurant space did not exist.

#### *Downtown Engagement*

The Downtown Alliance often acts as the 'voice of Downtown.' Staff spends time to meet one on one with Downtown businesses, property owners and residents to provide information about what is going on in Downtown and collect feedback in order to represent the Downtown business perspective to Town Staff, and facilitate important conversations for Town Staff. These meetings are often used for things like snow and ice mitigation, Town Right of Way concerns, etc.

Staff also shares information on Downtown programs, such as the Flowerbox Program, Façade Improvement Grant Program, Downtown Enhancement Program and Patio Program, as well as information about DDA initiatives such as development projects, parking, and Town initiatives.

In addition to one-on-one meetings with the community, staff often visits interested groups and organization to present information and collect feedback about Downtown, or provides support letters representing the Downtown perspective:

In January, Downtown Alliance and EDC staff provided a presentation to the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce about what is going on in Downtown Castle Rock, and about future plans for Downtown.

In February, the Downtown Alliance provided another letter of support for the Crystal Valley interchange to support federal funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

In June, the Downtown Alliance provided a letter of recommendation for the Castle Rock Police Department to be selected for Georgetown Law's Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE) project.

In July, the Downtown Alliance provided a memo to Town Council to express support for a partnership between Douglas County School District (DCSD) and the Town of Castle Rock to provide additional public parking in Downtown Castle Rock at the DCSD Parking Lot at 620 Wilcox Street.

#### *Banner Program*

The Castle Rock DDA Light Pole Banner Program uses decorative banners to publicize special events and enhance the streetscape by adding color and vitality to Downtown. In the Spring/Summer season, colorful Spring/Summer banners were hung lining the streets of Downtown. These banners will be replaced with Winter/Holiday themed banners in November. Recently, on the Town of Castle Rock social media, the program was highlighted in the Our Town Over Time segment as turning 15 years old.

#### *Parking*

The Parking Committee meets quarterly to discuss the management, maintenance and operations of downtown parking including community policing, parking sign policies as well as use and allocation of parking spaces. The committee makes strategic decisions to create a positive experience for downtown customers. Policies, discussions, and changes enacted in 2023 include:

- Consideration of a request to add (2) 15-minute loading zones on 4<sup>th</sup> Street, and to change from all-day parking to 2-hour parking in the Town-owned lot south of 4<sup>th</sup> Street along the railroad tracks behind the 390 Perry Street building. The committee recommended moving forward with an additional 15-minute loading zone space in the east lot behind the building and not advancing the additional changes requested at that time.
- Consideration of a request to remove the 2-hour parking restriction on the east side of Jerry Street, north of 6<sup>th</sup> street. The committee did not recommend this change to Jerry Street at this time due to the transitional nature of parking at this location and expected additional parking to be constructed by the View Project.

#### *Trolley Rides*

Back by popular demand, the DDA once again provided free Trolley rides in Downtown Castle Rock in the summer and has contracted to provide rides during the holiday season on a consistent schedule. The Trolley ran Tuesday and Friday evenings in July and will run Monday and Tuesday evenings in November and December following Starlighting, activating evenings from 5:00 – 7:00pm. This effort provided just one more exciting thing occurring in Downtown during the summer, serving a novel free ride, and also a way to get from parking to Downtown destinations. In the winter, the free trolley rides provide an alternative option to carriage rides to see the holiday lights in an old-fashioned way. The route for both seasons starts at the Encore Parking Garage and travels north on Wilcox to the Douglas County School District Administration building parking lot and then back down south on Perry Street to the Encore Parking Garage. Anecdotal feedback for this program has been excellent and ridership over last year has increased. There were 493 riders total over the 7 evenings in July resulting in an average per night ridership of 70 riders.

#### *Development Projects*

In partnership with the Town of Castle Rock and the Castle Rock EDC, several development projects have been negotiated with the private sector, with the goal to encourage mixed use projects that follow good planning policies, contribute to vibrancy, and create a stronger economy for Downtown small businesses, as well as Castle Rock as a whole:

### The View at Castle Rock – 610 Jerry Street

The View project was introduced to the DDA Board and Town Council in 2020. The project held 4 neighborhood meetings and in April of 2021 the project was presented to the Town Council who approved a redevelopment agreement for the project. The project will build 221 apartments, 14,250SF of office space and 5,000SF of restaurant space. The project will construct 399 parking spaces in the building and the Town of Castle Rock will own 100 of the 399 spaces for public parking, which will be purchased by the DDA Special Fund with the payment of project fees to the Town for the developer. There will also be 33 street parking spaces constructed where there are currently 22 spaces. This project represents a significant, strategic investment in parking for the current and future parking needs of the community.

