



Town of New Castle

Newsletter

A Quarterly Update for Residents

Spring 2024

Welcome to the Quarterly Newsletter

With this edition of the New Castle Newsletter, the publication schedule shifts from monthly to quarterly. The newsletter will be issued in March, June, September and December. For weekly announcements, please subscribe to the Friday email news from the town website (www.newcastlecolorado.org) under the Our Town tab. Also please follow these Facebook pages: Visit New Castle, New Castle Government, New Castle Colorado Chamber of Commerce and New Castle Recreation.

Here We Grow Again: Background Information for Residents



Charles Englebert Photography

After years of relatively slow growth, the Town of New Castle has begun to see new interest from landowners who may wish to bring development applications forward for review. During the development boom years of the late 1990's and early 2000's, much of the Castle Valley Ranch, Lakota, Burning Mountain, Riverpark and City Market Plaza areas went from being rural rangeland to well-developed neighborhoods, a shopping plaza, a golf course, community center, restaurants, gas stations, car wash, hotel, schools, and other features that now serve the town well. The rate of growth during these years had not been seen since the town's incorporation in the late 1800's.

Following the economic recession of 2008, New Castle experienced a sudden cessation of housing starts and commercial development; area residents saw sharp rises in mortgage rates and foreclosures as they watched housing prices tumble to unthinkable lows. Between the years 2009 and 2020 the town sat relatively idle with very few building permits issued for new homes.

Since 2021 the town has issued 72 new home building permits, largely on existing vacant lots, and has approved development in Lakota of an additional 185 homes and approximately 56,000 square feet of commercial space which has yet to begin construction. Current land use applications under review include a 135-unit development above VIX Park and a phased buildout of Mixed Used property near the Castle Valley Ranch roundabout, which may include a mix of commercial buildings and open gathering space. Both applications are in the early stages of comment and review.

As with all neighborhoods that have been built in the last several decades, the land-use application process includes multiple steps which start with a basic sketch, followed by multiple Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council meetings that are designed to include public feedback throughout much of the process. Land-use applications are measured against the town's zoning codes, municipal codes, town comprehensive plan, public works manual, proper water rights dedications, and other approval criteria to assure that final applications satisfy all approval standards. Throughout this process landowners receive constructive input from P&Z, Town Council, and the public to achieve a final product that makes sense for the owner and the town.

To learn more about the status of current land use applications residents are encouraged to visit the town website, weekly e-newsletter, quarterly newsletter, textmygov messaging, and New Castle Facebook pages. Residents nearest a property under review are notified via US mail of certain upcoming meeting dates as the process reaches its preliminary public hearing stage. Residents may also reach out to Town Hall and arrange time to meet with town staff to learn more about any given application or the general review process.

Roundabout Project Has Begun

Lines of cars backed up on the New Castle bridge and the interstate twice a day have long made it evident that the four-way stop at the entrance to town is inadequate for traffic control. For several years, town staff has worked with CDOT to develop plans for a roundabout, attended countless meetings and waited patiently for the project to move up CDOT's priority list and get funded.

Underground utility work is under way, to be followed by the actual construction of the roundabout. As final construction plans are completed by CDOT's contractor, town staff will be informed of future lane closures and possible traffic delays. Staff will pass the information to the public using the town e-newsletter, New Castle, Colorado Government Facebook page, and textmygov. To sign up for textmygov, text New Castle to 91896 and reply Yes.

Annual Earth Day celebration in April



New Castle's annual Earth Day celebration will take place over two days: Friday April 19 and Saturday April 20. Internationally, Earth Day 2024 is focused on reducing the production and use of plastic. See www.earthday.org, and watch for information from New Castle's Climate and Environment Commission. To start: Use a refillable water bottle rather than single-use plastic.

