

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS  
& COMMUNITY PROFILE

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## Background Information

The Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District (CCCPRD or the District), located in both Jefferson County and Boulder County, Colorado, is creating its first Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan. One component of such a plan is to understand how local demographics affect the parks and recreation facility and program needs, as well as understanding how the local demographics are either similar or different from state and national trends.

For this analysis, demographic data was evaluated for only the geographic area within the District's boundary. It is important to recognize that prior to the District forming Coal Creek Canyon did not historically have strongly defined boundaries. Therefore, other sections of the report may refer to the region as a whole rather than the just the District.

The District is located just west of the Denver Metropolitan area and is centered around State Highway 72, which runs east-west through the Coal Creek Canyon. The District is within both Jefferson and Boulder counties and is adjacent to Gilpin County. The District is adjacent to and west of the City of Arvada and a short distance from Golden to the southeast, Boulder to the northeast and Nederland to the northwest.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the raw data used for the analysis that follows was provided by ESRI Business Solutions. 2010 data noted in this analysis is a projection of actual Census data, because at the time of this report 2010 US Census data had not been released.

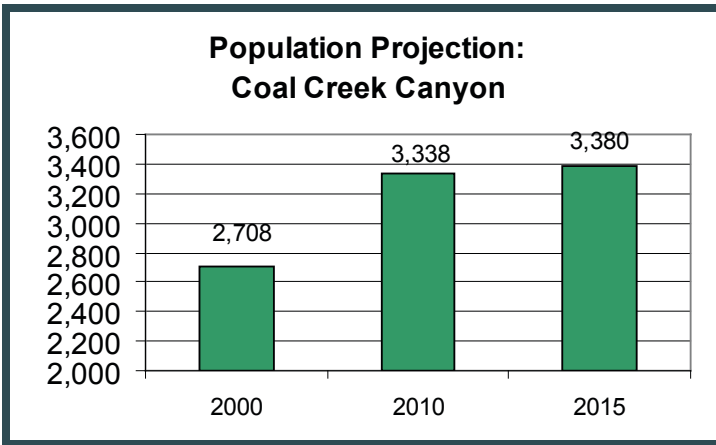
## Population Forecast

The Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District is a mature community that is growing at a much slower rate than both Colorado and the United States. The community will experience a 0.26% annual population growth rate for the 5 year period between 2010 and 2015. This rate of growth is significantly below the rate projected for Colorado (1.51%) and the U.S. (0.76%) for the same period. The projected population is illustrated in **Figure 2.1**.