As we have learned with the previous projects in Downtown, and as demonstrated by redevelopment projects across the nation over the last 30 years, vibrancy comes from people. People that work in a downtown during the day and live, dine, shop, and find entertainment in a downtown during the evening and weekend that make a downtown successful. This project has the ability to strengthen the Downtown economy in a major way and staff is optimistic for the progress of this project. This project was allowed by code without DDA involvement, however with DDA involvement, first floor retail, additional office space and 100 public parking spaces were required to be built in the project.

The extreme winter and spring weather along with onsite complexities and supply chain delays, put this project behind schedule. The DDA and Town Council approved an extension in June and July of 2023, to the requirements in the redevelopment agreement for project completion. As of July of 2023, the foundation and most of the wood framing was complete. The new completion date by agreement is now December 31, 2024, extended from the previous date of May 1, 2024, however construction is expected to be completed earlier.

### 221 Wilcox Street

In 2015, Niebur Development purchased the property at 221 Wilcox St. and proposed a mixed-use project at the site. They evaluated potential projects ranging from 3-5 stories, and the need for parking associated with its likely tenants. A redevelopment agreement, which has since expired, for a 5-story project was approved by the DDA Board and Town Council which provided assistance for some of the fees, and a share back with some of the property and sales tax that would be generated by the project. Ultimately, Niebur Development was unable to make this project work, due to several challenges including the inability to provide parking at a reasonable cost. Niebur Development came back to the DDA Board and proposed an idea to add a floor to the then current 1 story building with a plan to utilize the boarded-up drive through for a quick serve / fast food tenant. This concept was not supported by the DDA Board.

In 2016, Confluence Companies purchased the 221 Wilcox Street site from Niebur Development to protect their investment at Riverwalk after hearing about the proposed two-story renovation of the existing building with use of a drive through. Confluence Companies introduced a project in February of 2018 to the DDA Board proposing a mixed-use project at the site. A hotel was also considered and evaluated for this location. As Confluence evaluated the potential of the site, opportunity with the Encore project down the street was identified and Confluence, in partnership with the Town and DDA, structured an agreement for the Encore project. Among many positive outcomes of this project, this allowed Town Staff to park at 221 Wilcox while Encore was built. Of note, when this partnership was created, the DDA, Town and developer discussed that the end goal for 221 Wilcox Street was not to remain as a parking lot.

Staff conversations at the end of 2021 included discussion of the code requirement to park residential units onsite, and about architecture that is a “fit” for this property. This led to an updated proposal from Confluence Companies in Q1 of 2022, which would park the residential space on site one floor below grade and would park the commercial components of the building in the extra spaces privately owned space in the Riverwalk North building adjacent to the property with a shared alley. Architectural changes were made to the exterior design of the building incorporating some historical design features such as historical looking sills on the windows as requested by Town Council. In May of 2022, a proposed redevelopment agreement was presented to the DDA Board and was approved, and in June the agreement was presented to the Town Council and was approved. Construction began in the fall of 2022. Confluence, the Town and the DDA met to limit the number of closures of pedestrian walkways and ultimately Confluence poured a new sidewalk to serve pedestrians during construction.

As of July of 2023, the foundation and most of the wood framing is complete on the project and completion of the project is expected in the fall of 2024.

#### Perry Street Social District

The proposed Perry Street Social District project continues to pursue redevelopment at 404 Perry Street. As described in more detail earlier in this document, this project is proposing a full redesign, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse project at 404 Perry Street. The site consisting of the historic Whittier House at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Perry Street, the concrete block building most recently housing Castle Rock Bike and Ski, the white Sprung Structure canopy and the residence on the north side of the site are proposed for a mix of demolition, preservation, face lift and new uses including 3 new dining concepts and a beer garden in the center.

As new buildings with higher density and public parking are proposed and built in Downtown Castle Rock, it is exciting to see smaller scale, adaptive reuse projects also being proposed. A strong synergy exists between the two types of projects. Often smaller scale, adaptive reuse projects contribute to the preservation of character and history with the reuse of buildings, but do not always have the capacity for onsite parking even though a new vibrant use is likely to increase parking demand. With a goal to have successful reuse projects and have the visitor parking experience in Downtown be a positive one, Downtown Castle Rock will need to continue to identify strategic public private partnerships when larger development or partnering opportunities are identified. One such partnership is the agreement reached with Douglas County School District, earlier in 2023 to lease 55 parking spaces for public parking including parking for proposed redevelopment at 4<sup>th</sup> and Perry Street.

