Doubled-Up Households in Colorado:
How prevalent is this phenomenon in 2006 vs. 2017?

Shift RESEARCH LAB

PART 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

COLORADO FUTURES CENTER

In January 2018, Shift Research Lab released Exploring Colorado's Housing Affordability Challenges. This research revealed a largely unexplored phenomenon: more Coloradans are living with friends, roommates and family members in "doubled-up" households. This brief, the first in a two-part series, explores the data on doubled-up households in Colorado, describing the demographics, geographic distribution and change in the prevalence of the doubling-up phenomenon from 2006 to 2017. The second part in the series, which will be released in late 2019, will explore the economics surrounding these households.

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WHO IS MOST AFFECTED? A PROFILE OF COLORADO'S DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLDS

Doubled-up households come in many shapes and sizes. They are family and non-family households. They are headed by single people, single parents, and married couples. They are represented by all age generations, located throughout Colorado, and housed in both renter and owner-occupied units. While the below profile does not explain why households are doubled up, it provides insight into the demographic profile of these households as of 2017.

COLORADO'S DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLDS IN 2017

Family vs. Non-Family Households: Doubled-up family households are more than twice as common as doubled-up non-family ones.

~405K
FAMILY

~155K
NON-FAMILY

Average Household Size: Doubled-up households average more than one additional person versus non-doubled-up households.

3.40
DOUBLED-UP

2.18
NON-DOUBLED-UP

Definitions

Household: The U.S. Census Bureau defines a household as all persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. Persons not living in households are classified as living in group quarters, such as dorms, prisons, group homes, etc., and are not included in this analysis.

Non-doubled-up households: Any family relationship that includes both married and unmarried partners, with or without their own minor children, and single parents with their own minor children, or single persons living alone.

Doubled-up family households: A nuclear family, plus any other related family members not included in the above definition of non-doubled up households. This can include family members, such as children of legal age who could otherwise form their own unique household, siblings or parents of the head of household, or other familial relations.

Doubled-up non-family households: Any other legal age person who does not have a familial relationship with the head of household, where the head of household is the Census survey respondent. The predominant doubled-up non-family household is one containing roommates.

Source Data: Analysts' calculation from 2006 and 2017 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample, U.S. Census Bureau. Note: All figures are rounded.

COLORADO'S DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLDS IN 2017

Young vs. Old: Doubled-up households contain between 20% and 25% of very young children and the aging in Colorado.

THOSE LIVING IN A DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLD

1 in 5	1 in 4	1 in 5
CHILDREN UNDER 6	CHILDREN UNDER 18	SENIORS OVER 65

Owners vs. Renters: 60% of doubled-up households are in owner-occupied units.

~220K RENTERS

~340K OWNERS

~160K students between the ages of 18 and 24 live in doubled-up households

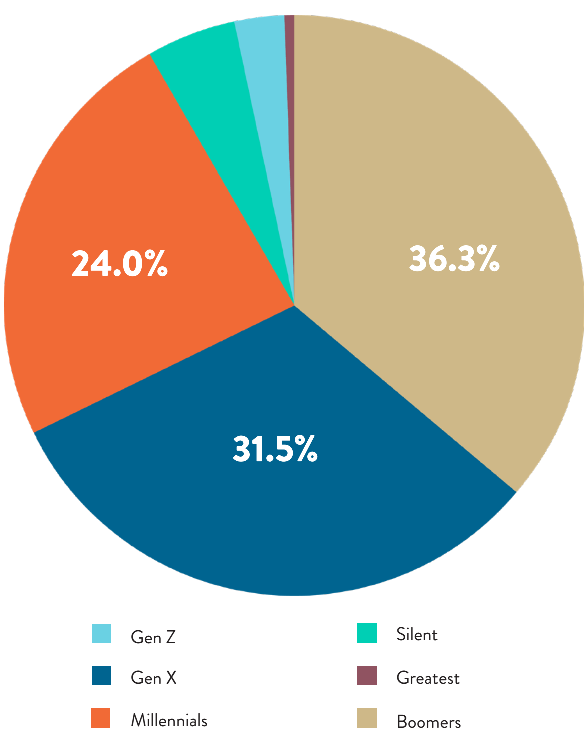
Married vs. Single Parents: Three-fourths of doubled-up households with children under 5 are headed by a single parent.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5

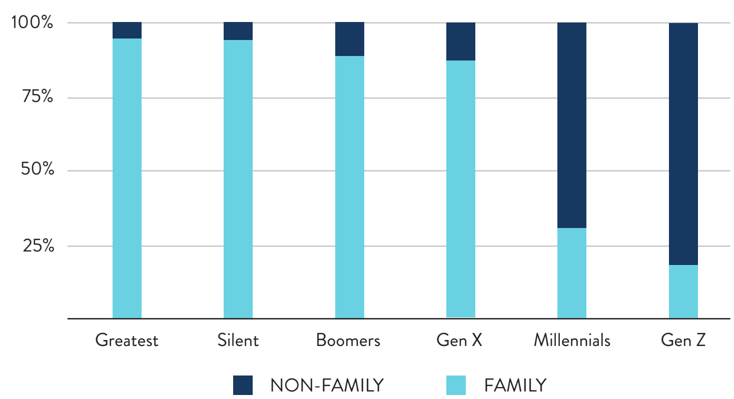
~17K MARRIED

~50K SINGLE PARENT

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD'S GENERATION: ALL FAMILY TYPES



HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD'S GENERATION: SHARE BY FAMILY TYPE



BY THE NUMBERS

- Of the 405K Family households, more are headed by **Boomers** than any other generation, at 180K
- **Generation X** is a close second, at 153K
- Of the 155K Non-Family households, more are overwhelmingly headed by **Millennials** than any other generation, at 93K

HOW HAS THE DOUBLING UP OF HOUSEHOLDS CHANGED SINCE THE GREAT RECESSION?

CHANGES IN COLORADO'S DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLDS: 2006 TO 2017

The number of doubled-up households increased by 34%, as compared to 16% for all household growth.

1 in 5
DOUBLED UP IN 2006

1 in 4
DOUBLED UP IN 2017

30%
FAMILY DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

41%
NON-FAMILY DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

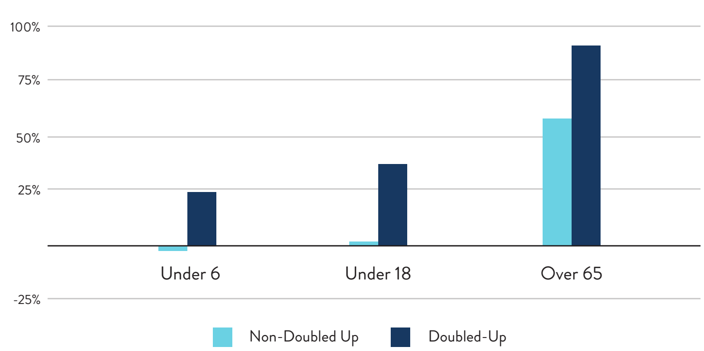
~415K
2006 DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLDS

~560K
2017 DOUBLED-UP HOUSEHOLDS

Households with Children are Doubling Up

Eighty-eight percent of the growth of households with children occurred in doubled-up households. For the very young, fewer children lived in non-doubled-up households in 2017 than in 2006. More children lived in doubled-up households in 2017 than prior to the Great Recession.

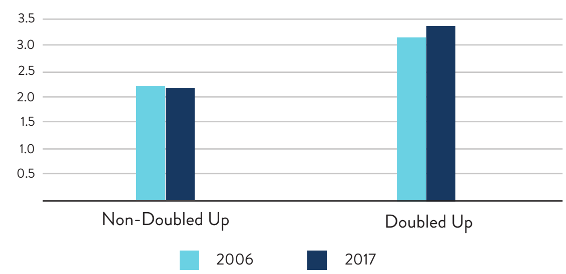
Non-Doubled vs. Doubled-Up Growth by Age



BY THE NUMBERS

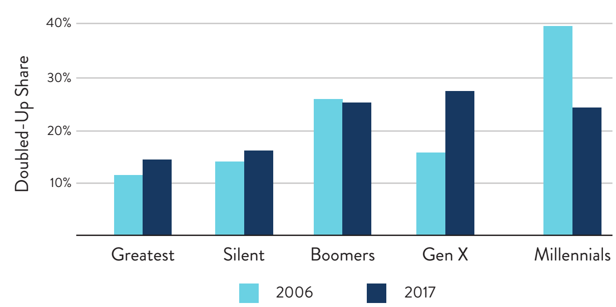
- Renter households grew 48%, while owner households grew 26%
- Married households with children grew 71%, while single-parent households grew 56%
- Doubled-up households with students between the ages of 18 and 24 grew 19%

Average Household Size



The average size of doubled-up households grew from 3.20 to 3.40 persons per household, while the average household size for non-doubled-up households fell from 2.23 to 2.18

