DENVER REGION DATA BRIEF
Regional growth deceleration
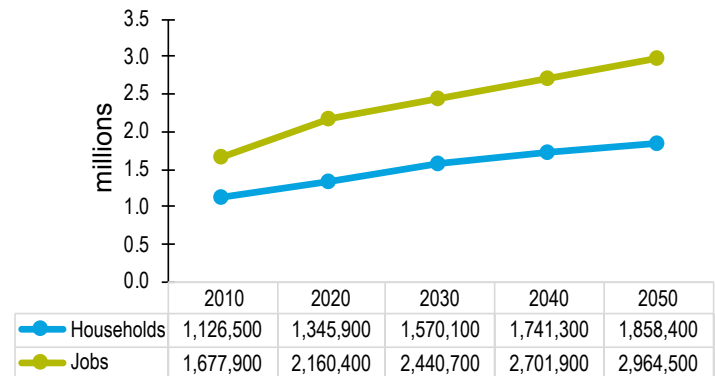October 2020

drcog — Regional Planning and Development — DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Just the numbers

- By 2050, the Denver region could be home to 1.86 million households and 2.96 million jobs.

- Growth is slowing. Expect less regional growth over the next 30 years than the past 30 years, with 14% fewer households (81,300 less) and 21% fewer jobs (217,000 less) forecast to be added.

- Though the state and regional growth rates continue to outpace the nation's, the same demographic realities slowing national growth will also affect the Denver region.

POPULATION AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

The region is subject to the same trends slowing growth rates across the state and the nation. Contributors, as identified in the State Demography Office's "Colorado's Population and Economic Trends" report, include lower birth rates and an aging population.

The region, along with the state, has experienced lower birth rates since 2007 — the peak birth year in U.S. history.

Denver region growth forecast, 2010–2050

	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Households	1,126,500	1,345,900	1,570,100	1,741,300	1,858,400
Jobs	1,677,900	2,160,400	2,440,700	2,701,900	2,964,500

This recent trend compounds over the course of the forecast period as this subdued-in-size cohort reaches its child-bearing years. An older population also means lower fertility overall, as well as a higher propensity to move away, decreasing net migration.

Also due to aging, the region is facing an increasing number of retirements and will need to accommodate slightly more household growth from 2020-2030 than it experienced from 2010-2020 simply to maintain the needed labor force. The tightening labor market will likely contribute to slowing job growth.

GROWTH IN PERSPECTIVE

The Denver region could be home to 1.86 million households and 2.96 million jobs by 2050. To put the forecast growth in perspective: it includes less growth over the next 30 years than the region experienced over the last 30 years.

Looking back and forward at 30 years of growth

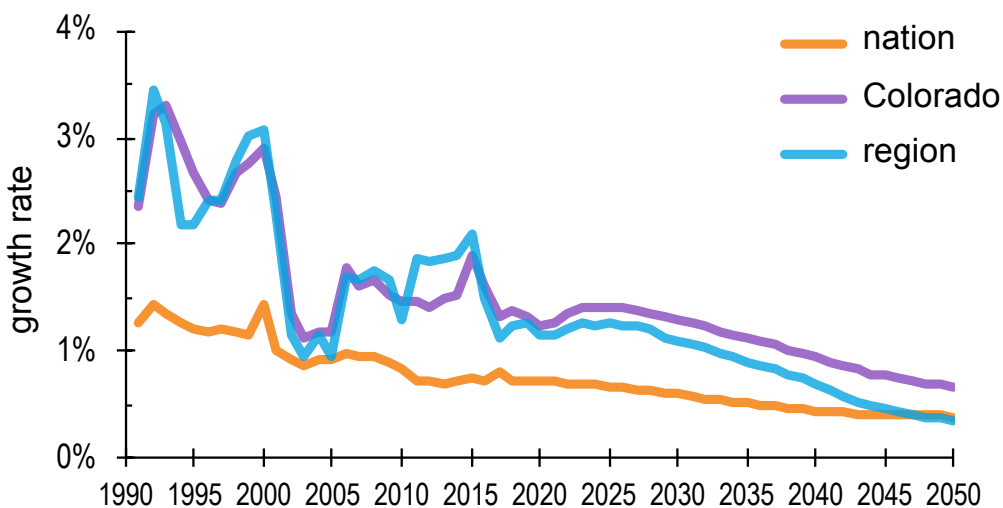|	Last 30 years			Next 30 years		
	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020	2020-2030	2030-2040	2040-2050
Household growth	216,100	158,300	219,400	224,200	171,200	117,100
		593,800			512,500	
Job growth	478,700	59,900	482,500	280,300	261,200	262,600
		1,021,100			804,100	

IN PRACTICE: PLANNING OUT TO 2050

With the immediate concerns and uncertainties brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic recession, forecasting out to 2050 may seem premature. However, as the region's federally designated metropolitan planning organization, DRCOG must facilitate a collaborative transportation planning process that includes a long-range perspective. Among other factors, DRCOG must promote consistency between planned transportation improvements and growth and development patterns. In the near term, DRCOG staff are:

- expanding collaboration with the State Demography Office by using DRCOG's forecasting tools to equip local governments to explore how preliminary county-level forecast changes may affect their community in order to provide constructive feedback for consideration in the official forecast from the state

- incorporating insights from the 2020 census and other estimates or observations that reflect the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic downturn and the anticipated recovery from both

- finalizing the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan (drcog.org/mvrtp), which will present a vision for the multimodal transportation system needed to respond to future growth and demographic trends, as well as a fiscally constrained perspective of strategies and projects to improve the system.

Annual population growth rate

Data sources: "Components of Change — Regions," State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs: https://demography. dola.colorado.gov/births-deaths-migration/ data/components-change-regions/ (accessed September 2020); "Population Estimates, Vintage 2019," "Population Estimates, Intercensals 2000-2010," "Population Estimates, Intercensals 1990-2000, "Population Projections, 2017," U.S. Census Bureau: https://www.census. gov/data/developers/data-sets/popest-popproj. html (accessed September 2020).

Data note: Projections and forecasts appear smooth in comparison to the cyclic ups-and-downs shown for past estimates and observations.

The Denver Regional Council of Governments is a planning organization where local governments collaborate to make the region a great place to live, work and play. To support decision-making, DRCOG staff maintains and analyzes various data sets. This briefing is an opportunity to highlight insights from the data sets.

Questions? Ideas for topics? Contact Andy Taylor at ataylor@drcog.org. For more data, visit data.drcog.org.

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