



Dennis Fix with Ellie. Dennis is the owner of FarWest Landscape and Garden Center located at 5728 W State Street in Boise, Idaho

Spring Planting – What I Wish/Should Have Considered

We evaluated a handful of potential “value add” topics to share with you in the first 2016 cover story of The Ralston Report. With many of us currently immersed in spring gardening activities, we decided to ask a known and well-respected landscape and garden expert some questions that we sometimes think about when in our own garden/yard. Most everyone (with the exception of some of our downtown condo owners) finds his/herself growing and/or maintaining a yard/garden. Our hope is that you walk away from reading this story with new knowledge...and may even be inspired to start a new project. Beautiful, thoughtful yards/gardens add value to your home...and make the Valleys even better!

What follows are questions we posed to local expert and Horticulturalist, Dennis Fix – owner of FarWest Landscape & Garden Center located at 5728 W. State Street here in Boise.

Dennis’ knowledge and candor was so inviting that it was hard to stop asking him questions – in fact, we may even need a Part 2 in the next Ralston Report! On a personal note, some of us have worked with Dennis and his team at FarWest for many years and really appreciate his knowledge, humanity and the highest quality of landscape products and services he and his team offer – not to mention his extremely generous offer to our Ralston Report readers of a 20% discount (details on page 2).

Dennis - what are the most common mistakes you see, as people get excited to get back out in their yards after a long winter? I don’t know if I would classify this as mistakes, more like questions. Like how to prune the plants in their landscape? Is it too early to plant, and when do I fertilize the lawn and shrubs? These types of questions are the most common questions we get each spring. We do a series of free classes starting each

year in February to help educate gardeners, new and old, on the most common questions we hear. Our garden class series are called *Knowing and Growing Seminars* on Saturdays and Wednesdays.

Many people don’t have a true landscape plan. If they enjoy an ad hoc approach and/or relying on their own skills, are there some really good rules that they may want to consider? Yes, what I see in do-it-yourself landscape plans is a lack of consistency and imagination within the landscape. People pick out some really cool plants but don’t use grouping or repeating themes within the landscape. It looks like a landscape with one of everything. They also

Continued on Page 2

The Ralston Report is distributed on a quarterly basis. It’s intended to provide meaningful information (focused in our core specialty areas), as well as an update on projects. We hope that our quarterly cover story and Q&A from our expert lender and members of our community are both interesting and enjoyable for you. We always welcome suggestions, and will be happy to prepare an individual report specific to your area or need.

contents:

Cover Story	1
Market Update	5
Commercial Downtown At A Glance	14
Community Q&A	14
Downtown Update & News	15

lack a “theme”. Is this landscape Formal, English Cottage, or Modern? Using accents or specimen plants in key focal spots, but reusing groupings in odd numbers as foundation plants, ties your landscape together.

In your professional opinion, do you see risks of introducing non-native species into our yards and acreages? No. Growers have been introducing new species or varieties for decades. We’ve been using these new plants in landscape in the Treasure Valley for all these years. In 30+ years that I’ve been in the industry the Idaho Department of Agriculture has removed or banned only 2 or 3 plants that are invasive. On the converse, we now have the opportunity to create incredible landscape designs from a diverse plant palette that gives us so many choices. As Horticulturists, we also monitor the plant introductions and decide which are best suited for our area.

What should we be doing in our gardens and yards in the spring? This is a short question with a long list of to-do’s. The quick answer is clean up the landscape beds, prune, divide plants that need to be divided, remove any diseased or damaged plants, fertilize lawn and plants, check out the sprinkler system and fire it up, add any new plants, get the garden rototilled and started, weed beds, put down a weed pre-emergent in lawn and beds, and add 3” of mulch to hold in moisture (adds a fresh clean look to the beds) and retards future weed growth. Whew!

Are there planting activities that are best to save for the fall? Working in the yard can be relaxing and a year-round hobby. Many people will do several of the items from the spring “To-Do” list in the fall so the spring clean-up is quicker. Some perennials are better divided in the fall versus the spring. I fertilize my lawn in late fall so it has a quick green-up in the spring.

