

B. Demographics

There are an estimated 6,940 people living in Elyria-Swansea ⁶, and the neighborhood sustained a consistent growth rate of 2% since 1990 due mostly to a slowly increasing household size ¹. Recently the population decreased slightly, in sharp contrast to the population boom that surrounding Denver neighborhoods experienced ³. The population is no longer primarily Eastern European and Slavic, but instead is largely Hispanic (84% of residents) ⁷; The majority of Hispanic citizens are of Mexican descent ³. In addition, education levels in Elyria-Swansea are generally lower than greater Denver, with 32.1% - 54% of adults lacking a high school degree ². Through anecdotes and one-on-one interviews it is postulated that many households in the neighborhood are mixed status (containing undocumented immigrants living with US citizens); Thus, it is probable that many demographic statistics fail to include the portion of Elyria Swansea consisting of community members who are not legalized citizens. For this reason, it is critical to view statistics about Elyria-Swansea as estimates rather than absolute descriptions.

Many Elyria-Swansea residents struggle with economic security; over $\frac{1}{3}$ of the population lives in poverty. In 2013 the average household size was 4 people ³, with a 2015 median household income of \$32,342 ⁵⁵, in stark contrast to Denver's 2013 average household size of 3 people ³, and 2015 median household income of 68,118 ⁵⁵. The 2015 self-sufficiency standard (the amount of money necessary to live without public or private assistance) for 4 people in Denver County is \$63,069 ⁸. Food costs within the self-sufficiency standard are calculated by the USDA in order to meet minimal nutritional standards; these costs not include any takeout or restaurant prepared meals and are admittedly strict ⁸. The average household income in Elyria-Swansea is significantly lower than Denver's self-sufficiency standard, suggesting that many households struggle to afford basic necessities. Food insecurity, which is a lack of money or resources forcing a change or reduction in food consumption, is faced by 34%

of Elyria-Swansea by the estimates of a survey, more than double the rate of food insecurity in greater Denver ⁴. Over half of survey respondents in northeast Denver agree that they worry everyday about being able to afford nutritious food for their family ⁵.

Works Cited

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