



CASTLE ROCK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Submitted to: Mayor Gray and Town Council
Report by: Pam Ridler, Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce
Submitted: August 6, 2021
Re: Castle Rock Chamber's January-July 2021 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 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.

- Due to COVID we canceled some in person classes from January through March but held training events.
- One-on-one Business Consultations with expert volunteer assistance are now taking place in person.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Business Assistance Programing:

- **One-on-one business consultations** with expert volunteer counseling to date with 9 businesses and/or start-ups with 14 hours of services. The value of volunteer services is \$700 to date. Due to Covid we had to cancel in person consultations from January-May however did hold virtual consultations.
- **Business trainings**--*3rd Tech Tuesday, BizBuilder Lunch 'n Learn, Horizon Breakfasts and Women of Influence series* continue to grow in popularity. To date we have conducted 12 training events with 380 (+23%) participants (virtually & in person). Business volunteers have contributed a value of over \$3,875 of in-kind professional staffing.

B. **Workforce Development—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 pipeline into the future.

- Received a \$35,000 grant in March 2021 through ADWorks! for our workforce program which assisted in the hiring of a Business Services Liaison Apprentice through a work-based learning training grant.
- Have begun the process of creating Industry Collaboratives we are targeting healthcare, construction, and technology industries.
- Partnered with ADWorks! in coordinating and promoting three virtual Job Fair Events
- Continue to host Job Board promoting businesses open 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 \$15,000 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, 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 31), Colorado Artfest (September 11 & 12) and Starlighting (November 20) events.

Community Events the Chamber has conducted in 2021 to date:

Castle Rock Winefest (July 17, 2021) recently celebrated its 17th year after the cancellation of the event in 2020. The event was held at Butterfield Park in the Meadows. 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 activities to increase the economic impact to Castle Rock's local economy and marketing exposure.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES WineFest:

- Ticket sales with multiple partnerships and new marketing outlets, the 2021 WineFest was a huge success with a total of 3221 attendees (+34%).

- Social media Event impressions reached 11,953 with 944 Responses. Paid Advertising Reach: 5,276, with 255 Link Clicks.
- Print ads included in local magazine Douglas County Living and included in online enewsletter: AreaNewsletter.
- Current media (radio) 150 promotional spots in two markets, recorded 10 interviews
- Staffing—75 volunteers estimated at 425 hours value equity of \$12,130**.

*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 \$28.54/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 DC Fair Parade:

- 64 parade entries with an estimated 9,248 viewers and participants (-28%) We reduced entries by 17% this year due to staging concerns from recent road infrastructure changes.
- Social media Event impressions reached 16,368 with 1,061 Responses.
- Staffing—27 volunteers estimated at 62 hours value equity of \$1,769**.

**Town funding is received in the amount \$2,153 for DC Fair Parade, \$7,376 for Artfest and \$5,286 for Starlighting events.*

***Volunteer event staffing is valued at 28.54/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.

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. Created/distributed new VisitCastleRock.org promotional rack cards distributed 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.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Community Marketing:

- VisitCastleRock.org page views currently are 74,221 (+78%) with 59% being new users.
- The Business Directory website hits are 39,704 (-3%).
- Event Calendar Pageviews 3,909 (+16%) We saw an increase in pageviews on the following pages: Dining +111%, Shop +94%, Play/Attractions +113%.
- Our social media presence on Facebook on three FB pages (Castle Rock Chamber, Visit Castle Rock, Castle Rock Chamber Events) through July 2021 is 15,978 (+8%) total followers, Twitter followers are 1409 (-27%) and Instagram followers are 1804 (+10%). 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.
- The Chamber’s community email list of 9,507 residents were sent a total of 78 emails (Jan-July) to promote various local events, Town/County News, Under the Dome updates, latest Business news, Member happenings and Community Resources.
- Mailing of 2,623 (+32%) new residents’ packets which are sent monthly to new water hookups to encourage shopping for products and services locally.
- Visitor Center—To date the Chamber has welcomed 4,892 visitors (+11%).

**Town funding is received in the amount of \$22,600 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 22nd class in June graduating 13 class participants (class size was intentionally kept small due to COVID) 8 class members either live and/or work in Castle Rock representing local businesses, non-profits or in the public sector.
- The program has graduated a total of 420 graduates since 2000.
- During January to June of 2021, LDC included 552 hours, volunteer/panelists. Class participant hours approx. 1,272 hours (includes class project time) The hours above performed by 84 different volunteers, contributing a value of \$27,600.
- 2021-2022 has not been chosen at the time of this report.

**Town funding is received in the amount of \$2,000 for this program.*

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