

Rapid City Real Estate Update

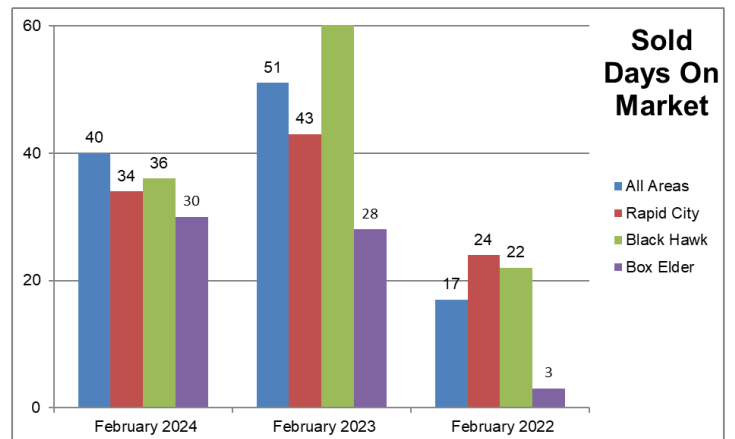
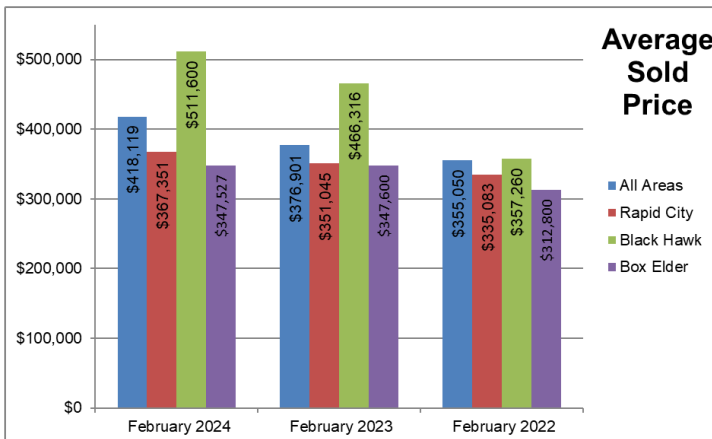
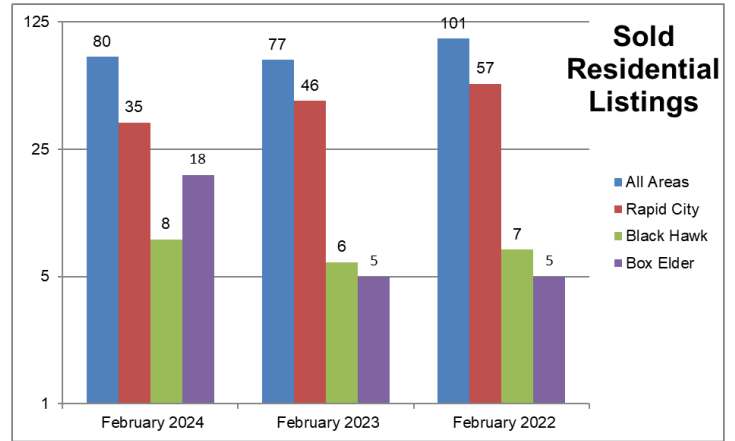
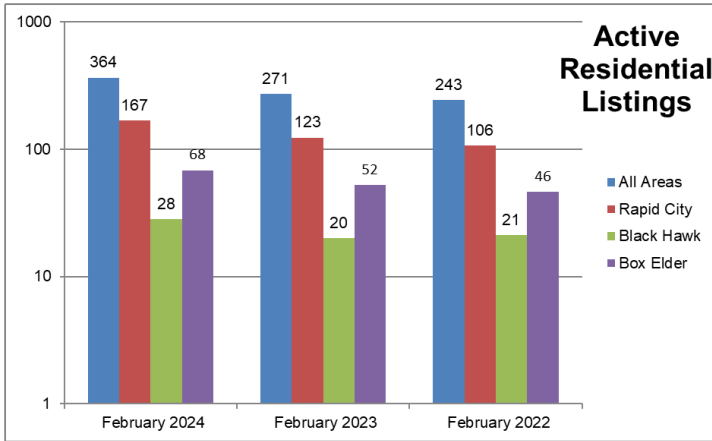


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In This Issue

- P.1 Rapid City & Area Market Conditions P.2 How To Keep For-Sale Properties Safe
- P.2 How To Save On Kitchen Cabinets P.3 Why Do Lenders Use Gross Pay?
- P.3 February Real Estate Roundup P.4 Black Hills Events

Rapid City & Area Market Conditions For February 2024



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How To Save On Kitchen Cabinets

If you're remodeling your kitchen, it can be a costly project. One of the biggest expenses you're probably going to run into is the cabinets.

