



**Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce
Public Policy Missions and Values**

*IGNITING PASSION FOR
BUSINESS SUCCESS & COMMUNITY PROSPERITY*

CASTLE ROCK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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ROLE OF CASTLE ROCK CHAMBER IN PUBLIC POLICY

The Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce (The Chamber) recognizes that government has a significant impact on its members through local, county, state and federal legislation and regulation. While monitoring these areas of government, the Chamber identifies emerging issues and influences the course of events for the betterment of its members and community.

As an important player in the governmental arena, the Chamber is a strong advocate for legislation that enhances the economic climate of Castle Rock and Douglas County.

The issues contained in this document represent the concerns of Chamber members and reflect the philosophical consensus of the Board of Directors.

MISSION/VISION/VALUES/BELIEFS

Our Mission:

The Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce is to:

- **Support and promote** member businesses
- Be a “**business voice**” to government
- Foster a livable community with **positive-growth**

Our Vision:

Igniting Passion for Business Success & Community Prosperity

Our Values:

- **Accountability** – to provide transparent & responsive leadership; acting as good stewards of funds, time & resources
- **Innovation** – to inspire new ideas, solutions and opportunities
- **Integrity** – to do things right and always do the right thing
- **Respect** – to earn trust & to hold others in high esteem
- **Teamwork** – to motivate and empower one another to do great things
- **Relationships** – to build enduring connections and partnerships founded upon honesty, gratitude & commitment
- **Diversity**– to honor and value varied ideas, beliefs and practices

Our Beliefs:

- Business is an essential element of all successful communities. A community’s fundamental existence rests upon the foundation of a healthy economy.
- A community’s basic well-being (quality of life) and economic well-being are inextricably entwined.
- The interests of residents, businesses, government, and educators and the not-for-profit sector are inextricably bound together. All have a stake in the community’s success.
- Economic development creates wealth for the community for residents of the community and enhances the community’s stability. We believe a growing economy enhances the wealth and livability of a community.
- We believe the community must continually re-examine and reinvest itself when necessary to remain competitive and to create its preferred future.
- A regional approach to economic opportunities and issues is essential. For the Douglas County region to be economically successful, Castle Rock must be economically successful.
- In the conduct of our work, we strive to meet high expectations, respect and protect the resources of our community and our members, are honest and trustworthy in motives and actions, are visionary and open to all possibilities, are respectful and inclusive of various viewpoints and act with the strength of conviction even in the face of adversity.
- We will be open and honest in our dealings with the community.

The Chamber believes that an environment that is friendly to businesses is imperative to the economic health and development of the region. Further, the Chamber believes that fiscal restraint, sustainability, stability, simplicity and prioritization of programs and funding must be the guiding principles for setting the State of Colorado's regulatory environment, and tax and fee policies, as well as spending policy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Economic Development is the intentional process by which we, as a community, increase our ability to produce goods and services, which in turn increases per capita income for residents. It is a balanced utilization of our economic, human and natural resources for the benefit of the people of Castle Rock and Douglas County.

The Chamber supports further diversification of industries to create a well-balanced business community. The Chamber is committed to supporting the attraction and startup of primary employers that will diversify the Castle Rock area economy, create capital investment and increase employment opportunities for our residents. We believe primary employers are the economic foundation of the community. Primary employers are companies which produce goods and services in excess of what can be consumed by the local market. Those goods not consumed by the local market are exported to other markets in exchange for money ('export' income). This flow of new income into the community becomes capital investments, payrolls and creates secondary benefits including 'indirect' or 'spin-off' jobs. Money flowing into the community from primary employers provides the economic resources necessary to support a viable community..

The Chamber supports the local economy to develop more high-paying jobs, retention, expansion, recruitment and startup efforts should be focused primarily on specific industry groups as identified by the Castle Rock Economic Partnership which is composed of leadership of the Town of Castle Rock, Castle Rock Economic Development Corporation, Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Alliance.

SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The Chamber recognizes the importance of helping our existing and new industries grow and prosper because most new jobs come from the expansion of existing companies. The attraction, retention, expansion and startup of primary employers is a highly competitive endeavor requiring a coordinated effort by public and private sectors. The Chamber supports efforts of local government to create a favorable business climate in which private enterprise can function effectively and can plan for its future with confidence.