Can we talk about low water and/or drought-tolerant Idaho species (i.e., your top 20 list)? This isn’t just an Idaho list but my preferred low/moderate water plant list. **Trees:** Most of the Blue Spruce, Bristlecone Pine, Sumac, Amur Maple, Washington Hawthorn and Honeylocust. **Shrubs:** Butterfly Bush, Bluemist Spirea, Mock Orange (State Flower), and Red Twig Dogwood. **Perennials:** Yarrow, Jupiter’s Beard, Coreopsis, Coneflower, Thyme, and Veronica. Most of these are low water users after being established. This list gives the ability to work together a nice landscape plan with colors, textures, flowers, and year-round interest.

Have you found that your “foothills” clients have to consider diverse soil conditions within their own yards? Any tips? Yes, depending on their location the soils will vary wildly, from heavy clay pockets to nothing but sand, or compacted granite. It’s important to learn what soil type you have before starting to landscape so the correct amendments can be added. Mostly in the foothills I see sand or compacted sand/granite soils. These soils drain very quickly and have very little nutritional value to the plants and lawns. We usually import better soil or amendments, and mix in with the native soil to build up the planting areas for successful gardening in the foothills.

Are there currently any local issues, challenges, or plant/tree diseases that you want people to be aware of? Please share and give tips on what to watch for and what to do? The Japanese Beetle showed up about 3 years ago here in Boise. This is a Midwestern bug that caused an extreme amount of damage. The Idaho Department of Agriculture has been trapping and treating for these buggers. You see the yellow traps hanging from trees, posts and fences along the Warm Springs corridor all the way past BSU. The Department of Ag. is really working hard to eradicate the beetle. Everyone should look up this beetle and be aware of what it looks like. If you identify it in your

landscape, contact the Department of Ag. They will come out and set traps and will try to remove the threat from your neighborhood.



Do people on well water irrigation vs. public system irrigation have different considerations? All types of irrigation system have advantages and disadvantages. Having your irrigation on your domestic well allows you to start your landscape watering earlier in the spring and run it later into the fall. The disadvantage is you are using your own domestic well and pump, which can wear out the equipment if not set up correctly. City water is great, but usually expensive to water the landscape with. Pressurized subdivision water is pumped from canals that don’t fill until around April 15th and can be shut down early on low water years. However they are usually the least expensive way to cover your landscape watering requirements.

Any tips on the most efficient and effective strategies for watering plants/grass? Generally we want to water less often and deeper to establish our plants with deep root systems. This will keep our plants healthier and happier. We are so fortunate to have such a great water supply currently here in the Treasure Valley. However, this is not an unlimited supply. As our Valley continues to grow we will at some point run out of extra water. That being said, we should all really monitor how we water our landscapes and yards. More and more we are using a “drip” style irrigation system in the landscape beds. This allows us to put more water down at the plants feet without wasting water in areas that don’t have any water requirements. Lawn areas are also getting new systems with new sprinkler heads that put out less water over a longer time period for slower deeper watering. Thus using less water and helping the lawn grow a deep root system. Also changing your timer settings with the season is great strategy for conserving water and saving on your water bill. Don’t set your sprinkler timer in the spring and leave it for the whole season. Start in the spring with less frequent irrigation settings. Increase those times in the hot summer months and less frequent watering in the cooler fall. Turn off your system on rainy weeks. These settings will save you money and make your lawn and landscape better.

When hiring a landscaper contractor, what questions should we be asking? Another short question with lots of answers. I would start by asking if they are licensed, ask for references, how long they have been in the industry and where did they get their start. Do they have any certification, what is their warranty policy, were they around before the “great recession” and how were they able to survive through these tough years, and what type of education in our industry do they have. In our industry there is a running joke that if you have a pickup with a magnetic logo, a shovel and a dog... you are landscaper. (Shovel is optional). We see too many people jump into the industry, try it for a few years, make a bunch of mistakes, and then bail out. Thus leaving their clients with problems or concerns and no “contractor” to warranty these issues. Ask lots of questions!