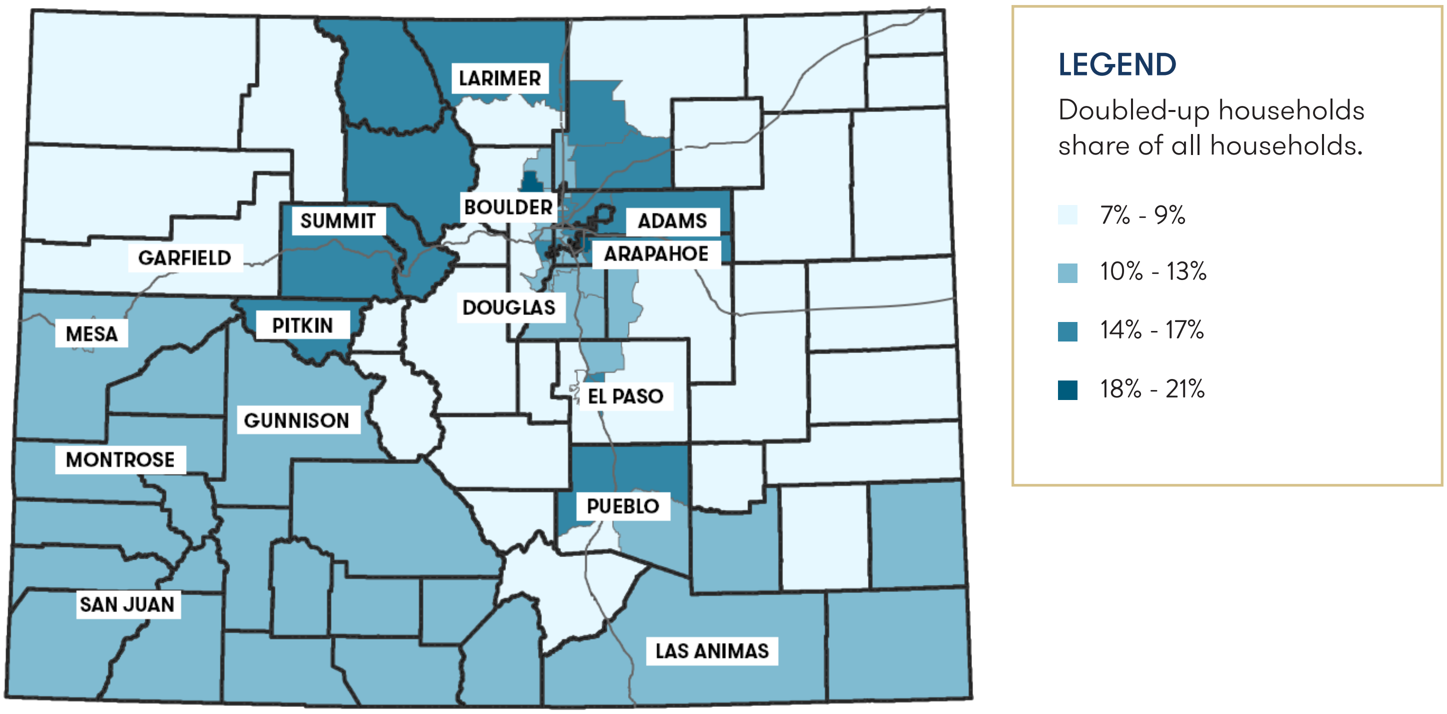
Share of Total Households by Generation



Between 2006 and 2017, there was a generational shift in the head of doubled-up households from Millennials to Generation X.

WHERE IN COLORADO IS DOUBLING UP OCCURRING MOST?

Statewide View

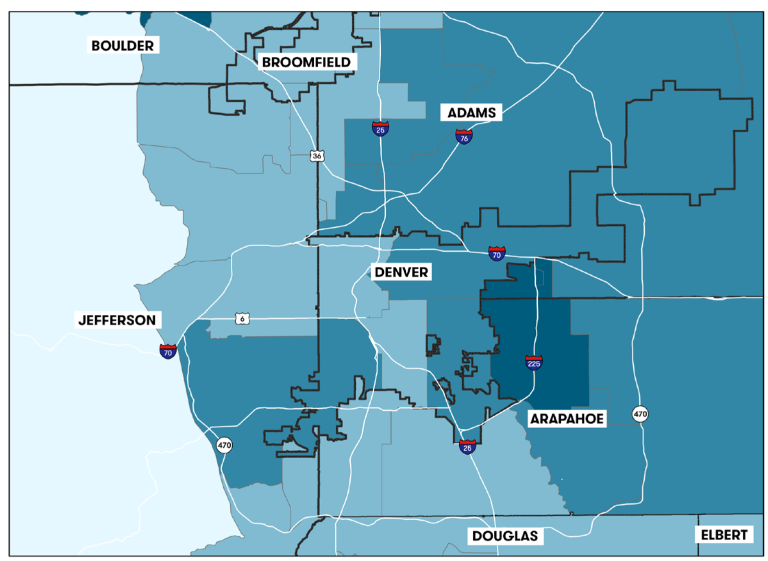


SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR COLORADO?

Colorado now has more doubled-up households than prior to the Great Recession. Living choices are the result of many complex decisions. While housing affordability has been central to the anecdotes about doubling-up, other factors, including child care, transportation and cultural norms of multigenerational households, are other likely factors. While we cannot ascertain from the data the real reason why potentially unique households are living together it is important that policymakers and other Coloradans understand the implications of the increasing prevalence of this phenomenon.

In the second part of this series, we will dig deeper into the economics and the policy implications of doubling-up at the household and macroeconomic levels by exploring issues such as the following:

Metro Denver View



INCOME: Are doubled-up households experiencing more economic stress?
AFFORDABILITY: How many doubled-up households could afford the median priced house if separated?
JOBS: How does doubling-up relate to the Self-Sufficiency Standard and to the occupations in Colorado that support stable housing?
DEMAND: To what extent is doubling-up masking true housing demand, and what are the implications such choices have on factors such as housing policy and resource allocations?
POLICY: How does doubling-up impact housing policy, including HUD income limits, the relationship between occupations and salaries that have been “artificially qualified” for housing support, and the competition this creates for housing support among Colorado’s lowest income residents?