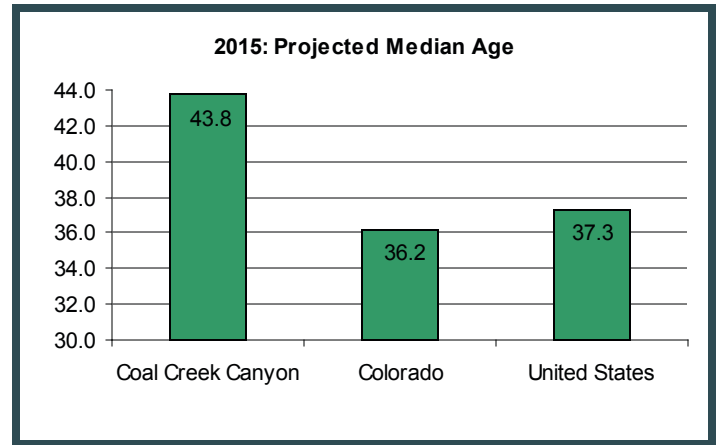


# DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & COMMUNITY PROFILE

**Figure 2.1: Population Projection 2000-2015**

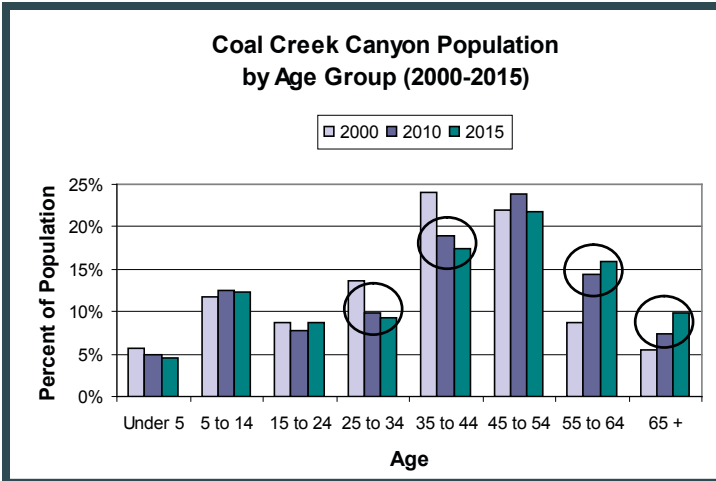


**Figure 2.3: Projected Median Age, 2015**

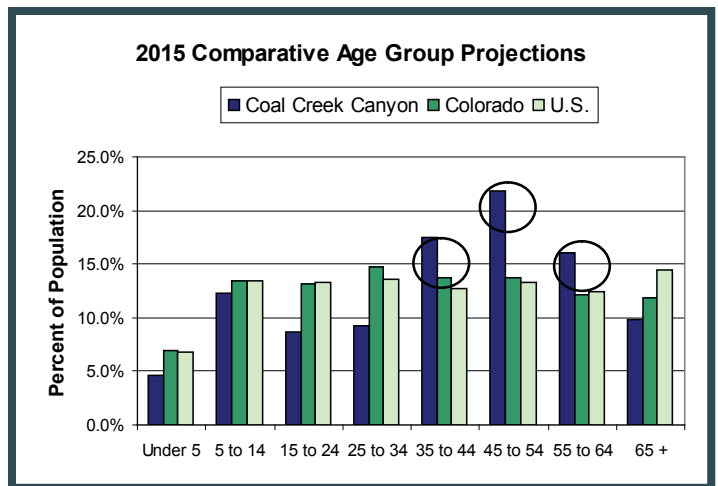


**Age Distribution**

**Figure 2.2: Coal Creek Canyon Population by Age Group (2000-2015)**



**Figure 2.4: 2015 Comparative Age Group Projections**



A profile of the population’s age is critical to parks and recreation programming since different age groups can have extremely different needs and desires for parks and recreation facilities and programs. **Figure 2.2** illustrates the population breakdown of the District by age groups. The percentages depicted in the chart indicate significant drops in the 25 to 44 age groups, and steady increases in those 55 and older (refer to circled areas for details). This indicates a decrease in the number of parents raising children in Coal Creek Canyon and an increase in those approaching or in retirement, which not only impacts the services of the District but partnering organizations such as the schools. This trend is also supported by **Figure 2.3** which shows a significantly older median age than both Colorado and the United States. **Figure 2.3** illustrates that the District’s projected median age in 2015 will be 43.8 years, which is 7.6 years older than Colorado, and 6.5 years older than the nation.

**Figure 2.4** illustrates that the percentage of population in every age category under 35 years is projected to be smaller in Coal Creek Canyon (total % under 35 in 2015 = 34.8%) than in both the State of Colorado and the nation (48.3% (Colorado), 59.8% (United States)). The reverse is true of age 35 and above – Coal Creek Canyon is projected to have a higher percent of the population above age 35, (total % of 35 and over in 2015 = 65.1%) than both the State and the nation (total % 35 and over in 2015 = 51.7 (Colorado), 40.2 (United States)). This high percentage is attributed to the three categories that cover the 35 to 64 age group, which in 2015 includes Generation X and the majority of the Baby Boomer generation.

