

## Castle Rock Downtown Alliance

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

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### **Downtown Merchants Association Mid Year Report to Town Council 2024**

#### **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 the first half of 2024, the DMA events have been a huge success. The attendance at our events has been strong, the weather has been great and feedback from event goers has been positive. In addition to the 6 events that are included in the Town Service Contract with the DMA, the DMA has planned an additional 15 community events and activations for a total of 21 events. The DMA also partners with the Town of Castle Rock and DDA to provide free summer and winter trolley service on a repeating schedule, as well as to provide free trolley service during its largest events.

Looking at the state of the downtown economy, small businesses in Downtown have continued to report that inflation is impacting their businesses. Anecdotally, conversations have reported that customers are increasingly seeking discount opportunities such as happy hours or specials at restaurants. This is a typical consumer reaction to inflation and our retailers have reported some of that activity picking up. It is still undetermined how much and how long inflationary pressure will continue, but the Downtown Alliance and Castle Rock EDC will continue to pursue good economic development efforts to support business and the economy.

While the cost to produce events has continued to rise, the DMA is proud that it has continued to go above and beyond with respect to its Service Contract with the Town of Castle Rock. The DMA has also maintained a model where for every \$1 received from the Town, the DMA generates an additional \$3 to pay for community events and activations in Downtown. This generally comes from 3 private sector sources: sponsorship sales, alcohol sales and vendor booths. This allows the DMA to produce events at a fraction of the cost. All events in 2024 are family friendly and free, providing safe, professionally produced entertainment for Castle Rock residents and visitors.

This report provides information on each event produced by the DMA and their estimated attendance numbers. Following is the list of events and approximate attendance for each event to date:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Est. Attendance</b>
May 18, 2024	Spring Kickoff Concert	3,000
June 1, 2024	Starlight Movie Night	1,750
June 5, 12, 19, 26, 2024	Jazz In The Park	50-150 per event (4 events)
June 14, 2024	Street Party & Concert	4,250
June 15, 2024	Classic Rock Cruise-In Car Show	8,000
July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 2024	Jazz In The Park	40-100 per event (5 events)

## **Events Recap**

### *Spring Kickoff Concert*

The Castle Rock community was blessed with great spring weather on Saturday May 18, 2024, for the Spring Kickoff Concert in Festival Park. This event welcomed the Castle Rock community to Festival Park from 5-10pm to celebrate the start of better weather and community events. The concert featured Sarah P. and the Dirty Logger and headliner Premium Diesel, who are both local bands, that played to a family friendly crowd. Several local breweries were present to serve the public including Rockyard Brewing Co., Great Divide Brewery & Roadhouse, Wild Blue Yonder Brewing Co., 105 West Brewing Co., and Mystic Mountain Distillery. Eight food trucks were present providing everything from BBQ to bundt cakes. Families enjoyed free face painters and balloon art. An estimated 3,000 people were in attendance.

### *Movie In The Park*

A community favorite, Movie in The Park was back this year on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> and featured The Super Mario Bros. Movie. The park was packed with an estimated 1,750 people enjoying a beautiful summer evening and tons of family fun. Face painters, balloon artists, vendor booths and fun activities kept everyone entertained until showtime. Great Divide Brewery, Wild Blue Yonder Brewing, 105 West, Purgatory Wine Cellars and Moly Brownd Distillery kept things cool with adult beverages.

### *Jazz In The Park – June & July Series*

In 2023, the DMA Staff received several unsolicited emails from Castle Rock residents asking for more Jazz in the Park evenings in Festival Park. This coupled with positive feedback from the restaurants in the area regarding the increase in traffic during these events, encouraged the DMA to consider expanding the offerings of this event. For 2024, the event time was moved later in the evening so that it would be cooler and was extended into August (which will be reported in the Annual Report). The DMA is excited to have once again partnered with Castle Rock Music to provide Jazz in the Park throughout the summer. This event is scheduled for Wednesdays in June, July, and August from 6:30-8pm providing a total of 13 evenings of free entertainment in the park. Performances include local jazz musicians as well as local jazz students.

