

Next Week, Denver Homeowners Will Receive Updated Property Valuations From the City & County Assessor

During the first week of May in every odd numbered year, Colorado's county assessors are required to inform every property owner of the full valuation that they have assigned to each property. Unless revised downward in the appeal process, that valuation will be the basis of the property tax charged for this year and for 2026.

The valuation you receive by letter is the assessor's best guess as to what your property might have sold for on June 30th of the previous (even-numbered) year. That assumes, however, that the size and condition of your home is the same on Jan. 1st of this year and next year as it was last year.

The system actually *depends on* your participation in correcting the assessor's valuation, which was the result of a computer-assisted "mass appraisal" system, informed by human analysis of market trends, verified sales data, and neighborhood conditions. Deputy assessors will, however, read or listen to your appeal of the valuation which their system generated for your home. **The bottom line is that you owe it to yourself and to the county to help the assessor come up with the proper valuation for your home.**

So how do you do that? For non-residential and commercial properties, which pay roughly four times the property tax per \$100,000 of valuation, a whole industry has arisen to help property owners (for a fee) to appeal their

This article describes the tax assessment process in the **City & County of Denver**. You can find versions of this article for the other metro area counties online at www.JimSmithColumns.com.

property tax valuation. Residential taxes are so much lower than commercial taxes in Colorado that there's not enough profit for professionals to make, leaving residential homeowners to fight on their own for lower valuations. My hope is that this article will help.

The county assessors are expected to make it easy for taxpayers to determine whether the assessor guessed correctly at their home's value as of June 30, 2024. First, find your home at <https://property.spatalest.com/co/denver/#/>. Note that after you enter your address, you need to scroll down and click on your address.

On your home's web page look for "Neighborhood Sales" (at the right, under the second 'More' tab) which lists all the qualified sales that occurred during the eligible period, the 24 months prior to June 30, 2024.

To make the list of sales useful, click on the "Square Footage" header to find homes similar in size to yours. Once you find good comps to use in your appeal, you need to "time adjust" their sale prices.

Time adjustment is based on how much Denver homes increased in value during those 24 months. The Denver assessor will announce the median percentage increase in values from June 30, 2022, to June 30, 2024, for the City & County, but "median" means that half the neighborhoods will be higher and

half will be lower or even negative. Whatever it is for your neighborhood, divide that by 24 months to determine the increase in value per month for residential properties.

So, if a sale occurred six months prior to June 30, 2024, you need to increase its sale price by six times that monthly rate, and that "time adjusted" price of comps is what you will need to cite in your appeal.

Using the procedure described above, if you find your home was overvalued, you can protest using an online form that is under the "Assessment Protest" tab on your home's web page, where you can log in as "Guest."

Your appeal must be postmarked or received at the assessor's office by June 9, 2025. You can mail or fax your protest, but I recommend an in-person meeting, which you can request by calling 720-913-4164.

If your protest is rejected, the appeal options are explained on the Notice of Valuation letter which you will have received in the mail and in your rejection letter.

Review: My Mustang EV Is a Fine Replacement for My Tesla

A couple months ago, I reported that I had traded in my Tesla Model Y (which I loved) for the Ford Mustang Mach E after test-driving multiple other brands, including Chevrolet, Toyota, Hyundai, Kia and Nissan. Now that I've put 1,000 miles on my Mustang, and knowing that many readers may be thinking of trading in their Teslas, I thought it time to play automotive critic and write a review of the Mustang.

A few years ago, I spent 2 weeks driving an F-150 Lightning, which I liked, so I knew I would like the Mustang. Its "BlueCruise" hands-free driving, which only works on divided highways, is quite nice, but not worth (to me) the \$50/month subscription fee after my three months' free trial. It's nowhere near as nice as Tesla's "Full Self-Driving (Supervised)" which I reviewed favorably in my Nov. 21, 2024, column and which costs twice times as much (\$99 per month or \$8,000 purchase).

Without "BlueCruise," there is lane-keeping and adaptive cruise control which can be used on city streets and arterials. The lane-keeping is not as effective as in the Tesla, wandering to the very edges of lanes instead of keeping strictly to the center, and it gives out on sharper curves, which Tesla is great at. But what I prefer about Ford's lane-keeping is that it's automatic. When I break the lane-keeping to change lanes, it locks into the new lane without me having to set it again.

The adaptive cruise control is much better than Tesla's, because when the posted speed limit changes, it automatically resets the set speed. Since I set it for 10 mph over the speed

This Ad Will Appear Bi-Weekly Instead of Weekly, Starting This Week

Writing the articles for this full-page "advertorial" has been my privilege and passion for over two decades, but I have decided to give myself a break and publish every other week instead of weekly so I can devote more time to my thriving real estate practice and family life. All 26 newspapers in which it appears have graciously allowed me to make this change, and I look forward to having next week "off"! Look for me to return every other week starting now.

On those "off" weeks, including May 1st, I'll be publishing half-page ads on related topics. In next week's ad, I start a series on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Look for it on this page.

Remember, above all, the intention is to determine what your home was worth on June 30, 2024, not what it is worth today! Your taxes for 2025 and 2026 will only be based on what it was worth back then!



limit, when it resets, it sets the new speed control accordingly. Not true on the Tesla.

