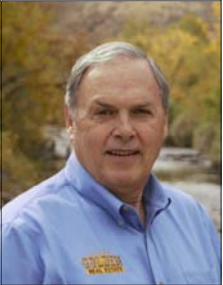


Why We Believe in a Values-Based Real Estate Practice

If you have seen Golden Real Estate's "for sale" signs, you may have noticed that they contain two value statements. I don't know of any other real

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH**, Realtor®

estate brokerage with value statements on their yard signs.

The first value statement on our signs is "*Hometown Service Delivered With Integrity.*" There are two values contained in that one phrase. By "hometown service" we are expressing the value of focusing on where we live and work.

Although we do on occasion accept listings outside Jefferson County, the vast

majority of our listings are here where we are best equipped to serve them. Most brokerages choose generic names because they don't want to limit themselves geographically. We want our clients to know that we specialize in the greater Golden and Jefferson County market.

The second value in that phrase is integrity. That is expressed in many ways, some of them subtle. As the broker/owner, I don't condone puffery or misrepresentation by any of our agents. For example, you won't hear any of us using the presumptuous tagline "Your real estate professional for life." We answer our phones when they ring, instead of having a voicemail greeting that claims we're busy with clients all day but will be returning calls between 1 and 2 and between 4 and 5. And when our listings go under contract, we put "Under Contract" sign riders on them instead of hoping buyers will call about the house so we can capture them as clients and sell them another property.

We don't misrepresent our level of success or create phony testimonials. We employ a third party company to survey our actual clients after closing and post only those ratings and comments, good or bad, on www.RatedAgent.com.

The highest compliment I have received about this column has been that I "tell it like it is." This has made me unpopular with some colleagues but won the respect of many others. Also, no one writes these columns for me. The byline means what it says — I write what appears under my name.

Our second value statement is "*Promoting and Modeling Environmental Responsibility.*" Being a "green" brokerage is not a gimmick to look good. We believe in the biblical teaching that having "dominion" over the earth includes being a good steward of it. I have been an EcoBroker® for over five years, and I was delighted when all eight broker associates at Golden Real Estate chose to earn that

designation for themselves. As far as I know, we are the only real estate firm in which every agent is a certified EcoBroker.

As EcoBrokers, we are better equipped to serve clients who look for sustainable homes or are interested in making their current homes more sustainable. But we go beyond that role to promote sustainability and practice it ourselves. In addition to writing about that topic in this space, I work with Golden Earth Days in mounting the annual tour of solar and sustainable homes, and my own home and our office have been on that tour more than once. We have installed solar PV systems on both properties, super-insulated them, and taken other steps to reduce their carbon footprint. We also have the larg-

est fleet of electric vehicles, and we installed car charging stations that are free to the public as well as to our agents and staff.

I strongly believe that no one should check their values-based opinions at the office door. Most real estate agents avoid politics like the plague, fearing they could lose a client who disagrees with them. Quite the opposite, I voice my opinion in this space on political issues, such as the ill-conceived Jefferson Parkway toll road. I don't fear losing business because of such stands and have been gratified by the business I've received from readers who disagree with me. As the song of my college days says, this land is my land, this land is your land, and we should all care enough to speak our minds.

This Week's New Listings from Golden Real Estate

Walk to Light Rail From This Sixth Avenue West Home

Sixth Avenue West is a desirable subdivision with a Golden address in unincorporated Jefferson County. Built in the 1970's, the homes are well built and the lots are bigger than in some newer subdivisions. There are covenants, but no HOA — just a voluntary community association. The elementary school, Kyffin, is centrally located in the subdivision, just a short walk from this home at 14340 W. 5th Ave., and is known for its gifted and talented program. The light rail station for Red Rocks Community College is a 3-block walk from this home, and Colorado Mills Mall and downtown Golden are close by, too. As for this ranch-style home, it has a fully finished basement, 5 bedrooms, 3 baths, and is on a cul-de-sac. Three Solatubes bring extra light into the house, and all wall-to-wall carpeting has been replaced with beautiful laminate or tile flooring except on the stairs to the basement. Radon has been mitigated, too. Open Saturday, 1-4 pm.



Cherry Knolls Ranch on an Oversized 12,000-sq.-ft. Lot



This Cherry Knolls ranch-style home at 6920 Steele St., is 1,692 sq. ft. on the main floor with 3 bedrooms, 2 baths and has a 678 sq. ft. partial basement, of which 271 sq. ft. is finished. Located on a quiet street, the lot is over 12,000 sq. ft. with mature landscaping, a private backyard and two patio areas. The house has newer Andersen double pane windows throughout, but could use additional updating. All in all, it's a great opportunity to fix up and make it your own. Listed by Chuck Brown, 303-885-7855, who will hold it open Saturday, 1-3 p.m.



All Agents Are Certified EcoBrokers

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