

COVID-19 Will Certainly Impact the Real Estate Market, but By How Much?

By **JIM SMITH, Realtor®**

We Realtors are keenly aware that the COVID-19 outbreak will affect the real estate market, but we're all waiting to see that happen in a more measurable way. We've seen a reduction in showing activity, but homes are still being listed and keep going under contract, especially in the higher price brackets.

I dropped in on an open house Sunday and spoke with the agent on duty. This was a million-dollar listing on Easley Road, north of Golden. I showed up two hours into the open house, and he said that he had already had about 10 sets of visitors. Indeed one visitor was in the house when I arrived.

Two Saturdays ago, I had my best open house ever at a \$580,000 listing in Golden proper, and 18 agent showings had been set for that same day. Two days later, the home was under contract for \$620,000. Other than bumping elbows instead of shaking hands, it was pretty much business as usual.

I'm under no illusion that the market won't slow down as more potential home buyers are unable to get mortgages because they were laid off. Cash buyers may be less willing to sell depreciated stocks to buy a home. But that's not happening a lot yet. A local TV news program had a segment Saturday even-

ing in which a local real estate agent gave a similar account of a busier-than-ever real estate market.

My broker associates have seen some impact. One of them told me a buyer had terminated a million-dollar purchase because they were concerned that they wouldn't be able to sell their current home.

Another broker associate reported that his buyers are moving forward with their contract on a home, but only because they have stable jobs — one a physician and the other a public defender.

A third broker associate has a vacant land listing that had failed to sell for three years but suddenly has multiple buyers talking to her about submitting offers for it.

Another broker associate has a buyer from Connecticut who is retiring and wants to move to Colorado but had to cancel her flight because of COVID-19. Her state has instituted a stay-at-home order. Meanwhile, she told our agent that she's now thinking more about looking outside the metro area where there's "more space." Maybe she'd like that Cedaredge listing featured below!

The same broker associate said that a buyer from Chicago had been planning to make a non-contingent offer on a home but now wants to make it contingent on the sale of his current home because of concerns

that it may not sell as readily now.

Yet another agent has a client who was ready to list their current home and buy another but is a physician concerned about getting infected herself, so she is holding off on those plans.

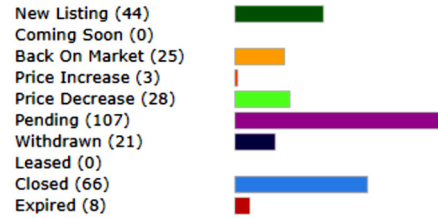
it's warm outside, we keep our front door open so that visitors (and we ourselves) don't have to touch the handles at all.

Title companies are adapting, too. I attended closings recently at which the closer handed out only new pens and wore blue gloves herself, and the rest of us were spaced out more than before around the closing table. One title company is doing "drive-through" closings, in which the documents were passed through the car window for signing!

The real estate industry will survive and people will still buy and sell homes, but we expect the volume of sales to decline. How much we can't be sure.

Stay-at-home orders and the closing of businesses could have a big effect, but real estate was exempted from that ruling as an "essential professional service."

Denver MLS Activity - Sat. to Mon. 3/21-3/23



The MLS statistics above show that life goes on across our industry. Homes are still being listed, going under contract and selling. However, the 21 withdrawn listings and the 25 back-on-market listings are likely homes where a contract fell, perhaps because of COVID-19.

Like any business, Golden Real Estate is adjusting to the situation with new practices and procedures. We carry disinfectant wipes and rubber gloves in our cars, and we have buyers meet us at listings instead of carpooling. At our office, we have disinfectant wipes handy for wiping down hard surfaces after we or visitors touch them. When

Video Tours of Listings

For over decade, Golden Real Estate has created [narrated video tours](#) of its listings. You can find examples at www.GREListings.com. If all brokerages did this, it would greatly reduce the need for open houses and in-person showings.

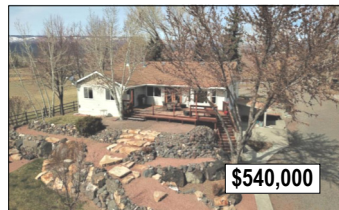
Just Listed: Lakewood Ranch with Finished Basement

This 4-bedroom, 3½-bath brick ranch at 1957 S. Taft Street in Lakewood's Green Mountain Village offers a solid home with main-floor living in a quiet neighborhood just north of Bear Creek Golf Club and Hutchinson Park. Green Mountain's network of bike and hiking trails is also close by. One trail is just 100 yards away at the end of the street! With its finished garden-level basement, there's 2,498 sq. ft. of living space. The backyard is special, with a dozen or more lichen-covered boulders, brick flower beds, included hot tub, wood deck (outside the master bedroom) with pergola, and two storage sheds! The garage is extra long, with included work bench and wall cabinets plus a 240V outlet for charging an EV. With our narrated video tour at www.LakewoodHome.info you only need to set a showing if you know you're interested in it. It's just like a showing. Call me to see it.



Do You Want to Get Out of Dodge? Try Cedaredge!

This Western Slope home just listed by our former broker associate, Kim Taylor, is a newly remodeled home at 1235 NW Cedar Ave. It overlooks five private acres with incredible views of the San Juan Mountain range and the Grand Mesa, just a half mile from downtown Cedaredge, where Kim is now a happy local Realtor. The 3,464-square-foot ranch-style home was completely remodeled in 2013, including natural gas service, a new heating system, new paint, carpeting, and more. Two bedrooms were converted to a large master suite. An office and gas fireplace were added to the main floor. One garage/shop is 44'x50' with a 12-foot door that can store your RV and all your toys, and has a shop with 240V power. A second outbuilding is an 800-SF shop with garage door and attached tractor barn. The property enjoys public water and sewer and is adjacent to open fields and an orchard, just a 10-minute walk to downtown Cedaredge. The top of the Grand Mesa is just 20 minutes to the north and offers world class snowmobile trails, X-country skiing, hiking, biking and fishing. The Gunnison River is 15 minutes to the south for water sports and fishing. Visit www.CedaredgeHome.info for a video walk-through of this home, including aerial footage of the property and surrounding area. Call me at 303-525-1851 or Kim Taylor at 303-304-6678 for more info or to set a showing.



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Jim Smith

Broker/Owner, 303-525-1851

Jim@GoldenRealEstate.com

Broker Associates:

JIM SWANSON — 303-929-2727

CARRIE LOVINGIER — 303-907-1278

KRISTI BRUNEL — 303-525-2520

CHUCK BROWN — 303-885-7855

DAVID DLUGASCH — 303-908-4835

ANDREW LESKO — 720-710-1000

CAROL MILAN — 720-982-4941