A strong sense of public-private cooperation is a key ingredient for creating such a business climate and is supported through the Chamber's relationship with and participation in the Castle Rock Economic Partnership. By using local government's resources and powers to reduce the risks and costs which could prohibit investment, the public sector can set the stage for employment-generating investment by the private sector. Government can support a variety of initiatives that encourage private sector investments that benefit the community, including:

- Adopt policies and programs to provide services and infrastructure that benefit businesses such as streets, water systems, police and fire. Infrastructure represents those types of community capital investments that serve the activities of many industries including streets, communication networks, schools, water and energy supplies – that all support primary employers by increasing the productivity of labor and capital thereby reducing the costs of production and raising profitability, production, income and employment.
- We believe that the Town of Castle Rock and Douglas County should have dynamic economic plans that are up-to-date and closely coordinate with the industry clusters being targeted. These plans should guide Castle Rock and Douglas County's staff during the development review process and should help expedite the process for companies in the targeted industry clusters.
- We believe that economic advisory boards should guide Castle Rock and Douglas County officials through the discussion of economic issues and decisions. Such boards should consist of people from the business community, economists and organizations including the Chamber and the Economic Development Council.
- Continued labor force preparation in partnership with Higher Education, K-12 and Vocational Training.
- Adopt policies and programs explicitly directed at improving the business climate through specific efforts including but not limited to: business finance, marketing, business retention and expansion, technology transfer, real estate development incentives and government incentives.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Chamber is dedicated to the basic philosophy of actively and affirmatively supporting the free enterprise system. Consequently, the Chamber believes that government should be neutral and impartial in disputes between management and employees. The Chamber opposes governmental legislation that restricts the rights and responsibilities of management to effectively direct the operations of an enterprise, particularly in the area of employer/employee relations. Economic stability can best be achieved by voluntary action on the part of the employer and the employee rather than governmental regulation.

HEALTH CARE

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Although Americans have access to some of the best medical care in the world, a variety of factors continue to drive up the costs of medical care and health care coverage. This makes access to health care more difficult with each passing year. Clearly, the situation is not sustainable, and continued reform is necessary. The Chamber supports patient-centered reforms that will allow all Americans to have access to a market-based healthcare system that provide quality, affordable care. The Chamber believes seeking to ensure any increases in the cost of healthcare must provide a clear benefit to the business community.

TOURISM

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Tourism is an important source of community income and employment. The Chamber believes a successful tourism program requires adequate funding, a variety of lodging and meeting facilities, a broad range of attractions and events and a professionally managed marketing program.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Workforce Development is the process by which we, as a community, increase the quantity and quality of the labor force so business can be competitive and working age residents can be gainfully employed to their fullest potential. What the community does to enhance the skills of its workforce is very important for economic competitiveness.

To have a viable workforce, the community must continue to address both education and training and how they impact the full workforce continuum, which includes the Emerging Workforce (K-12, vocational and college students), Transitional Workforce (dislocated workers, unemployed but seeking, recent graduates, out of school and welfare recipients) and current Workforce (employed at potential, under-employed, employed with special needs, working poor, under-skilled and part-time contingent).

GOOD GOVERNMENT

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Chamber believes that business should expect government to be predictable, efficient in the delivery of services, reasonable in imposition of costs, be accessible and responsive, open and transparent, accurate and timely. Focus should be on basic services, being mindful of property rights and avoiding mandates when possible and most importantly be business friendly.

FEES AND TAXATION

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Business is willing to pay a reasonable level of taxes and fees for essential public services. In short, tax policy should promote a healthy business and economic climate that encourages investment in capital equipment and human capital.

- Monitor legislation which possibly could increase taxes and utilization of those monies.
- Evaluate structure of the local government and find opportunities to restructure, streamline or eliminate programs and processes to increase efficiencies, reduce costs and enhance accountability.
- Support legislation that allows for an equitable environment in which individuals and businesses in similar situations are taxed and regulated.

Continue to monitor and support the elimination of the Business Personal Property Tax in order to foster an economically viable business community.

EDUCATION

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Education is the key to our economic competitiveness and standard of life. We believe that the goal of education is to produce educated citizens with marketable skills, who are productive members of society. High school graduates should be proficient in math and science, be able to read and write, have a basic understanding of civics and should have problem solving and interpersonal skills. As well, students should have some understanding of how business contributes to the economic vitality of a community and general business classes should be required of all high school students.