On April 19, volunteers will gather at the Apple Tree office at 9:00 am for the annual CR 335 cleanup. There will be a barbeque in the park at 11:30, following the cleanup. Please call 970-984-2247 to sign up. On April 20, the

Lions Club will clean up the two miles of Rt.6 immediately east of New Castle. To join them, please meet at 9:30 am at the City Market sign (at the south side of the parking lot).

On Saturday, April 20, the Climate and Environment Commission will again host an Earth Day event next to City Market. Representatives from Mountain Waste and Recycling, Evergreen ZeroWaste, Mountain West Beekeepers, City Market, Garfield Clean Energy, CLEER, Xcel, Colorado River Fire Rescue, New Castle Coffee and others will have giveaways and information. Everyone is invited to stop by between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm.

A Very Special Founders Day

New Castle's Founders Day is a yearly celebration of the town's history, held in February, the month of the town's incorporation in 1888. This year Founders Day was on Saturday, February 3, and featured a talk by Steve Rippy about the town's first thirty years. Steve has his own history with the town; his father operated a lumber camp on the Flat Tops and Steve attended the New Castle School. He served as a Town Councilor and Mayor. When he and wife Becky moved to the family home east of town, he resigned as Mayor, but soon after was chosen as the town administrator. He has collected historic photos and done extensive historic research, much of which is shared on the Facebook page New Castle Old Photographs and History.

After his presentation, Steve was surprised with the presentation of the first Local Historian Legacy Award. This recognition, which will be awarded from time to time, was named in Steve's honor. His talk was videotaped and is available on the Visit New Castle Facebook page.



New Castle's April 2 Election Cancelled

Has anybody missed the fact that 2024 is an election year? Like all even-numbered years, 2024 brings a Town Council Election. This year, three Council seats are up for election. By the January 29 deadline, the three incumbents all submitted nomination petitions, and there were no challengers. When there are no more candidates than there are open seats, the Town Council can cancel the election and declare the candidates elected. At its February 6 meeting the Council passed Resolution TC2024-06, cancelling the April 2 election and naming incumbents Grady Hazelton, Crystal Mariscal and Graham Riddle to four-year terms on the Council. They will be sworn in at the April 16 Council meeting.

Positions on the town's three commissions are filled following each Council election. To be filled are three seats on the Planning and Zoning Commission, two seats on the Historic Preservation Commission and three seats on the Climate and Environment Commission. Applicants can submit a letter of interest to the town clerk by March 15.

New Castle Garden Club 2023 Awards

From May to October, New Castle Garden Club (NCGC) members gave awards to outstanding New Castle gardens in three categories: overall garden, xeriscape garden, and patio/deck garden. In 2023, Garden of the Month awards went to

805 Ute Circle
13 Stag Court
720 W. Main
844 Riverbend

891 Faas Ranch Road
840 Clubhouse Drive
113 N. 3rd
882 Front Street

In December the Garden Club teamed up with Lakota Social Committee and spent an evening touring and evaluating the many wonderful displays of residential holiday lights. They divided greater New Castle into three areas: Castle Valley Ranch, Lakota Canyon Ranch, Old Town and Appletree. The top three in each category were:

Lakota	Castle Valley	Old Town/Appletree
107 Spur	420 Wagon Wheel	343 Midland
152 Blackhawk	13 Buckskin	347 River Dr. Bldg. 2
7 Stag	122 Carson Ct	62 2 nd (Appletree)

The New Castle Garden Club meets the first Tuesday evening of the month from May through October. Monthly meetings include yard and garden tours, a potluck meal, occasional field trips and guest speakers. NCGC maintains the hanging baskets along Main Street and helps with Liberty Park and the flower bed in front of River Center. If you would like to join for the 2024 season, contact the secretary: Mary Gervais at 970-470-3678.