There are differences between landscape contractors, landscape architects, and landscape designers. What should people know, and how/when do they know what/who they need? Yes, let's start with *Landscape Architects*. They can be licensed architects which means they took and passed the board test after getting their college degree. We have two designers (at our company) who have their Masters of Landscape Architect, and will take the boards. *Landscape Designers* usually are individuals who have some college classes in Landscape or Landscape Design and have many years of experience. There is no formal application or license to call someone a Landscape Designer. *Landscape Contractors* are usually the company that installs the plan created by one of the above Designers or Landscape Architects. Most commercial plans will require a Licensed Landscape Architect. Architects that have the education to create a comprehensive master plan would best serve more complicated landscape plans. However, experienced designers can also accomplish beautiful & functional landscapes. Simple bed redesign might only need a designer's touch. Ask many questions when you are interviewing a Designer or Landscape Architect to see if you feel they will accomplish your vision.

Any tips for planting and harvesting herbs? Herbs are easy to grow in Idaho. Start with good potting mix and water regularly. We don't fertilize our herbs – and they grow profusely! We plant woody herbs in our landscape beds – lavender and rosemary. Mint, fennel & chamomile (very invasive) are best planted in a container. In our garden, we plant many types of basil, some chives, sage, lemon grass, oregano, cilantro, tarragon, lemon thyme and horseradish. The herbs we use most often for cooking are planted right off our patio in a large pot on our east side.

What are some things we can do to make our gardens/yards more sustainable? Install drip irrigation in your shrub beds, plant drought tolerant lawns and plants, catch any rainwater in a rain barrel, plant shade trees to keep your air conditioning bill lower, plant edibles (blueberries, fruit trees) in your landscape, grow your own veggies...the list is endless!

Can you share a list of some eco-friendly things we can incorporate to our yards and gardens? In addition to everything I just mentioned, we are using recycled mulches now, organic fertilizers, and best management practices with our yards.

Best shade trees? It's hard to pick a best shade tree. I think that would need to fit each person's criteria. Mine is a red oak. It's noble, majestic, long-lived, and has low pest/disease. It's large enough to build a tree house in, or hang a hammock. The red oak has beautiful fall colors, and branching structure provides winter interest. These attributes fit my criteria of "best shade" tree. Yours might be different?

Best bird-friendly plants/trees? I love the Prairie Fire Crabapple. It gives me year-round interest and the berries are persistent, which means they stay on until winter and the birds eat them in January every year. Others are Hawthorns, Flowering Pears and most trees with berries that hold until winter. Spruce can be great for Quail to escape hawks and other predators along with offering winter protection.

What is the best time of year to prune trees and plants – is it plant or season specific? I believe the best time to prune is early spring for most yard cleanup and corrective pruning. Some plants do have specific times like Hybrid Tea Roses -- they shouldn't be pruned until around March 15 to April 1. Late spring & summer blooming shrubs like Lilac and Rhododendron aren't pruned until after the

blooms fade. If you prune these late bloomers in the early spring you prune off this year's flowers.

Any tips on how/when best to fertilize plants/trees in the spring? I really like fertilizing twice in the spring for trees and shrubs. The first application should be around March 1st to April 1st. This helps the plant wake up with a good breakfast to promote new growth and flowers. The second application is around Memorial Day. This gives the plant a solid feeding before the stress of summer hits. I am not a fan of fall feedings. If you feed at the wrong time in the fall you can promote late fall growth that may not harden off before early hard freezing occurs. This will damage your plants or possibly kill them.

How do we get our kids and/or grandkids interested in gardening and recognizing how gardens, trees, etc. contribute to a good planet? Make gardening fun – help your kids grow their own herbs, veggies and fruit. Plant some pollinator friendly flowers and perennials while explaining how important they are for plant growth. Plant trees for them to climb and relax under during the hot summer months. Plant a flower-cutting garden, encouraging your kids to gather, arrange in a mason jar and enjoy those flowers. Teach your kids to share their excess veggies, fruit and flowers with their neighbors. I think that kids truly love being outside in the fresh air and being creative. Get out and get a little dirty!

What do you attribute to your long success in our community? We have a Landscape Division with creativity and passion for each client's particular needs. FarWest has designers and architects with cutting edge knowledge in the latest designs and trends. We feel that our designers are Landscape Craftsmen -- certified and enjoy creating uniquely individual landscapes. We give back to the community with community projects and fundraisers like our Habitat for Humanity benefit night. Most importantly, we always provide great service for our customers.