Coal Creek Canyon is also trending at a much faster rate than that of the Colorado and the nation when it comes to population growth of those age 65 and older. Between the years 2010 and 2015, the 65 and over population in Coal Creek Canyon will increase by 2.4%; in Colorado, it will increase by 1.4% and in the nation as a whole, it will increase by 1.3%. Due to the aging of the Baby Boomers, a lot of attention nationally and statewide will be paid to meeting the need for recreational amenities for older adults. Similarly, the Coal Creek Canyon community's demand for programs and facilities serving the needs of those 65 and older is projected to increase, so any facility enhancements should give strong consideration to the needs of this age group but not at the expense of meeting the needs of the District's younger residents, who have been identified as a high priority by the community (see Community Survey Summary). It is also imperative that physical access to facilities is maintained or improved over time to accommodate this age group, which includes a greater portion that move slower and/or with assistance.

The following list (**Table 2.1**) indicates some of the characteristics of age groups that affect parks and recreation programming.



**Table 2.1: Coal Creek Canyon Demographic Groups and Recreation Needs**

Age Group	2010	2015	Characteristics and Recreation Needs
Under 5	4.90%	4.60%	Preschool and toddler programs
			Playground users
			Experience park and recreation facilities and programs with an adult
5 to 14	12.50%	12.30%	Youth athletics and after-school programs
			Growing interest in non-traditional, individual activities
15 to 24	7.80%	8.70%	Teen and young adult programs
			Extreme sports and adventure-related activities
25 to 34	9.90%	9.20%	Adult program participants
			Young families
35 to 44 and 45 to 54	42.90%	39.30%	Adult program participants
			Combined age groups - have similar needs and demands for recreation programs and facilities
			Families range from preschool to youth to early empty nesters
55 to 64	14.40%	16.00%	Active older adult programming
			Empty nesters approaching retirement
			Often have grandchildren who use facilities and programs
65 and older	7.40%	9.80%	Older adult programs
			Social networking and healthcare related programs
			Range from healthy and active to more physically inactive

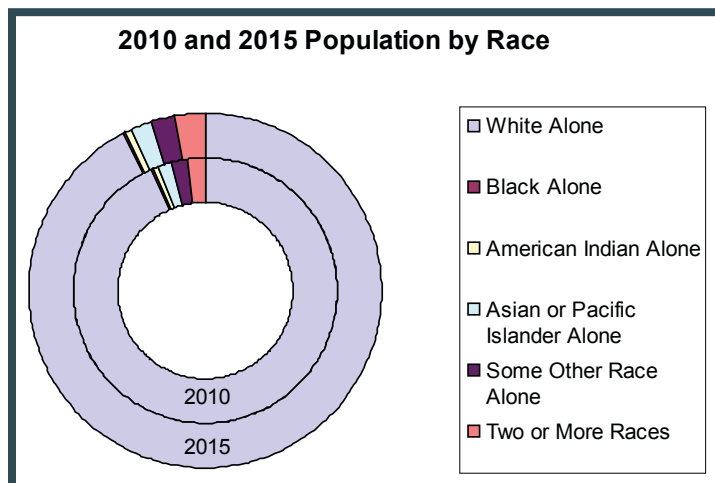
## Race/Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity often play a role in a community's park and recreation needs and desires. Trends can be found in the ways that different ethnic groups use parks, recreation facilities and the types of programs they seek. As **Figure 2.5** illustrates, the District's ethnicity makeup is predominately "white alone" and will remain so over the next five years. The District is less racially diverse than both Colorado and the Country as a whole. The percentage of the population in 2015 that is "white alone" will be significantly lower in both Colorado (78.9%) and the United States (70.7%) than in Coal Creek Canyon (92.1%). Additionally, in 2015, the percentage of District residents projected to be of Hispanic origin is 7.9%, which is significantly lower than the percentage of state residents (22.9%) and US residents (17.8%) of Hispanic origin.

