

Cathedral City Chamber of Commerce – Spring 2015 Quarterly Report

- The Cathedral City Chamber of Commerce is leasing the former Housing Dept. annex for \$ 1/year.
- The current offices are convenient for residents, visitors and business owners.
- The Chamber Office is also a Visitors Center, providing maps, attractions, housing information, schools and city data for the individual visiting, looking to relocate to the city.
- The City pays \$50,000 per year to the Chamber for its Scope of Services.
- Scope of Services include:
 1. **Commercial Space Inventory** – The Chamber utilizes the City’s DACIE report for reference and referral to commercial leasing agents, prospective business owners, businesses looking to relocate and commercial interests. The Chamber continues to coordinate and follow the lead of the Business Development Administrator.
 - The Chamber provides the City’s SCAG profile to all inquiring interests, and includes the report on the Chamber website. The Chamber, since receiving the May 2013 report, printed and has distributed 64 copies of the report. The Chamber provides direct referral of interested parties to leasing agents.
 - The Chamber worked with and referred leasing agents to the City re: Medical Marijuana Dispensary effort.
 - The Chamber, also, provided potential resource, E-Z kiosks/C4Ever Kiosks to potentially assist the City’s efforts in navigating the new dispensary matter – resolution, ordinance, application process. The Chamber introduced Ron Hodge to the City. Mikey Margolin is now working with City Staff.
 - The Chamber participates at the Coachella Valley Invests conference with the Business Development Administrator.
 - The Chamber assists leasing agents and store managers with Municipal Code updates, including providing copies of Panhandling Ordinance for distribution by store managers. The chamber has provided copies of the Ordinance 11.08.020 Limitations on soliciting in public places to all store managers – two Stater Bros. locations, Rite Aid, two CVS locations Cardenas Market, Target and Trader Joe’s stores. All have had positive feedback and results, minimizing public complaints.
 - The Chamber provides legislative updates to Commercial Brokers, as appropriate.
 - The Chamber continues to introduce the Business Cluster concept to center operators.
 2. **Visitors Information and Welcome Center**, open 40 hrs./week, 8:30am-4:30pm with fully operational trained staff responding to phone calls, mail, email correspondence, and in-office visitors.
 - The Chamber provides welcome packets to Date Palm Country Club, Outdoor Resorts, Royal Palms Mobile Home Park and Desert Princess Country Club for its seasonal residents, and all other Mobile Home Parks upon request. Packets include city maps, flyers and calendar of city events, services, recycling services, Palm Springs Life Guide, Travel Host Magazine and brochures and rack cards/flyers from member businesses such as restaurants, retailers, attractions, etc. Packets are also provided to real estate agents upon request.

- The Chamber provides property rentals and hotel referrals via phone, email, and in-office especially during seasonal months beginning as early as mid-October through June. Requests are especially high during tournament season and, in particular, during the NCAA Women's Softball tournament at Big League Dreams throughout the month of February and in the spring for Pride Week. Hotel referrals are to all hotel/niche properties, not just those that are Chamber Members. For those properties that are not Chamber members the office provides phone number and website information.
- The Chamber promotes via e-blast and in the Chamber newsletter all City events and promotions to its membership, typically a six-eight week time frame.
- The Chamber is the central contact point for valley residents and visitors, not familiar with DiscoverCathedralCity.com or the city's facebook page, on city special events, promotions, etc., especially on Friday's, as City Hall is closed, and there is no city staff to respond to city-related inquiries. The Chamber responds between 37-85 phone calls/day in the four days prior to an event. For new events, i.e. the Balloon Festival, Farmers Market, interest in Food Trucks or the Art Festival, the Chamber responds to calls for directions, downtown location, admission costs, hours of the event, featured activities and food interests. This does not include the in-office visits. A majority of the inquiries are "snow-birds" that do not have computer or smart phone access.
- The Chamber is, also, a resource for City Hall for residents and visitors inquiring of City services, especially on Fridays, and during City Hall's lunch hours. Since the Great Recession, residents and visitors, alike, attempt to seek assistance from 11:45 – 1:15pm, seek the chamber for immediate assistance. We assist when and where we can, and refer back to City Hall or the Police Dept. on other issues.
- Residents and visitors call the Chamber office re: City services and departments, requesting to be connected for a building permit, planning or sign permit or how to obtain a garage sale permit. These inquiries are often on the Chamber voice mail prior to office hours and continue throughout the day. Callers have called 4-1-1 asking for City Hall, and the service provider has directed the caller to the Chamber phone number. The Chamber office provides the general City Hall, Police Dept. or Fire Dept. phone number. If there is a specific need and/or contact person, we provide the direct line.
- Tourism: The Chamber CEO attends Greater Palm Springs CVA marketing meetings and forwards co-op marketing opportunities to the City's Communication and Events Director. The Chamber participates in surveys, CVA efforts, provides calendar of events (City and Chamber) to the CVA for its Master Calendar. The Chamber participates in multi-agency meetings at the CVA with CVEP in developing a plan to enhance education, valley-wide in the hospitality industry. The Chamber supports the Greater Palm Springs CVA efforts in bringing tourism to Cathedral City and the Coachella Valley, at large.

