

Are You Ready to Take Full Advantage of the Winter Home-Selling Season?

As the weather turns colder, the real estate market can actually get hotter for sellers. However, since few sellers are aware of this dynamic, let me explain.

The internet has changed the way home buyers shop, making the residential real estate market far less seasonal than it used to be. In the past, buyers would tell an agent what they're looking for and wait to see what the agent turned up. Those days are behind us. Buyers now have a variety of tools by which they can perform a home search online, contacting their agent as they identify properties they'd like to see. Consumer-facing real estate sites also offer email alerts based on geography, price and other criteria.

A hybrid option, made possible by MLS improvements over the years, is for the buyer's agent to set up an email alert *within* the MLS. This option has the advantage of the search being far more specific, since agents can search *every* MLS field, not just location, price range, bed/baths and a few other fields. Buyers can choose to receive their MLS alerts monthly, daily or even as soon as a new listing is entered on the MLS by the listing agent. When a buyer receives an alert on a home that checks enough of their boxes, he or she can call their agent and request a showing.

While a buyer might do less active searching on the internet as winter sets in, the MLS alerts keep coming on their own. This allows a buyer to respond quickly should the "perfect" home hit

the market. (If you haven't asked your agent to set up such an MLS alert, ask him – or me. It's a free service to us and you and takes little time to set up.)

Experience has shown me that, if a buyer were to get an MLS alert the day before Christmas with a new listing that sounds perfect, he or she would pick up the phone to wish his agent "Merry Christmas... and by the way, did you see that new listing? When can I see it?"

What this means for sellers is that you shouldn't withhold your home from the market just because winter's approaching. Don't think that spring and summer are the "selling season." Homes sell year round more than in earlier times, and, because many sellers aren't aware of that and wait for spring, the opportunity for your home to get more attention increases. Put your home on the market in the depths of winter and if you've priced it right (not too high), you'll be amazed at how many showings you will have and how quickly it will sell. Why? Because there's little else out there!

My own research shows that homes take longer to sell in December and January than in June and July — almost double — but median days on market have stayed under 20 through every winter since 2014. That's still a very good environment for selling a house, and the showings you get in mid-winter are higher quality. People who are house hunting in the winter are, for the most part, serious buyers and not "lookie-loos."

Yes, families with young children might *prefer* to move during summer vacation, but they are not the majority of home buyers anymore. Consider these other buyers: baby boomers looking to downsize, millennials looking to start a family, and employees facing mid-winter job relocations.

Seniors facing a knee or hip replacement six months from now want to sell their 2-story home and buy a ranch-style home with no stairs without waiting for spring. Ditto for women who are three months pregnant. They want to move *now* into a home with more bedrooms, not wait until they're eight months pregnant or until after the baby is born.

Yes, the market is slowing, but we'll continue to see quick sales with multiple offers on homes that are *priced properly* this winter, just as we did last winter. If you fail to price your home right, you'll think I misled you, as your home sits on the market for weeks or months with few showings and no offers. I've written columns on how to price a home properly in the past. Find them at www.JimSmithColumns.com, or call for a free consultation with me or one of our nine excellent agents.

It's all about supply and demand. There are just as many buyers in the winter, but there are far fewer listings to

choose from, which makes it a great time to put your home on the market. Some of those buyers tried all summer to buy a home and lost out to other bidders. They are not going to stop looking just because the days are getting colder and shorter.

Coming Soon: Historic Downtown Golden Home



This 1913 home in Golden's 12th Street Historic District is being readied for market. Rehabbed in 2006, it also has a 3-car garage on the alley with an accessory

A Further Price Reduction
Andrew Lesko's listing at **2000 Lewis Street** is now reduced to \$420,000. See www.LakewoodHome.info for a video tour. **Open this Saturday 11 to 3.**

Wheat Ridge Ranch Is Close to Crown Hill Park

This is a great ranch home all on one level, no steps, with newer air conditioning and heating units, large bright family room, kitchen island, covered deck, wood-burning fireplace, and a large master bathroom with dual sinks and a second full bathroom. Hardwood flooring is throughout the house, including under the carpeting in the three bedrooms and living room. The yard is fenced, with a new storage shed (10'x10') and a larger metal storage shed (24'x13') that is large enough to store an automobile. Visit www.WheatRidgeHome.info to view a narrated video tour, then call listing agent **David Dlugasch** at **303-908-4835** for a private showing. David will be holding it open this **Saturday, Nov. 3rd, from 11 to 2.**



Just Listed: Downtown Golden Townhome



Briarwood Commons is a late-1990s townhome community built across 8th Street from the Golden Community Center's upper parking lot. All units have 2-car attached garages accessed from an alley. This one at **1216 8th Street** has the kitchen and living/dining rooms plus the master suite on the upper floor, and a guest bedroom with en-suite bathroom on the main floor, plus an unfinished basement with 9-foot ceiling that could accommodate a 3rd bedroom and full bath. There's a walled patio in front and a full-width balcony accessed from the upstairs living room, both with mountain views. **Open Sunday 11 to 2.** Video tour at www.GoldenTownhome.com.



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