*\*Note: It is important to note that Hispanic origin (also known as ethnicity) is independent of race, and that persons who report themselves as Hispanic may be from any of the racial categories noted. The Census Bureau defines "Hispanic or Latino" as "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race."*

Despite the District's more homogenous character, it is important to consider in its parks and recreation services (e.g. community special events) any special needs or desires of the various races/ethnicities or other special groups within the District. Yet, the District should also be aware that programming specifically geared towards minorities might have low participation numbers. Therefore, increased marketing to minorities may be a more effective use of resources instead of specific programs geared towards minority groups.

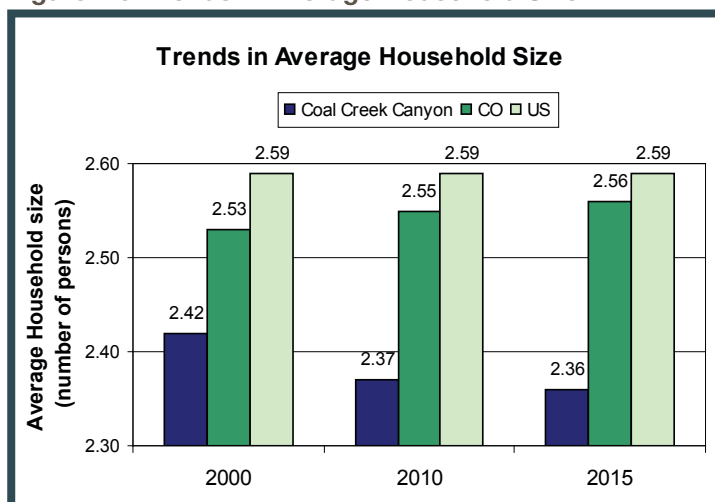
**Figure 2.5: Coal Creek Canyon 2010 and 2015 Population by Race**



## Household Makeup

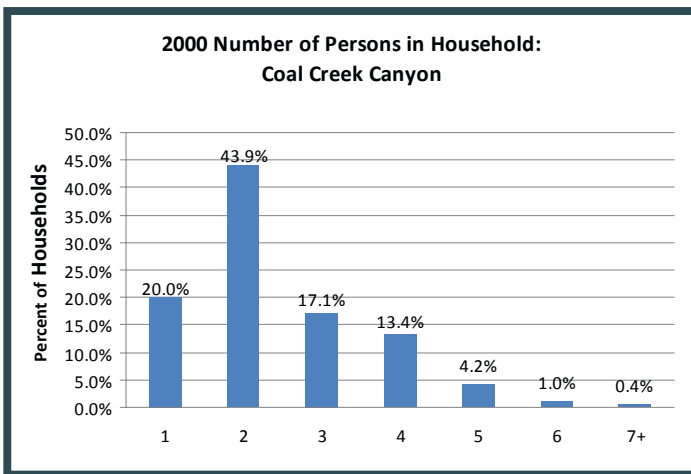
Coal Creek Canyon's household makeup is significantly different than both Colorado's and the Country. In 2000, 30.9% of the households in Coal Creek Canyon had children. This is 3.9% points less than the rate of households with related children in the State of Colorado (34.8%) and 4.6% points less than the rate nationally (35.5%). Additionally, **Figure 2.6** illustrates that the average household size within the District is significantly decreasing, going from 2.42 in 2000 to 2.36 people in 2015, compared to Colorado, which is increasing (2.53 to 2.56 people) during the same period. During this same period the US average is stable at 2.59.