Council Highlights

- Staff introduction: Justin Perkins
- Conditional Use Permit – U-Haul
- 2024 budget approved
- 2023 supplemental budget approved
- Adoption of 2021 building code
- Approval of 2024 MOU for Older Adult Programs
- Liquor License renewal: Black Bear Bar & Grill, Stop N Save, Hacienda San Miguel, K2 Spirits, Lazy Bear and Hogback Pizza
- Proclamation recognizing Hogback Pizza
- Approval of Longview Phase 1 (Lakota Canyon Ranch) SIA
- Authorizing a mail ballot election
- Canceling the April 2, 2024 election
- Recognition of Utility Department
- Consider adding microbrewery as a permitted use in the C-1 Zone District.



Town staff surprises the Town of Silt for a "rawsome" Valentine's Day!

Upcoming New Castle Events

Earth Day – April 20-21

Gypsy Chicks Flea Market – April 20-21

Community Yard Sale – May 4

Fishing Derby – May 4

Hogback Hustle - May 11

Bike Rodeo – June 1

Recreation Department

The Recreation Department offers a full and varied schedule of sports, arts and enrichment activities through the spring. All the programs are listed on the department's web page (newcastlecolorado.org), which is also the place to register (usually required). The department has chosen a couple items to highlight here:

The Re2 school district's Spring Break is March 25-29. That's the time for the New Castle Recreation Department's annual Spring Break Activity Days, Monday and Tuesday, March 25 and 26.

These activity days begin at 9:00 am and run through to 4:00 pm at the Community Center on Main Street. Each hour features a different activity, including craft stations, park play, games, cooking and an exercise hour. Students from kindergarten to fifth grade are encouraged to enroll. The registration fee is \$50 per day, per student. Register at newcastlecolorado.org

Baseball and softball leagues begin April 10 for Ages 8-13, with registration in mid-March. Younger children can join the T-ball league (ages 4-5) and the Coach's Pitch league (ages 7-8) starting in June. Micro Soccer, for ages 4-7 runs April 10 to May 17 at Alder Park. Volunteer coaches are needed to make these programs a success, and information about volunteering is available on the web site.

Bears are Back!



A message from Colorado Parks and Wildlife:

Hey New Castle. My name is Jake Stanton and I am your local Wildlife Officer. I wanted to give you a brief update on winter conditions and what that can mean for bear activity in town this spring and summer.

As you know, last year we experienced high levels of snowfall and low levels of bear conflict. These two things were not a coincidence. Our winter moisture brought abundant grasses, berries and acorns to our high country and surrounding foothills. The food surplus, along with securing trash and food sources in town, substantially minimized bear conflicts.

Our current winter has been very mild and we can expect natural bear food sources to be in a deficit come this summer. This means that it will be very important for us to continue following bear conflict minimization practices: Keep your trash secured; remove unnatural food sources (pet food, bird feeders, hummingbird feeders, etc.); and as always, call either our Colorado Parks and Wildlife office in Glenwood or Grand Junction if you experience a bear conflict.

More detailed information about living with bears can be found on our website:

<https://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/LivingwithWildlifeWildBears.aspx>.

Chamber of Commerce Plans for 2024

The New Castle Chamber of Commerce had a busy and successful 2023 with lots of growth, more member benefits and great community events. They wrapped up the year working with the New Castle Recreation Department to provide holiday gifts for all the town's senior housing residents.

2024 is off to a strong start as well. A newly redesigned website was launched in January at www.newcastlechamber.org. There are more members than ever, and an added feature (and volunteer opportunity) is the Chamber Ambassadors program, which will provide help with events. Individuals as well as businesses are invited to join the chamber at www.newcastlechamber.org/become-a-member.

BINGO is held the second Thursday of each month at the Community Center. Doors open at 6:00; play begins at 6:30. There are cash prizes and proceeds benefit community organizations. Non-profit groups can sign up to sell concessions during BINGO by calling 970-984-2897.

Looking ahead to June: The first annual Block Party held last June was such a success that the Chamber is planning it again for Friday, June 28. Member businesses will have displays to advertise their services and products. Details about this event, as well as other Chamber news, will be posted on Facebook: New Castle Chamber of Commerce.