You may think I’m getting political this week, and I suppose I am, but I’m certainly not off-topic, because the proposed Jefferson Parkway toll road cutting diagonally from Highway 93 to Highway 128 north of Golden has always been about real estate development and never about improving transportation in Denver’s northwest quadrant. Studies funded by the Colo. Dept. of Transportation itself concluded that projected traffic volume doesn’t justify completing the beltway through the northwest quadrant, which is exactly why it can only be built as a privately funded toll road. Residents of the northwest corner of the metro area are happy to let development occur primarily in the other quadrants where vacant land has been gobbled up by office buildings and subdivisions spurred by — guess what? — freeways and toll roads. This toll road will accelerate the same development in the open land north of Golden. Not surprisingly, the Realtor associations are all for completing the beltway, even if it makes Golden feel like Idaho Springs, with the constant drone of an interstate highway heard throughout its valley. I stand alone among my fellow Realtors in speaking out against this boondoggle which puts profit ahead of maintaining our quality of life. Now, for some reason, Golden’s own leaders have decided that the toll road is inevitable and are willing to accept a “compromise” with the County Commissioners under which Golden drops its opposition to the toll road in return for some rather vague promises of planning dollars to improve US Highway 6 and State Highway 93 through Golden. From where I sit, it seems like a trick. Would-be investors in the toll road have surely told the Commissioners that it’s a bad investment — unless the route through Golden is improved by creating grade separated interchanges and widening Highway 93 to four lanes. It doesn’t take a genius to realize that what the Commissioners are proposing is to “give” Golden improvements that in fact help to justify the toll road to investors — and, in addition, Golden agrees to stop fighting the toll road! Citizens Involved in the Northwest Quadrant (CINQ) is holding a meeting on Jan. 18, 7-9 pm, at the American Mountaineering Center in downtown Golden to explore the reasons for and against Golden’s proposed surrender on this issue. All are invited, including the Mayor and City Council. More info at GotheBetterWay.org.