**Figure 2.6: Trends in Average Household Size**



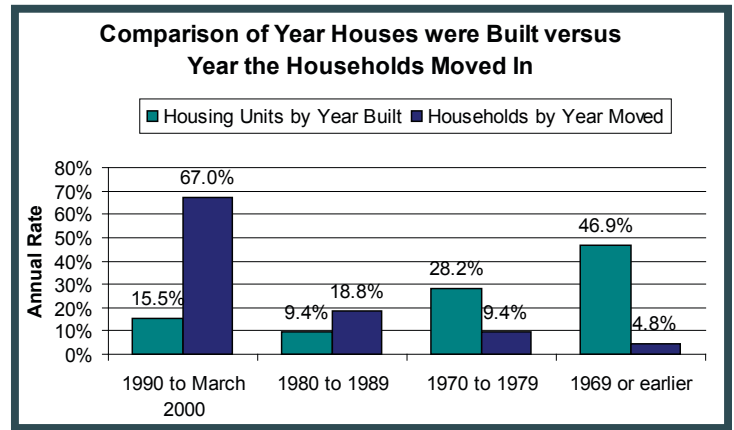
Household makeup is very important to parks and recreation programming – according to ESRI, in 2000, households with related children within the District made up 30.9% of all households (which is below the state and national percentages), and 43.9% of households were two person households (which is above the state and national percentages), see **Figure 2.7**. While a notable percentage of stakeholders have identified a need for facilities and programs for the community’s children, this data illustrates that it will also be important to design facilities and programs that appeal to older adults and those without children.

**Figure 2.7: 2000 - Number of Persons per Household**



Another key finding, as shown in **Figure 2.8** is the differences between the year homes in the District were built and the year households moved in. Generally, the majority of homes were built before 1969 (46.9%), but the majority (67.0%) of households moved in between 1990 and 2000 (data is not available for years after 2000). This shows that while there are some long-time residents, most people have moved in to the area more recently, which may indicate a moderate to high turn-over rate of residents, especially families, which may be reflective of the climate and available amenities (as heard during the Public Input workshops). However, it appears that those who live there without children tend to age in place.

**Figure 2.8: Resident Longevity**



### Education and Income

In 2010, 58.5% of the population in Coal Creek Canyon has an Associate’s, Bachelor’s or higher educational degree. By way of comparison, 43.4% of the population in the State of Colorado and 35.8% of the population in the US has an Associate’s, Bachelor’s or higher degree. The educational attainment breakdown is shown in **Figure 2.9**.

This significantly higher level of educational attainment correlates to the increasing income projected for Coal Creek Canyon. In 2010, the median household income in Coal Creek Canyon was \$100,269 compared to \$62,326 in Colorado. In 2015, median household income in Coal Creek Canyon is projected to increase to \$111,682, while Colorado’s median household increase will grow at a slightly higher rate to become \$71,434. As illustrated in **Figure 2.10**, the number of households with income levels under \$100,000 is expected to decrease and those with higher income levels are expected to increase by 2015. However, when reviewing household income data, it is important to keep in mind that the number of people in a household changes the amount of disposable income, and with a high number of households without children in the District, households may have additional disposable income.

Both high levels of educational attainment and the projected increase in income are positive news because data shows higher educational attainment and income are often correlated with better health and increased physical activity (discussed in further detail under Health & Related Factors).