The Chamber supports efforts that will provide cost effective and accountable alternatives for strengthening the education system. Adequate funding is an essential ingredient in public education, but increased spending alone does not assure learning and consequently should not be the focus of education policy. Education is a life-long endeavor, which requires adequate emphasis on pre-school through post-secondary education and continuing education as well as the fostering of a strong educational and life-long learning ethic in the community.

- **K-12 Public** schools in Douglas County should be competitive at a world-class level. To obtain this level, key components must be evident:
 - High standards for all students
 - Accurate assessments to measure students' aptitude and progress
 - Challenging curriculums with real-world applications which include leading-edge instructional effectiveness in technology, science, engineering and mathematics
 - Strategically retain and recruit competent, inspired and quality teachers
 - A culture of continuous improvement
 - Accountability tools that measure the school system's performance
 - A supportive business community which fosters school/business partnerships

- **Higher Education and Vocational Training** facilities providing life-long learning opportunities.
 - Cost effective efforts to improve the financial situation of institutions of higher learning.
 - Expansion of higher educational entities
 - Encourage non-traditional secondary educational opportunities such as trade, vocational and technical training.
 - Create partnership opportunities between business and higher education programming.

The interaction between businesspersons, students and teachers in the classroom is vital. For public schools to function well and to be truly representative of the community, the Chamber believes it is important for business people to run for and serve on the school board and other education committees and task forces.

ENVIRONMENT

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Chamber believes that a local business climate that protects and enhances its natural environment can be healthy, productive and prosperous. By enhancing the business community's awareness and knowledge of how the natural environment and the economy relate, additional opportunities and resources that are good for both business and the environment will result. We believe that the productivity and wealth created by a thriving, growing economy provides the resources that allow area residents to support a clean and robust natural environment. The Chamber supports those measures necessary to protect the natural environment and public health. The Chamber supports the following fundamental principles:

- Castle Rock will grow and economic development should occur. The economy and the environment are interdependent; a strong healthy economy can provide the resources required to protect and restore natural resources. In addition, a functioning, productive environment preserves the quality of life, attracts and retains primary employers and strengthens the economy.
- Reasonable efforts should be made to integrate business development into the area's natural environment.
- Economic and environmental objectives are best achieved through orderly compromise rather than conflict and toward that end; the Chamber seeks to establish positive relationships. Opportunities should be created to allow environmentalists and business representatives to establish areas of agreement, work through problems and develop positive joint initiatives.
- Disseminating information to the businesses community about environmentally friendly ways of conducting business is a key tool in changing behaviors.
- Recycling efforts should be supported and encouraged.

GROWTH PLANNING

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Castle Rock is a desirable place to live, making growth highly likely. The community must find ways to maintain a high quality of life while accommodating growth. It is wise to prepare for population growth by recognizing the importance of the interdependence of the marketplace, planning and infrastructure and being realistic about projected growth.

HOUSING

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Some of the biggest factors in the cost of housing are local and state government laws and regulations relative to building codes, land use code and government land purchases. Public policies for such things as open lands and income-restricted housing, in the absence of objective financial analysis, can have the consequence of limiting the availability of affordable housing options. The Chamber's policy fosters development of housing that meets the demand of the market and is attainable.

INFRASTRUCTURE

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Chamber believes that Colorado, Douglas County and Castle Rock will continue to grow and that government should plan for adequate infrastructure, communitywide and regionally, to accommodate that growth. Infrastructure is comprised of the facilities and systems shared or used by all area citizens. The facilities have in common the requirement for significant capital investment. These investments influence the quality of our lives, economic productivity, how we relate to our environment, land use patterns and the very character of the community. These improvements include our roads, traffic signals, potable water system, waste water system, storm water system, landfill and recycling centers (land and equipment), emergency vehicles, public transportation, libraries, (land, buildings, books and technology), artistic and cultural facilities, parks and recreation (land, landscape, equipment) and government facilities (land, buildings). The Chamber does not support programs and mandates that unduly burden business beyond the basic cost of service.

