

# As Winter Approaches and Covid-19 Lingers, What's the Denver Real Estate Outlook?

As I write this, the real estate market is a tale of two cities — or, more accurately, a tale of cities vs. suburbs. Because of the virus, Americans are “getting out of Dodge,” leaving the congestion of multi-story buildings and moving to the suburbs and the countryside.

The statistics tell the story. In a recent 30-day period, 46% of the sales in Jefferson County closed *above* their listing price after being on the MLS for a median of **5 days**. It was quite the opposite in downtown Denver. There, during the same 30-day period, 87% of the listings (primarily condos in elevator buildings) sold *below* their listing prices with a median time on the MLS of **24 days**.

It's the same story nationwide, and for good reason. People are fearful of catching Covid-19, and they know that being in close quarters can't be good. In the suburbs they can take their dog for a walk without using an elevator and without having to come within 6 feet of another human being. (I'm describing my own life here — I walk my dog Chloe every morning on a one-mile circuit around my subdivision and never come in close contact with the neighbors I encounter. Because of that, I don't even need to wear a mask on these walks.)

We keep hearing that the inventory of homes for sale is at record low (except downtown), but that's only true because homes are going under contract so quickly. The chart at right tells the

## REAL ESTATE TODAY



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story well. Using the most recent full-month MLS statistics for Jefferson county (September 2020), you can see that we actually had more new listings this September than in any of the five previous Septembers, yet the number of sold listings was nearly the same, so there was no way the number

Month	Active Listings	New Listings	Sold Listings	Median DIM	Ratio	\$/Fin SF
Sep-15	2,043	1,215	1,070	8	100.0%	\$171
Sep-16	1,946	1,171	1,093	8	100.0%	\$189
Sep-17	1,963	1,230	972	10	100.0%	\$206
Sep-18	2,063	1,245	852	11	100.0%	\$221
Sep-19	2,139	1,209	974	14	99.5%	\$232
Sep-20	1,284	1,294	1,242	5	100.0%	\$245

of *active* listings was going to increase and was, in fact, lower by far than the number of active listings in the five previous Septembers. The median time on the MLS of 5 days tells you why.

Moreover, the average ratio of sold price to listing price in Jeffco was 100%, as it had been every prior September except in 2019, and the price per finished square foot has continued to soar. *The situation is similar in all suburban counties.*

Clearly, the takeaway from this analysis is that if a homeowner is thinking of selling their home anytime soon, he or she would be smart to put their home on the market right now. Don't think that just because winter is coming that buyers aren't actively looking for homes. Last week in this column I promoted a 1973 ranch in Arvada that was “not particularly updated.” It didn't even have a garage door opener for its one-car garage, and it had a backyard clothes line instead of a dryer. Yet that home attracted over 50 agent showings in 72 hours and 11 offers by Saturday evening, when it went under contract for \$30,500 over its listing price.

A recent real estate industry article predicted a terrible winter for us real estate agents because of low inventory, but there are just as many homes for sale as ever — maybe more. You just have to act quickly because they are selling right away.

Another recent listing of mine also illustrates how hot the market is. The very first offer for my \$530,000 tri-level listing in central Lakewood came in at \$585,000, apparently from a buyer who had lost out in previous bidding wars and

didn't want that to happen again. The strategy worked, because no other agents would submit an offer when they learned that we had one that was \$55,000 over full price.

Are you wondering what you might be able to get for your home? It costs you nothing to get a comparative market analysis from a real estate agent, and, regardless of where your home is, my broker associates and I are happy to provide that for you. Call us!

## For-Sale-By-Owner Can Hurt Sellers in a Hot Market

When homes sell this easily (if priced right), you might think you don't need to use a listing agent, but think again.

Take the scenario I described at left. I listed a home for what it was worth based on comparable sales, but it attracted 50 showings and 11 offers and I played the offers against each other to get \$30,500 over the listing price, waiving appraisal.

If the owner had tried to sell it herself, fewer buyers would know about the home because it wouldn't be on the MLS and countless other websites. And how could she have handled those 50 showings without our showing service, which is only available to licensed agents? And what about handling those 11 offers which come in using a software package used by virtually all agents, not available to sellers? It would be rather awkward, don't you think, to conduct the bidding war and end up with as good a result?

Do you have questions? Give us a call.

## Realtor Code of Ethics to Address Hate Speech

A couple weeks back, I had an article about how the National Association of Realtors is taking fair housing seriously. This week I read in an email newsletter that NAR is proposing changes to its Code of Ethics and professional standards to crack down on racist and discriminatory speech and behavior.

If implemented, the changes would apply NAR's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice to all activities, not just those related to real estate, prohibiting hate speech against protected classes. Protected classes under the Code of Ethics include race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Once these changes are adopted, the Code would prohibit all discrimination, not just willful discrimination, against protected classes and would recommend that ethics violations be considered under membership qualification criteria. Ethics violations could also be referred to governmental agencies for action.

Discrimination would be deemed “particularly egregious” when determining appropriate discipline, which could include termination of membership for up to three years.

## 5-Bedroom Lakewood Home Just Listed by Ty Scoble

You're going to love this 5-bedroom, 2-bath home in a great location. It's at **120 Field Street**, a couple blocks from Meadowlark Park. It was listed this week for **\$570,000**. The open floor plan provides smooth transitions from room to room. The updated kitchen has stainless steel appliances and a nice wine rack. There is newer flooring throughout the main level, and both bathrooms have been updated. You can entertain in the beautiful backyard or downstairs at the bar. Thanks to its easy access via Garrison Street to the Sixth Avenue expressway, this home is only a few minutes from downtown Denver or Golden and the foothills. There is a light rail station less than a mile north on Garrison Street. Check out the narrated video tour at [www.MeadowlarkHome.info](http://www.MeadowlarkHome.info), then call Ty Scoble at 720-281-6783 to see it.



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