

COLORADO SPRINGS YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 2006 SURVEY

ABOUT COLORADO SPRINGS YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

In April 2006, The Colorado Springs Young Professionals (CSYP) teamed with the Greater Colorado Springs Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to survey the membership of CSYP. The survey was sent via a link in an email to CSYP membership. The questions in the survey were written by staff at the CSYP and the EDC, and focused on the issues of most relevance to this population.

The CSYP exists to provide a forum for connecting Colorado Springs-area young professionals to each other, as well as community engagement opportunities. Welcoming young professionals of many different professions, the CSYP serves to better the environment for young professionals in the area through social networking.

The CSYP currently has nearly 700 members, and is growing at an average rate of 40-50 new members a month. There is no charge to be a member of CSYP.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey had two goals: First, to address assumptions about the young professionals population in the Greater Colorado Springs area. Common perception, as well as information from the media, suggested that young professionals are underserved by this community.

The second goal was to provide community and economic development leadership with feedback and input so that future community services and development efforts may better serve this population, which is so critical to innovation and entrepreneurship.

A vibrant, dynamic and involved “young professionals” population is critical to the economic vitality of a region: this population tends to be highly educated, and often are a significant driver of entrepreneurship, diversity, and arts and cultural opportunities within a community.

Communities that wish to compete in the knowledge economy need to not only serve the young professional population well, but also actively recruit this demographic, such as you would a business.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the time of the mailing, the CSYP email list consisted of 641 members, of which 197 responded, resulting in a 30.7% response rate.

The survey asked basic demographic information, as well as for opinions on the environment in Colorado Springs for young professionals. The survey was designed to find out what factors are important to young professionals in determining a place to live, what factors have brought young professionals to the Colorado Springs community, and how long they plan to stay in the community.

The vast majority (85%) of respondents were Caucasian. 80% of respondents were between the ages of 25-29. Additionally, 75% of respondents have completed at least a Bachelor's degree.

Overall, 44% rated the environment in Colorado Springs for young professionals a "3", with "5" being excellent and "1" being poor. Additionally, 37% reported a "neutral" position when asked whether Colorado Springs has many professional opportunities for their demographic. These data suggest that though perceptions of the environment and opportunities in Colorado Springs are not negative, there is room for improvement in the minds of this demographic.

Nearly half (46%) of respondents stated that they moved to Colorado Springs for a job opportunity. Only 15% of respondents indicated that they grew up in Colorado Springs and continue to live here. This suggests that job opportunities are a critical attraction factor for the Colorado Springs community, and that relying solely on college graduates staying here, or nurturing Colorado Springs natives will not adequately feed the pipeline of needed young professionals in the community.

Respondents were also given twelve criteria, such as diversity, job opportunities, and arts and culture. Respondents were asked first to rank Colorado Springs on each of the criteria, and then to state the importance of those criteria in determining where one would like to live.

On those criteria, Colorado Springs received a low ranking in comparison to importance on: job opportunities, transportation infrastructure and the ability to meet and interact with peers.

It is interesting to note that quality of life, recreational opportunities and a family-friendly environment were closely correlated to each other – meaning that respondents identified those criteria as being important, and gave Colorado Springs a high ranking on each.

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RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

This section of the survey focused on gathering demographic information from survey respondents.

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

21-24	15%
25-29	42%
30-34	27%
35-39	11%
40 or over	5%

GENDER:

Male	41%
Female	59%

WHAT IS YOUR ETHNICITY?

American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%
Asian	3%
Black or African American	2%
Hispanic or Latino	6%
Caucasian	85%
Other	4%

WHAT LEVEL OF EDUCATION HAVE YOU ATTAINED?

Less than a high-school diploma	0%
High school graduate / GED	2%
Attended some college, no degree	19%
Completed an Associates degree	4%
Completed a Bachelors degree	48%
Completed a Masters degree	22%
Completed a Doctorate / PhD	5%

IF A COLLEGE GRAD, WHERE DID YOU DO YOUR MOST RECENT UNDERGRADUATE OR GRADUATE WORK?