The goal of these events is to provide a low-key vibe, with 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 live music. 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*

On Friday, June 14, 2024, the DMA held a fantastic kickoff to the weekend festivities with a Street Party and Concert from 6-9pm at 4<sup>th</sup> and Wilcox Street. After some rain earlier in the day and the threat of hail, the sun came out and gave the community perfect weather for the event. Roughly 50 cars from the members of the Vintage Car Club of Castle Rock were on display. Entertainment was provided by the band, Shelvis and Roustabouts and local beverages were available from Rockyard, Wild Blue Yonder, 4 Noses, 105 West Brewery, 105 West Bear'l Cellars and Molly Brown Distillery. Staff received positive feedback from participants and partners.

#### *Classic Rock Cruise-In Car Show*

The Castle Rock community celebrated the 16th Annual Classic Rock Cruise-In Car Show on Saturday, June 15, 2024, in partnership with the Vintage Car Club of Castle Rock. With excellent weather, over 300 classic and exotic cars, a free rock-climbing wall, free bounce houses, a free face painter and free balloon artist. Local bands, Scarecrow Revival and longtime band at the car show, The Atomic Drifters, played car show music enjoyed by all ages. There were 9 different food trucks providing a great selection of food, desserts and snacks at the event. Beverages were available from Rockyard Brewing Co., 4 Noses Brewing Co., Wild Blue Yonder Brewing Co., 105 West Brewing Co., 105 West Bear'l Cellars, and Molly Brown Distillery. This Car Show Weekend was the largest Car Show that the DMA has produced, and it was rewarding to see so many happy people in Castle Rock at the event.

#### **Downtown Businesses Engagement**

Once a year, the DMA and DDA hold a Downtown Stakeholders meeting that is open to the public and information is presented about downtown events, programs, and projects. This year, Town Public Work Staff and Castle Rock Police Department presented to the audience as well, providing information about upcoming construction and traffic and parking enforcement. The Castle Rock Downtown Alliance (both DMA and DDA) facilitate these meetings to provide information and answer questions. The DMA hopes these efforts assist the Town in answering questions and disseminating vital information.

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.

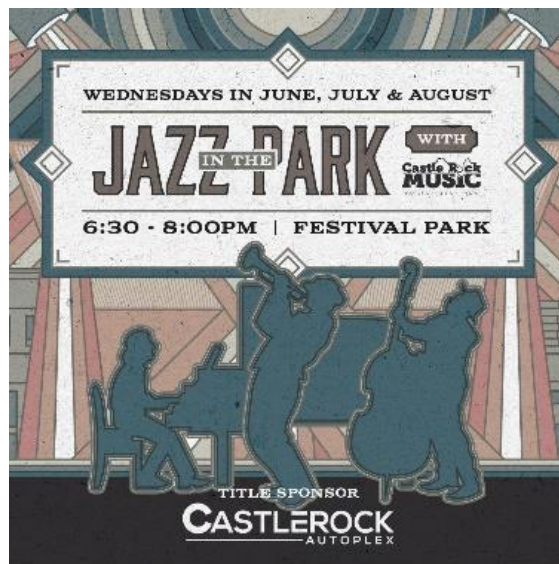
#### **Summary**

The DMA is working extremely hard to provide value to the Town of Castle Rock. The partnership between the Town and DMA leverages taxpayer dollars to go farther. For every \$1 received through this service contract, the DMA generates an additional \$3 that go straight to free events and free

entertainment for the Castle Rock community and visitors. The DMA is proud of this model for funding community events and is thankful for the partnership with the Town of Castle Rock. So far in 2024, the DMA has been fortunate to have great weather and great attendance, and the impact of these events has provided safe, family friendly entertainment to the community as well as to serve as an economic generator for the small businesses in Downtown.

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Attached are several examples of the marketing materials from DMA produced events in 2024, as well as a few photos.





Spring Kickoff Concert



Movie in the Park



Car Show Weekend - Friday Street Party & Concert



Car Show Weekend – Saturday Car Show



Trolley Rides in June, July & August - Marketing

**DOWNTOWN CASTLE ROCK**  
**TROLLEY RIDES**  
**FREE TO RIDE!**  
**EVERY WEDNESDAY 6:00-8:00PM**  
**JUNE, JULY & AUGUST, 2024**

SPONSORED BY  
**Advent Health**  
 Castle Rock

Map labels: US AVENUE, WILCOX ST., FOURTH ST., THIRD ST., FIFTH ST.

Legend: PICK-UP & DROP-OFF LOCATION