This project is currently working through the complexities of the different structures on site including historic preservation, demo, existing structure expansion, as well as plans for a modern container ship structure, and creating a design that meets building and fire code requirements cohesively. Often, it is easier to tear down and build new, than it is work in and around existing structures to create and allow for a new use, and this project is seeing some of challenges adaptive reuse projects manifest.

It was identified in March of 2023 that the Perry Street Social District desired to pursue a design that included modification of the white Sprung Structure canopy onsite. This structure was at that time owned by the DDA with an agreement in place allowing the Perry Street Social District to make payments over time to the DDA for a sale to the project. In June of 2023, the DDA and Perry Street Social District agreed to finalize the sale of the white Sprung Structure canopy for \$30,000. The completion of this sale gives full ownership to the Perry Street Social District and allows the DDA to get out of the way as the project ownership, architects and engineers design and redesign the site, specifically allowing them to pursue modification of the Sprung Structure. At the time of this report, ownership still



expressed a desire to continue to operate the Rink at the Rock in the winter months, noting that significant investment had been made in the purchase of a chiller and upgrades to ice equipment, however construction timelines, permitting requirements and other site complexities are not fully known at this time. The project is currently working with Town Staff following the public processes to allow demolition and new construction of the building on the north side of the site.

#### City Hotel

The historic City Hotel property at 415 Perry Street has been talked about for many years in Castle Rock. It is believed to be the oldest building in Castle Rock and is privately owned. So, when the private property owner expressed an interest in investing in the property, including restoring the historic structure, and adding new boutique hotel building on the same site, there was excitement about the positive outcomes from this proposed project. The project, as proposed, plans to incorporate a food and beverage concept into a lobby area in the historic structure, as well as a rooftop bar on top of the new boutique hotel building. The project proposes some leasable retail space on the first floor of the new building, with a total of 24 hotel rooms above the first-floor commercial space. The new building is proposed as a 4-story building, with the 4<sup>th</sup> floor stepped back and not encompassing the full floor plate of the building. The 4<sup>th</sup> floor would house a rooftop bar and 4 of the 24 hotel units, and as introduced would have a total building height of 45 feet. This project was introduced to the DDA Board in a public meeting in December of 2022 and staff was directed by the DDA Board to work with the developer/property owner on the details of this project and come back to the DDA Board with an update on the progress of the project in 2023.

DDA and Town Staff have continued to work through challenges on this project, including solidifying a partnership with Douglas County School District (DCSD) in July of 2023, that would potentially allow the City Hotel to valet park in the DCSD lot. At the end of July 2023, staff was awaiting a third-party analysis from Pioneer Development who was hired earlier in the year to provide an independent third-party analysis on the pro forma for the project. A presentation to the DDA Board and Town Council is expected in the fall of 2023.

#### Philip S Miller Library Expansion

Over the last 10 years, the Douglas County Libraries have invested in most of the libraries in their network including Highlands Ranch, Castle Pines, Lone Tree, Parker and Roxborough. One of the last libraries on this list, where they have discussed and planned for investment, is the Castle Rock Philip S. Miller Library.

On May 2, 2022, the Castle Rock Library broke ground on their new building in Downtown Castle Rock after nearly 3 years of discussions about design, location, function, and other details. This expansion will replace the current 45,000 SF library built in an old Safeway Grocery Store and create new vibrant spaces for youth, retreat spaces for work, event halls, conference rooms, huddle rooms and will house a new Douglas County History and Archive Center. This is exciting on many fronts. New downtown residents as well as long-term Castle Rock residents will be excited to experience the new and improved library and amenities. The larger event halls and conference rooms are expected to be a draw bringing people Downtown, and the brand-new façade further demonstrates the momentum of investment into property in Downtown.

At the end of July of 2023, the entire shell of the new library was completed, and interior work was underway with a plan to host a grand opening on August 26, 2023, when it will be open to the public. Demo permits for the old library were approved in late July and demo began on July 31, 2023.