3. **City Events & Activities:** The Chamber provides support to the City's economic development and community efforts through its public relations efforts.
 - Press releases, e-mail blasts, flyer distribution, articles and ads in the city newsletter – all inclusive in a strategic media release schedule.
 - The Chamber CEO participates on radio shows promoting the city's event and community efforts.
 - The Chamber displays the City's event promotional collateral in the Chamber lobby, at Chamber events – Power Lunches and Mixers, at strategic locations – hotels, restaurants, the Cathedral City Auto Center, the Cathedral City Library, Palm Springs Unified School District, private schools, as well as, recreational vehicle parks and clubs.
 - All city events and activities are included on the Chamber website, with links to DiscoverCathedralCity.com.

4. **Business Development:** Since July 2012, the Chamber has and continues in partnership with the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership, specifically its SBDC (Small Business Development Center) – a Small Business Administration program, supporting events that specifically target small businesses, educating on social media, forecasting industry trends, and business law.
 - The Chamber has partnered with SBDC introducing Business 101 classes assisting new and prospective business owners how to start a business. ***In 2014, the SBDC counseled 26 Cathedral City businesses with 195 counseling hours, helping to create 18 new jobs and working with Cathedral City business owners to retain 29 jobs.***
 - The Cathedral City Chamber hosted a CVEP town hall at the Pickford Theatre seeking business community feedback. Over 100 business owners, stakeholders, community leaders, educators and civic leaders attended the event. The Chamber supports and promotes the LanzaTech program, offering free workshops and counseling for Spanish-speaking business owners.
 - The Chamber promotes and supports its Business Cluster program encouraging co-op marketing and exposure for like-business and/or shopping center to maximize public awareness. The Chamber assists Business Clusters with promotion of events/happenings upon request.
 - The Chamber is a business resource center providing access to SCORE, SBA, business funding resources, education classes through CVEP, Cal State San Bernardino/UCR Campus, College of the Desert, Coachella Valley Women's Development Center and the State Board of Equalization. The Chamber promotes programs available through Riverside County Economic Development Agency, and the Inland Empire Economic Development Agency.

5. **Workforce Development:**

- The Chamber partners with Workforce Development-Indio office and Riverside Co. Dept. of Social Services in Cathedral City to promote federal job training and grant programs; job fairs and job placement.
- The Chamber is working with Dr. Dave George, College of the Desert, participating on a committee for an Entrepreneurship Certificate Program.
- The Chamber promotes CSUSB/UCR Educational opportunities for small business – webinars, workshops, speakers, etc. via e-blasts and newsletter articles and/or ads.
- The Chamber participates in meetings with valley stakeholders and investors to raise awareness and address the lack of skilled workforce. Desert Hot Springs, Indio and Cathedral City Chambers are the only three chambers actively participating to address issue.
- The Chamber works in partnership and support CVEP's SBDC efforts in expanding educational programs for small business owners.
- The Chamber shares all networking resources with small business community offering access and convenience on current education, talent and funding resources (traditional/non-traditional) to small business owners looking to expand or enhance current workforce.
- The Cathedral City Chamber provided work internships to students from Cathedral City High School, Palm Springs High School, and Xavier High School during summer of 2014. Riverside Co. Animal Campus, FIND and the Cathedral Center provided internship programs for required community service hours.
- The Chamber is currently working with office of Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia and staff members Jackie Lopez, and Aurora Saldivar.
- The Chamber worked closely with Greg Rodriguez, office of Congressman Raul Ruiz, and now with Amanda Hurley in the Washington D.C. office on workforce issues.

6. **Community Outreach** provides public relations support to the City on its programs, events, media alerts, cone zones, positive, and constructive feature stories.