Kitchen cabinets are an integral part of a renovation, and they usually make up around 40% of your total budget. Two big factors that play a role in the cost of cabinets are the quality and their construction.

Cabinets are a long-term investment, but even with their importance, how can you save money on the cost of new ones?

Do Your Research

The first step to saving on the cost of your kitchen cabinets is to do your research. You need to figure out the features and construction elements you can't live without versus the ones you can skip.

You'll start by learning more about the materials used to construct cabinets.

For example, particleboard is one of the cheapest options, but it breaks easily and doesn't do well with humidity and moisture. Medium-density fiberboard tends to be the option a lot of people prefer because it's somewhere in the middle in terms of cost and actually, when compared to solid wood, has a better performance. It's very water-resistant and can deal easily with changes in humidity and temperature.

Solid wood cabinets are beautiful, but they're expensive and not always a realistic option. For example, if the temperature and moisture aren't carefully controlled in a kitchen, it can destroy solid wood cabinets.

Get Custom Doors and Pre-Made Boxes

If you want the look of high-end cabinets without the price tag, there's a creative option to explore. Get custom doors, but use pre-made boxes from IKEA or a

(continued on page 3)



How To Keep For-Sale Properties Safe

Congratulations, you've put your property on the market! That's a huge step toward the next phase of your life, whether that's buying a new house or just selling off a rental property. But for potential intruders, that for-sale sign means something else entirely. Burglars sometimes target for-sale properties because they know those properties might be empty or relatively unattended.

How do you keep your property safe while it's on the market? A few smart home security measures can help.

1. Smart lights and floodlights

Lights are your first defense against intruders. Burglars look for easy marks—properties where nobody's around and it doesn't look like anyone's home. That's why for-sale properties are targets attractive in the first place.

A few well-placed smart lights will let you control both inside and outside lighting remotely from your phone.

With smart lights, you can also set lighting schedules or even randomize on-and-off patterns, so it looks like there are people inside the house no matter where you are. Plus, you can set up smart lights to work in tandem other security devices, like security cameras.

What kind of smart lights should you install?

- Get outdoor smart lights that work with other home security devices, like Arlo Security Lights and Ring Floodlights.
- Choose smart ground lights like Ring Pathlights or Calla Outdoor Pathway Lights. These are especially useful if your property has a big yard.
- Set up indoor smart lights—like Philips Hue or Lix—that let you control timers, schedules, and triggers through your phone. These are easy to install and replace your regular lightbulbs.

2. Outdoor security cameras

Security cameras go hand in hand with smart lights. If you get lights and cameras that work together, then you can have all your lights turn on when your cameras spot an intruder. Or you can even have the cameras start recording when the lights detect motion.

Choose weatherproof outdoor cameras that record in high-definition (preferably 1080p, so you can zoom in and still see clearly). It's also nice to have cameras with two-way audio, so if you get an alert about a potential intruder, you can hear and speak to them through the camera itself.

What are some HD outdoor camera options?

- Rugged wireless cameras like the Arlo Pro 2 let you put them practically anywhere without running wires or drilling holes through your wall.
- Cameras that combine a camera with a smart light, like the Ring Spotlight Cam, give you the benefits of lights and cameras in one package.
- Solar-powered cameras like the Reolink Argus Track stay fully charged with minimal human effort.

3. A professionally monitored security system DIY home security systems are becoming increasingly popular. But if no one's living in your for-sale property, it might be best to let the professionals keep an eye on your security system 24/7.

Professional monitoring means that if someone triggers your security system, the security company will call you to make sure it's not a false alarm, and then call the police for you.

Be warned: some security companies require multi-year contracts. Stick with a self-installed system that still offers professional monitoring.

What are some no-contract security systems with professional monitoring?

- Scout Alarm integrates with both Z-Wave and Zigbee-based smart devices, so you can add in smart lights and cameras from other brands and use them all together.
- Low-cost systems like SimpliSafe give you reliable security equipment and professional monitoring for a super reasonable price.
- Abode offers temporary professional monitoring if you only need someone to watch your system for a short period of time, like a week.

Smart security devices like lights, cameras, and alarm systems can help you keep an eye on your for-sale property even when you're far away. Deter potential burglars, secure your property, and keep your peace of mind with smart tools like these.

Courtesy of Realty Times



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Why Do Lenders Use Your Gross Pay?

This might seem kind of curious that

lenders don't count how much money you take home each month when determining affordability. Seems counterintuitive, does it not? I mean, after all, you pay your bills with the money you take home, not with the gross pay shown on your paycheck stub. And while it does seem a bit odd that lenders don't look at your net pay each month, there are definite reasons for it.