In Colorado Springs	45%
Elsewhere in Colorado	11%
In the Western United States	11%
In the Midwest	17%
In the Eastern United States	15%
Outside the United States	2%

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MARITAL STATUS:

Single	54%
Long-term relationship	8%
Engaged	5%
Married	22%
Divorced	10%
Other	1%

PLEASE MARK THE STATEMENT THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOU:

I grew up in Colorado Springs and continue to live here	15%
I grew up in Colorado Springs, moved away, and then moved back	16%
I moved to Colorado Springs for a job opportunity	46%
I moved to Colorado Springs for college and stayed	12%
I followed a spouse / significant other	11%

**PRIOR TO LIVING IN COLORADO SPRINGS, IN WHICH STATE DID YOU LIVE?
(MOST CITED RESPONSES ARE LISTED)**

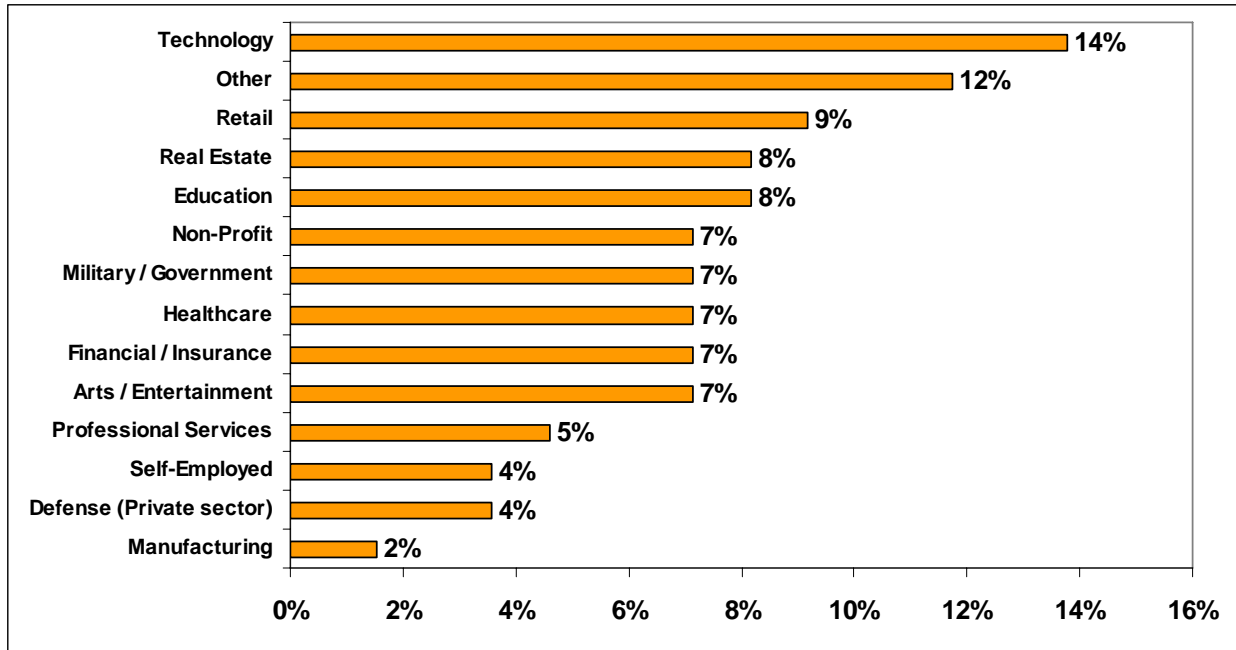
Colorado	22%
California	19%
Michigan	5%
Outside US	5%
Arizona	4%
New Mexico	4%
New York	4%
Texas	4%
Illinois	3%
Virginia	3%
Minnesota	3%
Missouri	3%
North Carolina	3%
Oregon	3%

WHAT TYPES OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES DO YOU ENJOY? (CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY)

Running	10%
Hiking	27%
Skiing / Snowboarding	17%
Biking	17%
Climbing	8%
Camping	22%

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WHICH CATEGORY BEST DESCRIBES THE INDUSTRY IN WHICH YOU WORK?



WHAT IS YOUR INDIVIDUAL ANNUAL INCOME?

Less than \$25,000	19%
\$26,000 - \$34,999	20%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	27%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	14%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	11%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	5%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	0%
\$150,000 or more	4%

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THE COLORADO SPRINGS AREA?

