

flights to Durango were Denver, Dallas, and Phoenix (Durango Area Tourism Office Community Briefing 2015).

Local tourism data showed that Durango was continuing to be a popular attraction. The number of enplanements had increased 0.81% from 191,980 passengers in 2013 to 193,537 passengers in 2014 (La Plata County Airport). Another important tourist attraction in Durango was the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. Ridership on the train increased by 9.8% from 2014 to 2015 (Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad). Mesa Verde National Park, a little over an hour from Durango, had 501,563 visitors in 2014, up 8.9% from 2013 (U.S. National Park Service). Furthermore, Durango's lodger's tax revenue increased by 11.6% from 2013 to 2014 (City of Durango, Colorado).

THE CONSUMER AND MARKET DEMAND

As of January 1, 2014, recreational marijuana possession and sale were legal in Colorado, within certain limits. All buyers must be 21, and the Department of Revenue regulated all licensing. While Colorado residents may have medical marijuana cards allowing them to purchase at a lower tax rate and at a greater number of locations, out-of-state visitors must purchase from retail marijuana vendors exclusively. There were different limits for sales to residents of the state of Colorado than to tourists from other states or countries. In a single transaction from a recreational marijuana store, residents may purchase 28 grams (or one ounce) while tourists may only purchase 7 ounces.

However, the possession of marijuana was the same for both residents and tourists. No one may have more than 28 grams (or one ounce) in possession. This meant that it is legal for tourists to visit more than one shop and make multiple purchases of 7 grams to add up to their 28 grams (or one ounce) of possession. However, tourists must consume their purchases while they were in the state of Colorado as it was illegal to cross state borders into a state that had not legalized recreational marijuana. For both residents and tourists, it was illegal to consume marijuana on public property.

According to Carrie Roberts, founder of 420 Intel Agency, a Colorado-based marijuana mystery shopping company, the fastest-growing demographic shopping at marijuana dispensaries was 35- to 50-year-old women as well as people born from 1946 to 1964—the boomer generation. Roberts also reported that older adults had the disposable income needed to purchase marijuana. “The average dispensary customer spends \$156 a month,” she said (Louisville BizBlog).

A study prepared for the Colorado Department of Revenue by The Marijuana Policy Group found that purchases by out-of-state visitors represented about 44% of metro area retail sales and about 90% of retail sales in heavily visited mountain communities (such as Durango). Visitor demand was most prevalent in the state's mountain counties, where combined medical and retail marijuana sales more than doubled after retail sales were legalized in January, 2014 (Market Size and Demand for Marijuana in Colorado).

Tourist destinations had a high ratio of visitors to residents, so the inception of the retail market services a large amount of marijuana demand by tourists. In a 2015 study, on average tourists spent more money per transaction when purchasing recreational marijuana (\$104) compared to local residents (\$65). While local residents had smaller transactions and were mostly purchasing bud, tourists were more likely to purchase a variety of products in addition to bud (hash, edibles, topicals, concentrates). Tourists relied on the internet for information about where to purchase marijuana and chose the store based primarily on location while residents relied on word-of-mouth for information and were more concerned with service and product quality when deciding on the store where they would make their purchases (Profiling Marijuana Tourists).

Retail prices in mountain communities were 50%–100% higher than prices for similar marijuana strains in metropolitan areas such as Denver. The price difference was