INFRASTRUCTURE: ELECTRICITY

ELECTRICITY RATES: The Chamber does not support progressive utility rate pricing, also known as tiered rates. Capital expansion and significant system improvements are acceptable uses of rate increases when approved by the community. The Chamber is against any manipulation of rates for the payment or finance of any project other than the production and delivery of the service. Public officials should not view utility revenues as a source of funds available to support non-production and delivery projects as this is a tax increase without the approval of the community.

ENERGY, GENERAL: Cost effective generation and distribution of energy is an essential factor in the economic viability of Castle Rock and the quality of life of our community. The community's economic prosperity is closely tied to the availability of reliable, affordable energy supplies. Rapid growth of our country's energy demand requires a comprehensive national energy plan and strategy. The basic infrastructure involved in the generation and distribution of energy, especially electricity, is complicated, expensive and takes years to develop and requires large capital investment. Government can assist this transition by incenting the use of clean and renewable technologies, funding research, being careful and prudent about significantly altering energy policy to address climate change, and keeping affordability and reliability of electricity as key criteria. In short, the gradual evolution of energy sources should be realistic and done in a manner that benefits Colorado while not harming it economically.

- Reliable and most cost-effective energy sources are vital to economic development and retention of businesses in Douglas County.

- Public utilities must be accountable to their business and corporate customers, serving present and future needs.

Creation and use of all energy sources that are reliable and affordable.

INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSPORTATION

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Chamber believes a community's transportation infrastructure is a key element for its quality of life, safety and economic viability. Regarding the latter, transportation infrastructure, particularly a properly functioning street system, remains a cornerstone to a viable and healthy economy. Transportation infrastructure includes roads and streets, signalization, mass transit, air service, pedestrian and bicycle. In addition, the Chamber believes that all such elements must be present to have a viable transportation system that meets the needs of the community. And, as noted above, the Chamber believes emphasis must be placed on an adequate road/streets system which is properly planned for future capacity and is focused on putting resources on street surfaces as opposed to landscaping and auxiliary surfaces.

- Ongoing maintenance and upgrades of existing roads, as well as the construction of new roadways are critical pieces of an overall transportation plan.
- Continued development of multimodal forms of transit should be considered where viable.
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive transportation plan for Castle Rock and Douglas County that prioritizes the overall transportation needs.
- Evaluation of localized transit options that provide links with regional transit should be discussed.
- Communicate and seek relations with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to enhance transportation between Douglas County and Castle Rock.
- Evaluate sources of revenue for additional funding of transportation needs.

INFRASTRUCTURE: STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Chamber believes that safe, environmentally sensitive and economically responsible use of floodplains and stormwater facilities is required for a sustainable, safe and economically successful community. The Chamber supports the jurisdictional decision-making concept that incorporates social, environmental and economic factors. We believe all three of these factors should be carefully weighed by the public and private sectors in a balanced manner prior to implementation, to promote the advancement of and prevent negative impacts to any of these three factors.

INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

Colorado has tremendous water resources that require careful resource planning, development and use. Douglas County and the entire state of Colorado, faces serious economic and environmental impacts from a failure to plan for future droughts and water shortages. As Colorado annually loses nearly half-a-million acre-feet of its fully entitled water, strategies must be deployed to increase water storage capacity while conserving available resources. The Chamber is a proponent of increasing our water supply while pursuing a reasonable policy of water demand management, as well as purchasing additional water rights as they become available.

- Support water policies that ensure sustainable water supplies that will support long-term growth and development within Douglas County.
- The Denver Basin ground water aquifers are finite in nature and should be used only as an interim supply until renewable source of surface water can be imported into the county and as drought supply in the long-term future.
- Water legislation can be detrimental to the development of renewable surface water and the Chamber opposes legislation that will deter development and transmission of such water into the county.
- Support development of water storage and transmission projects that can benefit multiple water providers

PRODUCT LIABILITY/CIVIL JUSTICE REFORM

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

America's litigation system is the world's most expensive. Research indicates that class action lawsuit filings rose more than 300 percent in federal courts and more than 1,000 percent in state courts in the past decade. A litigious environment is a brake on the American and Colorado economies because it diverts business resources from product research and development. The Chamber believes that there needs to be equitable and predictable rules governing product liability litigation and redefining the responsibilities of parties that manufacture, sell and use products. To that end, the Chamber believes that the 1986 and subsequent reforms to the tort system were positive and should be maintained. They do a reasonable job of balancing the rights of plaintiffs and defendants. Such balance is critical for maintaining a good climate for business.