### *Public Investment Infrastructure*

Castle Rock benefits from having a Downtown Development Authority in many ways. While having a set of staff and the financial tools to accomplish the many projects listed above, having a DDA and Statutorily authorized Special Fund can provide some relief to the Town General Fund on Downtown public investments. This frees up Town funds to be deployed to other priorities in Castle Rock. In recent years, the DDA has approved the use of funds from the DDA's Statutorily authorized Downtown Special Fund to support the following projects:

- **Roundabout at Wilcox and South Street:**  
In April of 2021, the DDA board voted to pay up to \$750,000 from the Downtown Special Fund to pay for the roundabout at South and Wilcox Street.
- **Streetscape Palette Plan:**  
In April of 2021, the DDA board voted to pay up to \$15,000 from the Downtown Special Fund to pay for a Streetscape Palette for Downtown Castle Rock to guide future decisions about streetscape materials.
- **Maintenance at the Encore Parking Garage:**  
In December of 2021, the DDA Board voted to approve using up to \$150,000 for Encore Garage Maintenance from the Downtown Special Fund.
- **Town Staff Support of Downtown Events:**  
In December of 2021, the DDA Board voted to use up to \$50,000 to support police, fire, and parks services at events in Downtown Castle Rock.
- **Quiet Zone:**  
In April of 2022, the DDA Board voted to pay up to \$900,000 out the Downtown Special Fund to implement a Train Horn Quiet Zone at the 3 crossings in Downtown Castle Rock.
- **Downtown Enhancement Grant:**  
As mentioned above, based on direction from the Town Council and the DDA Board this grant program was created in September of 2022. These funds are available to support smaller scale development projects.
- **Bump Outs at 4<sup>th</sup> and Jerry Street:**  
In May of 2023, the DDA Board voted to contribute up to \$56,000 (\$29,000 for patio / \$27,000 for upgraded hardscape treatment) for bump out traffic improvements proposed by Public Works at 4<sup>th</sup> and Jerry Street. This work will also replace the DDA patio in front of Angie's Café with a permanent concrete patio, and all bump outs installed at the intersection will be upgraded to follow the signature brick/paver inlay treatment recommended in the recently completed Downtown Streetscape Palette.
- **Douglas County School District Parking Partnership:**  
In May of 2023, the DDA Board voted to support a partnership between the Town of Castle Rock and Douglas County School District (DCSD) to allow the Town to lease 55 public parking spaces from DCSD for public parking, and to support potential valet parking with the proposed City Hotel project. The Downtown Special Fund is planned to pay for the lease to DCSD at a price of

\$50 per month per space for an annual payment of \$33,000 and additional costs for maintenance.

### **Summary**

The first half of 2023 has been positive for Downtown Castle Rock. Progress has been made towards several goals set by the Town Council, DDA and community:

- A project has been proposed to save the oldest building in Downtown with the City Hotel project, which works towards a goal of preserving history and character, something that has been more recently expressed by Town Council. This project will also add a small boutique hotel onsite, which is something that has been discussed as a goal for many years.
- A partnership was formed with Douglas County School District to lease 55 parking spaces for public parking, working towards a continued goal to be strategic about parking.
- The View project has made significant progress on their construction, and upon completion will not only add 100 public parking spaces but will add a daytime population of workers with their office space, and is likely to sign a restaurant tenant in the first-floor retail space. Dining options help drive visits to Downtown strengthening the Downtown economy.
- A brand-new Castle Rock Library is about to open in Downtown, following good “downtown design” practices by placing the building on Wilcox Street, completing the urban edge, walkable environment from the previous strip mall design. The library also expands their square footage allowing for the continuation of using this Douglas County Library branch as the headquarters for administrative staff, keeping a daytime population in Downtown, which are goals that the DDA communicated and hoped for with new library investment. In addition, the Castle Rock Library will demolish the old building and construct a 218-space parking lot, which is an 85-space increase over the prior library parking lot on the same site.
- Two new dining options are opening in Downtown with the Courtyard Social providing a new dining concept utilizing one of the best patio spaces in Downtown Castle Rock and it opened in July of 2023; and Snarf’s Sandwich Shop, which will bring a proven Colorado deli concept to Downtown.
- The Perry Street Social District continues to pursue a small-scale development project.
- It is exciting to see interest from an additional historic property in Downtown to apply for a Façade Grant. Staff will continue to work with this new property and hopefully the property owner will decide to invest in their property and apply for a grant.

Thank you for the continued partnership with the Town of Castle Rock.

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