

## The Beltway Push Is About Development, Not Traffic

By JIM SMITH  
Jefferson County Realtor®

Just because I am a Realtor does not mean that I favor unconstrained real estate development. Quite the opposite — I see clearly that unconstrained development is bad for the market in which I specialize — the existing home market.

The push to “complete” the beltway is all about development and has nothing to do with solving current or even projected highway needs. Northern Jefferson County has the largest amount of undeveloped land within a 20-mile radius of Downtown Denver, and the people who stand to gain the most by developing that land have combined with a governor who sees a completed beltway as part of his legacy, completely corrupting the transportation planning process for the metro area’s northwest quadrant.

Tom Hoffman, a consultant and community activist in Golden, gave me a quick tutorial on the decade long effort by developers to ram a beltway through Golden, not justified by any transportation studies which our tax dollars have paid for, but rather because a beltway would facilitate development which the free market alone has not.

Those of us who live in this quadrant would like to see some sensible improvements to the arterial highways which serve us, but we don’t need a freeway that will only create development and, in the case of the City of Golden, cut a destructive and unnecessary swath through one of the metro area’s great historic cities.

Every study done in this quadrant has resulted in a recommendation of arterial improvement in-

stead of a superhighway, and each time the forces of development have declared the study flawed and ordered a new study.



First, the County Commissioners created a Jefferson County Transportation Committee. When that group recommended arterial improvements, a Northwest Quadrant Transportation Feasibility Study was created.

When that study, too, recommended arterial improvements instead of a beltway, the head of CDOT, Tom Norton, declared it invalid and commandeered the Environmental Impact Statement phase — which should be used to study the impact of the recommended improvements — to change the recommendation from arterial improvement to a beltway, regardless of statistical models and regardless of public input. That’s where we’re at now, and it is, pure and simple, a travesty of developer greed over sensible transportation planning. Personally, I’m appalled.

Here’s how I predict that it’s going to unfold. Despite everything, the EIS will result in “approval” to build a superhighway that completes the beltway. It may or may not include the unconscionable building of a superhighway through the narrow Golden valley.

My *hope* is that within Golden’s city limits they will propose arterial improvement of Routes 93 and 6, with a mix of signalized 4-lane intersections and grade-separated interchanges. Meanwhile, the political travesty will be so apparent that Golden will have an excellent case for legal action blocking start of construction. Then the forces of development will come up with yet another strategy to get their way.

### This Week’s Featured Listings:

#### 2 Quite Different Golden Homes



This 4,756-sq.ft. home in the Village at Mountain Ridge, has it all! Great city & mountain views, a quiet circle street with no thru traffic or highway noise, 5 bedrooms, 5 baths, a fully finished walk-out basement with extra high ceiling, a grassy back yard undamaged by pets, and more. The

house is also smoke-free. Take a virtual tour of this great family home at [www.245WestDrive.com](http://www.245WestDrive.com). Priced to sell at **\$559,750**. Hurry!

On the other hand, this half-duplex with 3 beds/3 baths is in the older part of North Golden. At **\$269,000**, it is half the price of the above house, but is more than half the house! No HOA fees! \$6,000 hot tub included! Smoke-free! Landscaped yard! Virtual tour at [www.9Washington.com](http://www.9Washington.com).



Offered Exclusively By:

**Jim Smith**

303-525-1851

[www.JeffcoHomes.info](http://www.JeffcoHomes.info)

Buy or Sell With Jim Smith, And Get Free Use of His Moving Truck with Driver/Helper!