- The Chamber coordinated with City Engineer on the Ramon Rd. Rehab, Ramon Rd. Landscape Project, E. Palm Canyon, and Eagle Canyon Dam projects. Providing community updates, cone zones, attending meetings at the Cathedral City Auto Center, walking door-to-door on both phases of the Ramon Rd. Rehab project, and the Ramon Rd. Landscape project. Feedback was favorable on Ramon Rd.
- Chamber addressed E. Palm Canyon merchants concerns and frustrations, meeting with City Engineer as a messenger, and working collaboratively to mitigate issues.
- Chamber services as a liaison between Business Community and the City; Business Clusters and the City; Auto Center and the City, providing chamber and city updates to all entities.
- Chamber provided outreach to business and residential communities re: SCE, SoCal Gas, Time Warner, CVWD, DWA and Verizon utility upgrades throughout the year, notifying of upgrades and any associated cone zone reports.

- Chamber issues public safety advisories – traffic, business crime, etc.
- Chamber coordinates with groups, civic organizations and the School District in public awareness issues.
- Covered California - Affordable Care Act - - Chamber linked resources through St. Theresa and St. Louis Catholic Churches, and the Apostolic Churches to reach Spanish-speaking communities to enroll in program before the deadline. Over 100 families counseled with 63 families enrolling. Covered California Enrollment Period is extended to April 30th - Cathedral City Chamber of Commerce is listed as one of top five resources for this extension period. The Chamber is connecting with existing resources and added new resources for the program and public outreach.
- Clinton Healthcare Matters Initiatives – the Chamber works closely with Tricia Gehrlein, West Coast Regional Director, sharing outreach programs re: healthcare ranging programs from basic nutrition to healthcare in the workplace. Cathedral City Chamber of Commerce is the only Chamber actively involved with promoting Clinton Foundation programs to business community.
- Chamber works closely Victor Tocco is reaching the Spanish-speaking community through his media outlets.
- The Chamber participated and referred members to the City's CGI program, heightening public awareness of the City of Cathedral City.
- The Chamber assisted the Cathedral Center with public relations throughout the year, sending press releases, email blasts, articles in newsletter, and including events in the Chamber's calendar. All efforts focused on promoting the Cathedral Center's events, programs and services offered to the Senior Community. Programs and services included Health Fairs, Flu Shots, Insurance and Living Trust events, fundraising events, Rummage Sales, Food Pantry, etc. Coverage included television, radio and print.
- The Chamber assisted the Cathedral City Library with press releases, articles in the newsletters, email blasts on its featured programs, events, and calendar throughout the year. The Chamber assisted the Library and its affiliated programs with promoting its fundraising efforts.
- The Chamber has assisted the Cathedral City Fire Dept. with its promotion of the Fireworks Program, and, the Muscular Dystrophy Fill-the-Boot event with press releases, email blasts, television and radio coverage, and, articles in newsletter.

Legislative Affairs: Chaired by Kathi Jacobs, Vice Chair 2014

- The Chamber met bimonthly at the Cathedral City Library, January – June; September – November. Dark: July and August.
- The Chamber developed a Legislative Platform, Legislative Guidelines, and Legislative tracking, primarily on a state level with our local representatives.
- The Chamber provided letters of support and opposition on issues, and bills affecting our region, as appropriate.
- Attendance at the Legislative Affairs Meetings included Pat Cooper – Supervisor John Benoit's office; Greg Rodriguez – Congressman Raul Ruiz; representative from Assemblymember Manuel Perez's office; Eduardo Garcia, then representative from Sen. Hueso's office, and, occasionally, though not our representative, Lupe Ramos Watson from Assemblymember Brian Nestande's office.
- The Chamber office provided update reports to Alton Garrett, representative for US Senator Barbara Boxer's office.
- The Chamber, unless requested by the offices of Sen. Feinstein and/or Sen. Boxer, on issues directly affecting our immediate region, kept its focus on county and state levels.

- Though the Chamber is an advocate for business, it is also an advocate for legislation affecting our community. The Cathedral City Chamber of Commerce takes a neutral stance representing the community on both sides of issues/measures providing an educational and informational opportunity for residents and business owners. The Chamber provides informational and Town Hall meetings.
- The Chamber, also, provides a Candidate Forum, a free event for residents and business owners to become acquainted with candidates.

Affiliations:

California Chamber of Commerce

WACE – Western Association of Chamber Executives

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

- Solely for the purpose of attending a non-partisan 4-yr Institute of Management program
- The Chamber is not seeking accreditation as it does fit the community model;
- The Chamber participates in conference calls affecting our immediate region or businesses i.e. the Los Angeles Port Authority. The Cathedral City Auto Center was directly affected with product and vehicles off-shore for 3-plus months. The Chamber supported the efforts of Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer, along with the US Chamber of Commerce urging the two sides back to the table for negotiation, as the situation was having long-term impact on domestic and international commerce.