For most every loan program available today, lenders must determine affordability. This is accomplished by comparing your monthly income with your monthly bills plus the new payments associated with a new mortgage. The monthly bills that count each month are things such as a car payment or installment loans. It does not consider everyday expenses like food or utilities. For your mortgage payment, lenders add up the principal and interest payment along with monthly allotment for property taxes, hazard insurance and mortgage insurance (when needed.)

These comparisons are referred to as debt ratios and they look at the amount of monthly expenses compared to gross monthly income. When you add the housing payments into the mix, you now have two debt ratios, one is referred to as the 'front' ratio which is

your total mortgage payment and then the 'back' ratio which is all these expenses added together.

Okay, so why do lenders use gross income and not take home pay?

Because there are too many variables to consider. With 'take home' pay, one person might have more deductions compared to someone else. Lenders can't go down the list and verify and validate all your deductions before making a determination of affordability. There can also be areas where there are monthly expenses required where in other areas they are not.

To make up for these potential discrepancies, lenders simplify matters by using the gross monthly income and not 'take home' pay. Yes, there are sometimes requirements for lenders to look at monthly funds available each month after all expenses are accounted for, but these funds, called 'cash reserves' aren't really expenses but 'set aside' money lenders like to see after the closing has taken place.

By using gross income, the playing field is essentially leveled so all applicants can be approved using the same basic set of approval guidelines. In this fashion, lenders can evaluate all borrowers equally as it relates to debt ratios.

Courtesy of Realty Times

(continued from page 2)

retailer like Home Depot. You get the outward look of custom cabinets at a fraction of the cost.

Of course, you don't even have to do custom doors unless you want them or need them because of a spacing issue.

You can get pre-made cabinet doors as well and make them feel more high-end or custom with the hardware you choose.

Most factory-made cabinets and less expensive pre-made options have integrated rails, and they're made with either particleboard that has a veneer or a medium-density fiberboard panel.

When you're deciding on cabinets, avoid having too many built-in extras like spice racks and pullouts. The more of these you add, the more expensive your cabinets will be if you're going with custom options or even when you're buying cabinets in-stock.

Get Unfinished Cabinets

If you get unfinished cabinets, you're going to save money, but you'll still have to paint or stain them. Stain is something you might be able to do on your own, but with the painting, you could need a professional. You'll have to do the math on how much that will cost to figure out if it's worth it.

Use Open Shelving

Finally, if you know you want new cabinets but you're still on a budget, utilize the open shelving trend. The trend looks great, and it's significantly less expensive than having upper cabinets. If you do only open shelving instead of uppers in your kitchen, you could ultimately save thousands of dollars or more.

Along with being cheaper, open shelving can keep your kitchen feeling brighter and airier. This can work especially well in a smaller or more closed-in kitchen, where having too many upper cabinets could create a crowded feeling.

Courtesy of Realty Times

February Real Estate Roundup

Freddie Mac's results of its Primary Mortgage Market Survey® shows that "Strong incoming economic and inflation data has caused the market to re-evaluate the path of monetary policy, leading to higher mortgage rates. Historically, the combination of a vibrant economy and modestly higher rates did not meaningfully impact the housing market. The current cycle is different than historical norms, as housing affordability is so low that good economic news equates to bad news for homebuyers, who are sensitive to even minor shifts in affordability."

- 30-year fixed-rate mortgage (FRM) averaged 6.9 percent for the week ending February 22, 2024, up from last month when it averaged 6.69 percent. A year ago, at this time, the 30-year FRM averaged 6.50 percent.
- 15-year FRM this week averaged 6.29 percent, up from last month when it averaged 5.17 percent. A year ago, at this time, the 15-year FRM averaged 5.76 percent.

Courtesy Of Realty Times



Courtesy of:
Ron Sasso
Broker Associate
(605) 593-3759
ron.sasso1@gmail.com

Black Hills Events

Rapid City Rush Games

March 22, 23, 24, 27, 29 & 30
April 11, 12 & 13
The Monument, Rapid City

BHHBA Home Show

March 22, 23 & 24
The Monument, Rapid City

Spring Fling & Glow Egg Count

March 30 & 31
Rush Mountain Adventure Park, Keystone

Easter Sunday Sunrise Celebration at Mount Rushmore

March 31
Mount Rushmore

Forks, Corks & Kegs Wine & Food Festival

April 12 & 13
Main Street, Deadwood

Kountry Junkin Spring Market

April 20
The Monument, Rapid City

National Park Fee Free Day

April 20
National Parks & Monuments

Spring Marketplace Pop-Up

April 27 - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
The Monument, Rapid City