What are some other good questions that you'd love to answer and/or share? Landscaping/Gardening is a year-round lifelong hobby. Some clients tell me that they want us to install a low or no maintenance landscape. They tell me they don't have the time or knowledge to work in their yards. I try to explain that landscapes are constantly evolving. Plants need care – they grow and need to be

Dennis is offering 20% off any one full priced item. Good thru 5/31/16. One-time only. Just mention the "Ralston Report"



trimmed. Sometimes a new variety comes along that fits the spot better. Landscapes can mature and date a home, needing a “re-do” to be current. Plants are living entities and sometimes they perish and need to be replaced. Winter and bugs cause damage. But even with all the care I have mentioned, if a landscape is properly designed for each client and location, the care can be minimal and enjoyable. A few hours in spring and fall doing some clean up, and an hour here and there to spray for a bug or change a water schedule, pays dividends to you and the look of your home. Working in your yard adds value to your home. It’s proven to help with relieving stress and other health benefits. Landscaping shouldn’t be looked at as a chore, but as a chance to beautify your surroundings while working with the earth.

SOME OF DENNIS’ PERSONAL FAVORITES...

Top 2 Evergreens: I am a big fan of the Cedar Family – Weeping Cedar of Lebanon, also the Japanese White Pine varieties

Top 2 Deciduous Trees: Love the grace of the Clump River Birch, Red Oak for majesty, and Redbuds for flowering. Favorite small accents trees -- Pink Heartbreaker Weeping Redbud, or the shade loving Red Dragon Laceleaf Maple

Top 5 Bushes: The new varieties of Sun Loving Hydrangeas are fantastic performers. Korean Spice Viburnum give spring flowers and fall color. Dwarf White Pine for evergreen accent, Karl Foresters Feather Reed Grass. Perennials – Hellebore and Coneflowers are excellent for late winter, spring & summer

Top 2 Fruit Bearing Plants/Trees: Blueberries...and more blueberries. This is truly my favorite edible in my full sun landscape beds

Dennis grew up working his family’s farm in the Magic Valley. In 1985 he moved to the Treasure Valley to finish his marketing degree at Boise State University. It was then that he applied for a job at new Garden Center that was opening outside the Boise city limits – FarWest! Over the next 8 years, Dennis worked for the owner doing everything from deliveries, to watering, to managing the garden center. In 1993 the owner of FarWest offered to sell the business to Dennis and Maya. Since 1993, Dennis and his wife have grown FarWest from 3 acres to 7.5 acres and from a handful of employees to 60 dedicated staff. FarWest is a full-service landscape and garden center. They can design unique landscapes, install and (even) maintain landscapes, and plant and deliver pots for your home or business. The garden center retail shop offers plants/trees, tools, arbors, fertilizers, mulch, etc. Ellie (front cover) looks forward to your visit!

HAVE A PROJECT? NEED SOME HELP?
CALL US FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF SERVICE PROVIDERS
“Thank You” to Ralston Group’s Quarterly Favorite(s)!

Green Guard Pest Control - Dustin | 208-297-7947

Idaho Floor Supply - Robbie | 208-321-9090

Market Update - Ada Co.

Residential Single-Family Homes - Ada County <small>Statistics referenced herein are for single-family homes – unless otherwise noted – which includes existing homes, new construction, and condominiums/townhouses</small>		1Q2016 <small>JAN-FEB-MAR</small>
Average Sold Price		\$268,414
Average Sold Price Compared to Prior Year Same Quarter		up 4.1%
Average Days on Market		59
Total Dollar Volume		\$489.6M
Total Dollar Volume Compared to Prior Year Same Quarter		up 26.7%
New Construction Sold Based On # of Units		23.4% (426 units)
Existing Homes Sold Based On # of Units		76.6% (1,398 units)

Eagle Inventory Healthy – Boise Core Areas Suffering Low Inventory

The average sales (i.e., sold) price in Ada County increased 4.1 percent from a year ago (1Q2015) to \$268,414.

The number of homes sold was up 12.0 percent from a year ago; new homes sold up 22.8 percent. Total dollar volume of new construction was up 23.0 percent. New construction accounted for 23.4 percent of sales and existing homes the remaining 76.6 percent. The average sold price of new construction increased 0.2 percent from a year ago.

