

Some Favorite Home Improvements When Purchasing a New-to-Me Home

Who doesn't want to make some improvements on a home they have just purchased? Here are some of my personal favorites.

Energy efficiency is very important to Rita and me, so the first thing we do is pay for an **energy audit** by someone like Andrew Sams of **Alpine Building Performance** to identify opportunities for making the home more air-tight. This would likely include blowing **more insulation** into walls or ceilings and **caulking** around windows. It might also include installing an **energy recovery ventilator (ERV)** to bring fresh air into the home. This device warms cold outside air in the winter and cools hot outside air in the summer by means of a heat exchanger.

I love bringing sunlight into a home, not with traditional skylights but with **sun tunnels**. Most people

are familiar with the Solatube brand, but I prefer the Velux brand. I had Mark Lundquist of **Design Sky-lights** install a 22-inch Velux sun tunnel in my windowless garage and a 14-inch sun tunnel in my windowless laundry room — and four large Velux sun tunnels in the Golden Real Estate office. Ah, sunlight!

Speaking of sunlight, we replaced every light bulb in our house with **LEDs** which are "daylight" color (like sunlight), not cool white or warm white. CFLs and incandescent bulbs are so 2010!

Installing **solar photovoltaic panels** is a no-brainer for us, especially now that the cost has dropped so much. Your roof doesn't have to face due south. Southeast and southwest are good enough. (That's our situation.) Since you might be driving an electric car someday, install

as much PV as Xcel Energy allows to cover that future load. If you have just purchased an EV, Xcel will allow you to install more panels based on anticipated future use.

Don't you hate climbing a curb to enter your driveway? Developers install those mountable curbs the entire length of the streets in new subdivisions, not knowing exactly where each driveway will be. One of the first things I would do (and have done) is to hire a concrete company to **replace the mountable curb with a smooth entrance**. It cost over \$2,000 for our 3-car-wide driveway, but I love it every time I enter from the street! Caution: the sidewalk will now be sloped slightly and pedestrians could more easily

slip on ice, so be prepared to salt your sidewalk to eliminate icing!

When your gas forced air furnace needs replacing, consider replacing it with a **heat-pump furnace or mini-splits**. And when your gas water heater needs replacing, I suggest buying a **heat-pump water heater**. The cost is about the same, and, by converting to electricity for both, you will have eliminated the most common sources of carbon monoxide poisoning in your home.

Other improvements I'd consider include: Replacing carpeting with **tile in bathrooms**; and replacing regular glass with **Low-E glass** on south-facing windows to reduce the harmful effects of sunlight on furniture, hardwood floors and artwork.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH**, Realtor®

Price Reduced on Veritable Mansion in Alkire Estates

No expense was spared in the construction of this 4,937-square-foot home at **12996 W. 81st Place**. The roof, for example, is Italian Ludowici tile. The 18'x20' kitchen has two Corian double sinks and two dishwashers, a Sub Zero refrigerator *and* a 2-drawer Sub Zero wine refrigerator. The master bedroom features two master bathrooms (each with a deep whirlpool tub and a bidet) and his-and-her master closets. There are also his-and-her offices. There's a wall fresco water fountain in the foyer and three domed ceiling frescoes that were hand-painted by a local artist. Ceiling heights are 10 feet in the basement and 12 to 14 feet on the main level. There are two oversized garages, each with epoxy floors, radiant floor heat, floor drains, bright fluorescent lighting, and abundant electrical power. The basement garage alone measures over 2,000 square



feet and could accommodate at least 5 or 6 cars, but is designed to include a large workshop and man cave. Three boilers provide radiant floor heating not only to the house but to both driveways, patios and decks for snow melting. At left is a picture of the basement patio. The basement and garage concrete slabs are 8" thick, poured over 5 feet of imported compacted fill dirt. The structure itself is built on approximately 48 concrete caissons. An elevator suitable for a wheelchair connects the two levels. A 10-camera security system is monitored from the master bedroom where there are two wall-safes, one suitable for long guns. A 22-zone sprinkler system serves the home's grounds, including an herb garden and two vegetable gardens, as well as the well-manicured greenbelt below the property. All in all, this is one amazing home that is unmatched in the number of luxury features and quality construction details. My narrated video tour (with drone footage) at www.ArvidaMansion.info covers all this and much more! Call for a showing!

Horse Property Back on Market

The 0.92-acre horse property at **16826 W. 57th Avenue** is active again. The contract fell when the buyer's own home fell through. If you're looking for a great home that is also a horse property, check out www.JeffcoHorseProperties.com. Call **303-525-1851** to see it.

Price Reduced on Golden Listing

Kristi Brunel's listing at **461 White Ash Drive** is now listed at **\$795,000**. It is a four-bedroom, 3½-bath 2-story home with finished walk-out basement and mountain views from every window. Take a narrated video tour at MountainRidgeHome.com. Call **303-525-2520** to see it.

Just Listed: 1867 Home and Lot in Downtown Golden



This house and lot on Jackson Street between 14th and 15th Streets in downtown Golden represents a terrific development opportunity, whether you improve or scrape the 2-story, 1,940-square-foot historic building on the corner (barely visible through the trees in this aerial photograph). There are two lots to this listing, a rectangular lot with the building that is zoned commercial, and a triangular lot behind it and the brown home with solar panels. That brown home is owned by the same individual and will be available for purchase in 2+ years. The vacant land has a wind turbine and an electric vehicle charging station on it. This property has a storied history in the development of renewable energy and would make a great national renewable energy sustainability plaza. However, that is not a requirement for the buyer. What is required is to maintain access via easement through the vacant lot to the garage and carport of the adjoining brown home. View a narrated video tour and drone footage at www.HistoricGoldenHome.com, then call **303-525-1851** for a showing.



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