



## 2020 Annual Report

Submitted to: Castle Rock Town Council  
From: Pam Ridler, President/CEO

The Castle Rock Chamber exists to be:

- The Catalyst for Business Growth
- The Convener of Leaders and Influencers to make things happen
- The Champion for a Stronger Thriving Community

### Pandemic Crises Response / Reopening / Rebuilding

Since the beginning of COVID in 2020, our focus has been to support safe and responsible reopening of our businesses to assure the economic and mental well-being of our community. The Chamber assisted in supporting the development and implementation of a community-driven, data-informed business certification plan (5 Star Covid Business Best Practice Program) committed to promoting and rewarding outstanding safety and proven practices which support virus suppression while creating opportunities for businesses to operate with more flexibility.

The Chamber conducted additional outreach to our local businesses (both members & non-members) to find out how they were managing, what resources they needed and collaborated with our Castle Rock Economic Partnership CREP by offering local connections and resources to reopen our businesses.

The Chamber created the CRCStrong.com website and utilized our social media platforms to promote, support, connect and unify the community during the pandemic. Our website provides up-to-date resources and information related to health, business support, prevention, and business recovery.

In addition, the Chamber created a *Reopen Castle Rock Business Playbook* which provided best practices and focused on how they can implement health and safety protocols in their businesses for their customers and staff. Also, in partnership we created a unified social media campaign to feature and promote many of our hardest hit businesses. We have created over a dozen social media promotions to promote our local businesses who have gone the extra mile in becoming 5 Star Covid Best Practice Businesses on FB/Instagram which is ongoing. Furthermore, an online business directory was created to promote curbside, delivery & online shopping options during the shutdown.

CREP organizations worked together to provide five community virtual conference meetings early on with experts from CO Lending Source, the SBA, Centura Health, Town, and County officials to communicate financial resource opportunities for local businesses.

### Business Assistance Services

The Chamber continued to support the needs of our local employers and businesses through our eXcelerate Business Development program as well as Talent Pipeline programs. These programs provide a myriad of educational resources to encourage the development and growth of our workforce and entrepreneurial activities to both start-ups and established businesses.

- The Chamber shifted from holding in-person employment fairs to virtual fairs, partnering with ACC and AD/Works. A total of 4 events (1 in person & 3 virtual) were held with 60 employers and more than 250 job seekers.
- The Chamber also went through the process of becoming certified as a *Talent Pipeline Management Chamber* through the US Chamber.
- 64 businesses utilized our Chamber electronic job board by posting their open positions throughout the year.
- 21 entrepreneurs took advantage of our one-on-one business consulting services conducted by our expert volunteer consultants.
- Hosted 9 Business training classes with 103 participants
- New Business Outreach program-welcomed 298 new businesses on behalf of CREP helping to make local connections and providing numerous local resources.

### Leadership DC

The LDC program is designed to identify, educate, and motivate current and emerging leaders who will strengthen and enhance a sustainable community. LDC is in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year/10-month series with reduced class size of 13 participants due to capacity concerns. For the first time in LDC history, we have successfully administered three completely virtual class days.

### Community Marketing

We continue to have success with the visually engaging and interactive VisitCastleRock.org community website. This site allows local organizations, vendors, and event planners to submit their events to the community calendar for promotion. This site integrates our areas' cultural scene, which promotes community events, area nightlife, historic tours, and museum, in addition to recreational activities. This site is a great resource for those individuals looking to relocate to Castle Rock. Information on senior living, churches, schools, daycares, neighborhoods, government services, higher education or emergency services are directly linked to the appropriate providers in our community.

2020 presented opportunities for the Chamber to leverage our social media and website platforms to distribute and connect with the community in real time, and you can see here, our hard work paid off:

- Facebook followers = 15,452
- Twitter followers = 1,434
- Instagram followers = 1,572
- Web Pageviews/weekly = 18,554
- CRCStrong.com page views = 34,542
- Email Reach/monthly = 30,116 contacts

### Visitor/Relocation Support

- Visitor Center assistance is provided at the Chamber's Victoria House in providing in-person assistance, Livability magazine, maps, and promotion of our local businesses and attractions.
- Shop the Rock Welcome packets were distributed 3,374 new residents.

### Community Events

Our community events create a sense of hometown character that is highly valued by our residents and businesses. Although most community events were canceled due to the pandemic in 2020, the Chamber was able to host the 31<sup>st</sup> Castle Rock Artfest and 84<sup>th</sup> Starlighting. The feedback from our community was astounding. We heard from residents that they were grateful for these events to take place because they were able to bring the community together, while maintaining our commitment to keep everyone safe and healthy. We are hopeful that 2021 will afford us the opportunity to bring back many of our beloved events the Chamber traditionally hosts, including the Colorado WineFest and Douglas County Fair Parade in July.

### Advocate for Business

The Chamber continues to serve as the voice of business by working with our elected officials and staff to assist in maintaining an environment in which business can thrive in a healthy economy.

- The Chamber and our partners hosted five virtual forums: Meet the Candidates for Town Council, Douglas County, US Senate and CO Senate/House and a 2020 Ballot Election Forum.
- Hosted two Horizon events with the purpose of providing informative, thought-provoking sessions that allowed participants to gain insight from a distinguished panel of speakers as they discussed relevant topics that build and shape our economy.
- Interviewed Town Council candidates prior to the fall election.