Less Than 2 Years	30%
3-5 Years	16%
6-10 Years	22%
11-15 Years	8%
16 or More Years	24%

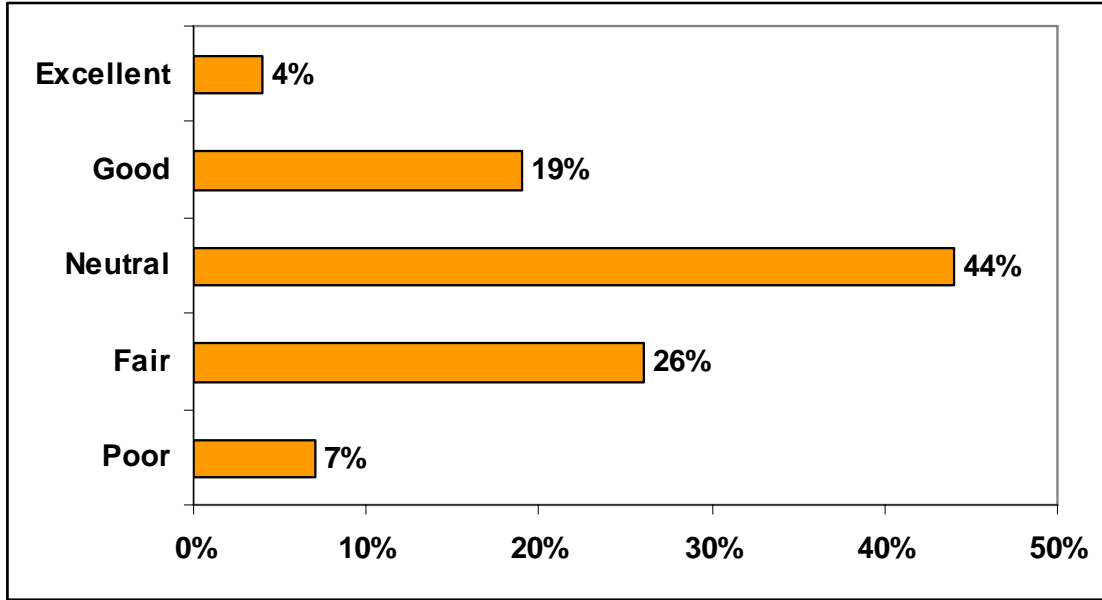
HOW LONG DO YOU EXPECT TO STAY IN THE COLORADO SPRINGS AREA?

Less Than One Year	10%
1-2 Years	14%
3-5 Years	30%
6-10 Years	11%
Over 10 Years	34%

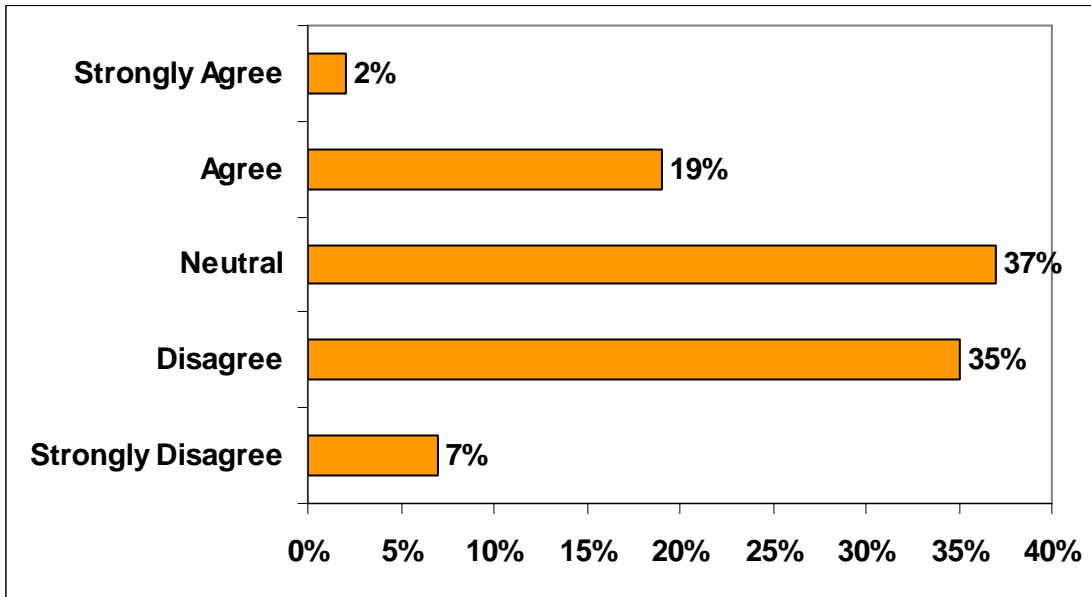
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COLORADO SPRINGS SURVEY RESULTS

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS, OVERALL, IN COLORADO SPRINGS?



**HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:
THERE ARE MANY PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN THE
COLORADO SPRINGS AREA:**



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OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH LIVING IN COLORADO SPRINGS?