REGIONALISM

BASIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Chamber believes in the concept of 'regionalism.' While localized political considerations are extremely important, they are not the only thing that matters to creating a vibrant local economy and bright future for the residents of Castle Rock. Actions of other area communities does impact Castle Rock and vice versa. To that end, active participation and dialogue between the communities must be fostered at every opportunity and Castle Rock should be a leader in regionalism efforts.

**GOVERNMENT INTERESTS COMMITTEE (GIC)
FRAMEWORK-adopted June 26, 2014**

Mission:

To provide the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce board of directors (Chamber Board) with information allowing the Chamber Board to be a proactive voice and advocate for the business community regarding governmental and legislative issues; facilitate communication and education between the business community, local and state governments and; promote economic interests which contribute to the quality of life for business owners and residents of Castle Rock.

Structure:

Governmental Issues (Regular Committee)

The Committee will review state, county and town agendas and recommend positions on legislative matters and ballot issues affecting the business community to the Chamber Board. Designated representatives will be appointed to the committee who will follow/testify on legislative issues when necessary.

Committee Composition: *Participants must be a Castle Rock Chamber member*, this committee will strive for the goal to represent the Chamber's membership composition by profession. In addition, GIC will have ex-officio positions which could include Town Council, Town staff and/or County elected officials and/or County staff.

Board Appointments:

- Serve 2 year terms
- Appointments for unexpired terms will be appointed by the Chamber Board.
- Vacancies should be advertised to the general membership and go through an application process.
- At least two members of the Chamber Board should serve on the GIC Committee.

Meeting Attendance:

Members of the GIC must attend 70% of scheduled meetings, measured quarterly.

- *Extended Leaves of Absence:* Extended leaves of absence should be communicated in writing, must be approved by the Chairperson or Chamber staff, or may require committee discussion.
- *Probation:* The first time a committee member misses more than 30% of the meetings in a quarter, the Chairperson will contact the member to communicate probationary status. Chamber staff will maintain documentation of the contact. Absence from more than 30% of the meetings in any quarter following the probationary notification will be considered a resignation from the committee, with no further action necessary.

Policy Process:

1. A legislative and/or ballot issue may be identified by a Chamber committee, members or Chamber staff.
2. The issue is then referred to the GIC for investigation, research, and discussion.
3. The GIC supports, opposes, or takes a neutral position. When approved, it is forwarded to the Chamber Board as a recommended position.
4. The Chamber Board approves, rejects, or modifies the recommendation. If approved, the recommendation is adopted and action is taken if appropriate.

5. Only the Chamber Board can establish a policy position for the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce, except to the extent that the Chamber Board authorizes the Executive Committee to act during periods between Chamber Board meetings.

Proactive vs. Reactive:

Issues may surface with little notice and may not allow time for the formal policy process to be followed. When time does not allow for the process to be followed, the GIC, Executive Committee or the Chamber Board may develop a position by using guiding principles as the standards to provide sound consistent public policy positions and use of email voting. The GIC and Chamber Board will also utilize the expertise of, research obtained, and positions established by the Douglas County Business Alliance in the decision-making process. Either the Executive Committee or the Board must approve public policy positions.

If the positions are clearly consistent with stated principles, the Chamber Board may take a proactive position whether in support of or opposing to the issue without following this process. This should only be done on an exception basis and will not be common practice.

Guiding Principles:

The Chamber will promote improvements to the quality of life and economic growth for Castle Rock and Douglas County as follows:

1. Promote a free trade and competitive market.
2. Represent the general business perspective on issues, which may differ from the perspective of other organizations in the community.
3. Weigh all issues appropriately against the price of government intervention, control or regulation on the local, state and federal levels.
4. Support a cost-effective government that is realistic and responsible.
5. Support a business community that is inclusive and not parochial, as businesses are competing in a global economy.
6. Promote ethical and appropriate business regulations and business practices, which encourage
 - A healthy and safe workplace
 - Responsible environmental protection and environmental practices
 - Fair employment practices
 - Appropriate economic growth
7. Promote ethical entrepreneurial activities
8. Advocate and promote sound approaches and initiatives that improve the community's overall quality of life.

Meeting Frequency: 1st & 3rd Tuesday's at 7:30 a.m.