Figure 2.9: 2010 Educational Attainment

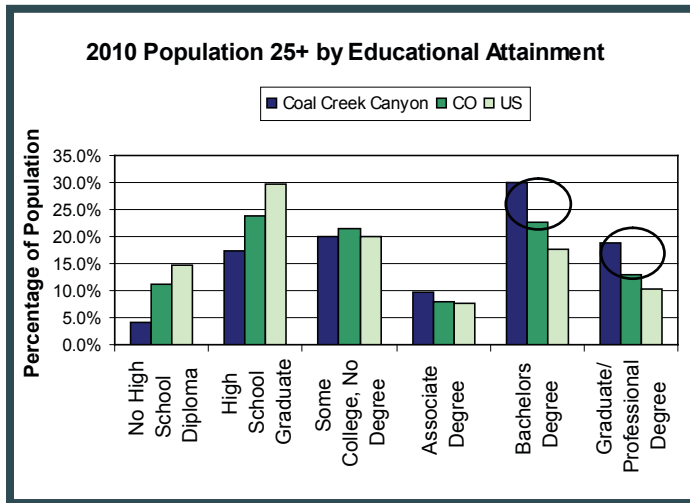
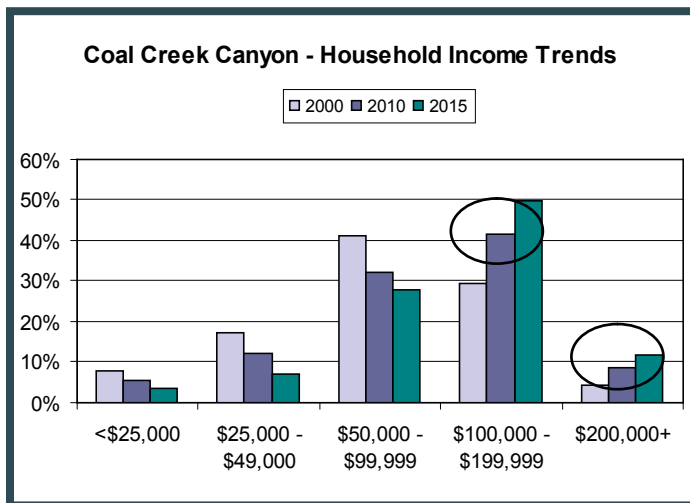


Figure 2.10: Median Household Income Trends



## Health & Related Factors

Research shows that a person’s physical activity level, which by extension is a large determinant of their overall health, is determined by many factors, including education, income, number of household members, and gender. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Physical Activity and Good Nutrition: Essential Elements to Prevent Chronic Diseases and Obesity, At a Glance 2008:

“Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, **more than 50% of U.S. adults do not get enough physical activity** to provide health benefits; **25% are not active at all** in their leisure time.

**Activity decreases with age**, and sufficient activity is less common among women than men and among those with lower incomes and less education.

About **two-thirds of young people in grades 9–12** are not engaged in recommended levels of physical activity.”

Specifically in Colorado, The Trust for America’s Health reported positively that in a three year average from 2007-2009, the state ranked 49th in the nation for Adult Physical Inactivity. Meaning, while this is a positive attribute and Coloradoans are one of the most active states in the nation, it is important to recognize that there is still a significant number, 18%, of adults reporting they did not engage in any physical activity.

Research has also shown that the availability and access to opportunities to engage in physical activity is positively correlated with the amount of physical activity people participate in. Therefore, while the natural setting of the Canyon encourages physical activities such as hiking, the availability of parks and recreation services are also vital to increasing physical activity, health and wellness across all ages. When evaluating the availability of recreation opportunities in the Canyon, it is important to consider their accessibility and proximity to residents in addition to their mere existence. Physical barriers, safety concerns, and distance to parks and facilities





often prevent residents from using the recreation amenities and programs – all which are major issues facing Canyon residents due to its rural and mountainous characteristics, steep topography, and lack of walkable access to parks and facilities. Research has found that larger sizes of parks and open spaces do not increase how often or how much people use them, but rather the distance and walkable access to the park or open space is the greatest determining factor.

## Key Findings

Coal Creek Canyon is a small, mature community located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, west of Denver and south of Boulder in Colorado. The rugged terrain of the area limits future land development and population growth. There are definite trends when looking at the demographic characteristics of those living in the Canyon. The community is characterized by older couples without children living at home that are more educated and more affluent than other communities in the state. Although a notable portion of residents do have children, it is 4-5% lower than state and national averages and projected to decline.

Coal Creek Canyon community's demand for programs and facilities serving the needs of those 65 and older is likely to increase, so any facility design should consider the needs of this age group but not at the expense of meeting the needs of the District's younger residents, who have been identified as a high priority by the community (see Community Survey Summary). While many stakeholders have noted a need for facilities and programs for the community's children, it will also be important to design facilities and programs that appeal to those without children because of the high number of single and two-person households in the district.