My favorite feature is the "1-Pedal" setting for driving. This uses regenerative braking to slow down the car at a good rate when you release the accelerator pedal. And when it comes to a stop, it holds the car whether on an incline or not. The best thing about it is that once I have set it to "1-Pedal" driving, it is already set every time I drive. (It's not the factory default setting, which is with minimal regenerative braking and unwanted "creep" as if you were driving a conventional car.)

The "frunk" is not as big as in any Tesla, but it's bigger than other brands of EV, some of which have no front storage at all.

Like the newer Teslas, there is no need for a key fob (although they give you two), because your phone is your key. Instead of door handles, you touch a button above each door, which pops the door open enough to pull on it. There's a smartphone app. It's useful, but not as complete as Tesla's.

There's an EV round-up happening in the **Arvada United Methodist Church's** lot at 68th and Carr St. this **Sunday, April 27**, from **9 to noon**. I'll have my car there if you'd like to get a closer look. Also, I wrote more about it at <http://RealEstateToday.substack.com>.

Celebrate Earth Day With Free Film Screenings This Saturday

The Colorado Environmental Film Festival (CEFF), which I wrote about and co-sponsored in February, returns to the Green Center on the Colorado School of Mines campus this **Saturday, April 26th, 1 to 3 pm**, for a screening of two environmental films. Admission is free, although a contribution of \$12 or more is encouraged.

The first film is **Peaks to Prairie** and is described as follows: "In Boulder County, an ambitious initiative harnesses the power of nature to combat climate challenges in the peaks and prairie ecosystem. As megafires rage across the Western U.S., millions of acres of nearby agricultural prairies remain degraded, stripped of the nutrients vital for a thriving landscape. To address these challenges, three ecological partners—Boulder Watershed Collective, Grama Grass & Livestock, and Boulder Mushroom—have come together in a pioneering effort to restore the land."

The second film is **Common Ground** (43 minutes). It's described as follows: "From the creators of **Kiss the Ground** (CEFF's 2021 Best of the Fest), this eye-opening film explores the regenerative farming movement and its potential to heal the soil, reverse climate change, and restore human health. Featuring passionate farmers, activists, and thought leaders, **Common Ground** offers a hopeful vision for the future of our planet—and the role we all play in shaping it."

The screenings are followed by an audience chat "to dive deeper into the stories, themes, and action steps from each film."

The Green Center is located at **924 16th Street** in downtown Golden. Street and lot parking is free on weekends. I put a link for ordering tickets for as little as \$0 on our blog, <http://RealEstateToday.substack.com>. There are trailers you can click on for each film.

Lennar to Build 1,500 Denver Area Homes Using Geothermal Energy

Lennar, one of the nation's biggest home builders, announced recently that it is going to build 1,500 homes in the Denver area using geothermal energy to heat and cool them. It's likely that these will be all-electric homes, although that was not mentioned, since gas will not be needed for space or water heating.

Dandelion Energy is the builder's partner in the project, using heat pumps to extract heat from the ground in the winter and to extract heat from the homes in the summer. Each home will have its own individually drilled geothermal wells, which surprised me. If the homes are close together, a community geothermal system might make more economic sense.

The goal is to complete the 1,500 homes by the end of 2026, making it the largest residential deployment using geothermal so far.

Just Listed: 1-BR Condo in Arvada's Skyline Estates

This well-maintained condo at **10259 W. 55th Drive #103** is in the Skyline Estates subdivision east of Kipling between the campus of Red Rocks Community College's Arvada campus and the athletic fields on 58th Avenue. When you look out the bedroom window or from the enclosed patio between mature evergreen trees, all you see is greenbelt, a children's playground and those athletic fields. There is little or no traffic noise, just the sounds of birds enjoying our spring weather! This condo is in great condition, as you'll see when you come to my **open house this Saturday, April 26th, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** You can view a drone video and a narrated video tour that I created at www.GRElistings.com, then call me at **303-525-1851** to request a private showing. This ground-floor unit has a rare attached garage, too! Check it out!



Open Saturday 11 am to 1pm

\$335,000

Attached Garage Front Door

Townhome Near Molly Brown's Summer Home

In south Lakewood, east of Molly Brown's summer home at Yale & Wadsworth (now a museum and special events venue) is a subdivision called **Thraemoor in the Park Townhomes**. This particular home, at **6701 W. Yale Ave.**, is at the topmost corner of the subdivision, and offers a clear view from Pikes Peak to Red Rocks over the roofs of the homes below. It features hardwood floors, a main-floor primary suite, vaulted ceilings and a deck accessed through French doors. The walk-out basement is fully finished with two bedrooms, a full bath, and family room. There's also a loft area suitable for a home office. See the video tour at www.GRElistings.com.



\$595,000

Coming Soon—Open May 3rd, 11 to 1

GOLDEN REAL ESTATE
Hometown Service Delivered with Integrity
Promoting and Modeling Environmental Responsibility

Jim Smith

Broker/Owner
303-525-1851—Use QR Code>
Jim@GoldenRealEstate.com

Broker Associates:
JIM SWANSON, 303-929-2727
CHUCK BROWN, 303-885-7855
DAVID DLUGASCH, 303-908-4835
GREG KRAFT, 720-353-1922
KATHY JONKE, 303-990-7428
CHRIS SHOLTS, 320-491-6494

In-house Loan Officer:
WENDY RENEE, 303-868-1903