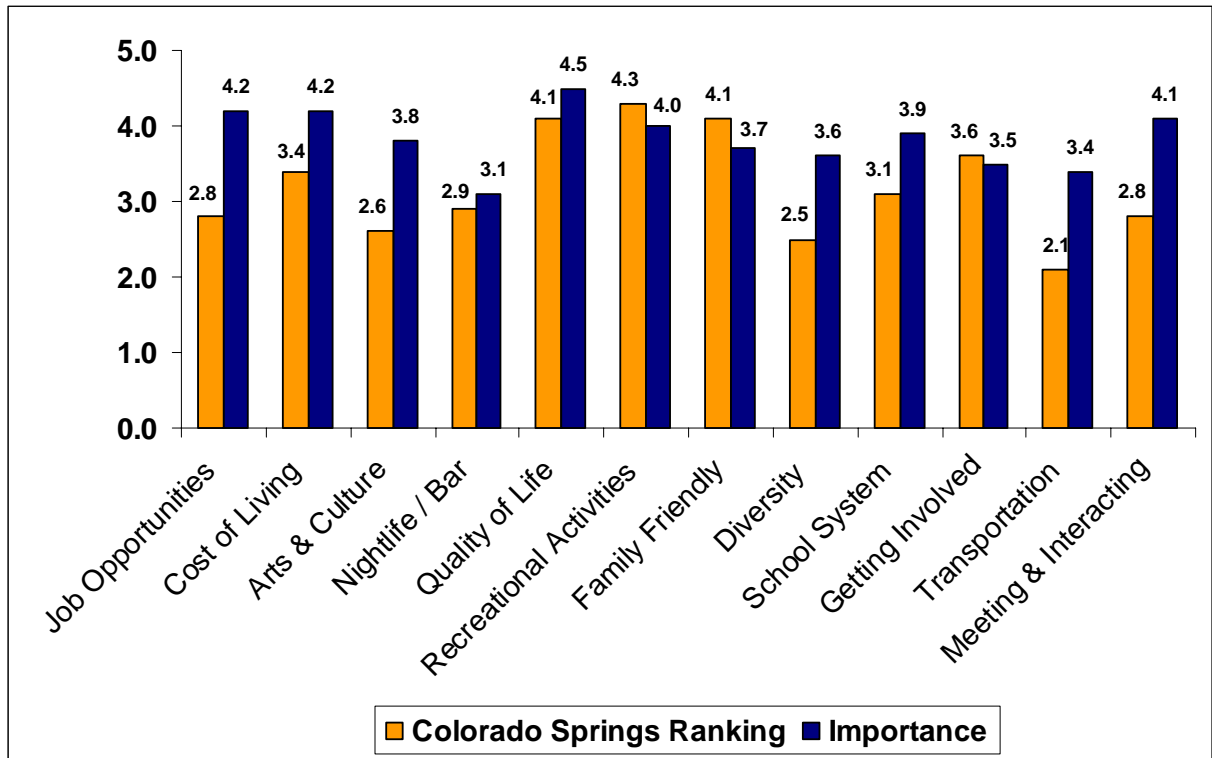
Very Satisfied	67%
Satisfied	0%
Neutral	26%
Dissatisfied	0%
Very Dissatisfied	7%

WHAT WOULD BE THE PRIMARY REASON YOU WOULD MOVE AWAY FROM COLORADO SPRINGS?

Better paying job / Better job opportunity	39%
Family	18%
New city / change of scenery	43%

RESPONDENTS WERE GIVEN TWELVE CRITERIA THAT MAY BE A FACTOR IN DETERMINING WHERE ONE WOULD LIKE TO LIVE. RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED FIRST TO RANK COLORADO SPRINGS ON A SCALE OF 5 TO 1 (5 BEING EXCELLENT, 1 BEING POOR) ON EACH OF THE CRITERIA.

RESPONDENTS WERE THEN ASKED TO RATE EACH CRITERIA ON ITS IMPORTANCE IN DETERMINING WHERE ONE WOULD LIKE TO LIVE. THE RESULTS OF THIS SECTION ARE ILLUSTRATED BELOW.



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CONCLUSIONS

The information obtained by surveying a sample of the young professionals population in Colorado Springs is important: it will help shape the efforts of the Colorado Springs Young Professionals, as well as community and economic development officials.

Nurturing the development of a vibrant young professionals population is critical. With baby boomers retiring in record numbers, there will be a significant labor shortage in the coming years. Young professionals are well-positioned to take advantage of opportunity, and drive regional competitiveness through entrepreneurship and innovation.

The results of this survey will be used to develop an action plan to determine how the Colorado Springs community can better serve this important demographic.

To get information on Colorado Springs Young Professionals, please visit:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/csyounghprofessionals/>.