The number of existing homes sold in the quarter was up 9.1 percent from this time last year. Total dollar volume of existing homes sold was up 14.3 percent from a year ago. Existing home sold price was up 4.7 percent from a year ago.

The quarter's dollar volume for single-family homes in Ada County was \$489.6 million compared to \$419.8 million a year ago. A total of 1,824 units sold (existing and new construction) in the quarter. Days on market was 59 compared to 67 days on market a year ago.

In 2016, lack of inventory continues to be a challenge for buyers. It's not clear when the inventory picture in Ada County will improve. At the end of the quarter, average overall inventory in Ada County was at 2.6 months – 2.0 months for existing homes and 4.7 months for new construction. Average inventory was 3.0 months for properties in the \$250,000 to \$299,000 price range and 3.6 months for properties \$300,000 to \$399,000. For properties \$400,000 to \$499,000 inventory was 3.8 months. Average inventory was 5.8 months in the \$500,000 to \$699,999 price range, and 12.2 months in the \$700,000 to \$999,999 price range.

In our core coverage areas, inventory of homes less than \$300,000 was 0.3 to 3.1 months. Inventory of homes greater than \$300,000 in our core areas is shown in the column to the right.

Months of inventory indicates the amount of time it would take to sell all current listings at the current sales price if no new listings became available. It is widely accepted in the real estate industry that 0-4 months is a "Seller's Market;" 5-7 months a "Balanced Market;" and 8-12+ months is a "Buyer's Market." Ada County has been (and is currently) in a "Seller's Market."

Last quarter's records indicate that 8 condos in downtown Boise sold at an average of \$378/SF

No. of land sales & avg. sold price in our core areas:

N Boise: 3 (\$113,333)
 NE Boise: 3 (\$180,167)
 SE Boise: 3 (\$218,833)
 The Bench: 2 (\$50,000)
 NW Boise: 7 (\$168,414)
 Eagle: 42 (\$183,547)

Average inventory (over \$300K+) in our core areas:

N Boise: 3.5 months
 NE Boise: 2.8 months
 SE Boise: 2.6 months
 The Bench: 3.5 months
 NW Boise: 3.1 months
 Eagle: 6.2 months

Market Update - Blaine Co.

Residential & Commercial - Blaine County	
NOTE: Blaine Co. is defined as Hailey, Ketchum & Sun Valley in the table below. Bellevue has not been included. Bellevue statistics are included on page 13	
1Q2016 JAN-FEB-MAR	
Average Sold Price Single-Family Home (INCLUDES CONDOS & TOWNHOUSES)	\$541,681
Average Sold Price Single-Family Compared to Prior Year Same Quarter	down 4.5%
Average Days on Market Single-Family	257
Total Dollar Volume Single-Family	\$46.0M
Total Dollar Volume Single-Family Compared to Prior Year Same Quarter	down 13.7%
Average Sold Price Condominium/Townhouse (only)	\$351,974
Average Days on Market Condominium/Townhouse	264
Total Dollar Volume Condominium/Townhouse	\$13.4M
Total Dollar Vol. Condominium/Town House Compared to Prior Year Same Quarter	down 40.2%
Average Sold Price Commercial	\$539,607
Average Days on Market Commercial	716
Total Dollar Volume Commercial	\$3.8M
Total Dollar Volume Commercial Compared to Prior Year Same Quarter	down 45.7%

The quarter's records indicate that 85 single-family homes sold at an average of \$265/SF – average sold price was down 4.5% from a year ago. Thirty-eight of the 85 single-family homes were condominiums/townhouses, selling at an average of \$273/SF; average sold price was down 18.2% from prior year; dollar volume down 40.2%. Land, which is not included in the data above or that follows, included 7 sold properties at an average price of \$790,286; 546 average days on market. Total dollar volume of land (\$5.5M) was up 198.0% from a year ago! Seven commercial properties sold at an average of \$174/SF. The commercial data in the table above was gathered from the Sun Valley/Sawtooth MLS. Loopnet-only properties have not been included in the data



200 E Braemere

Courtesy of Jill Donahue - Ralston Group Properties



1920 N Harrison

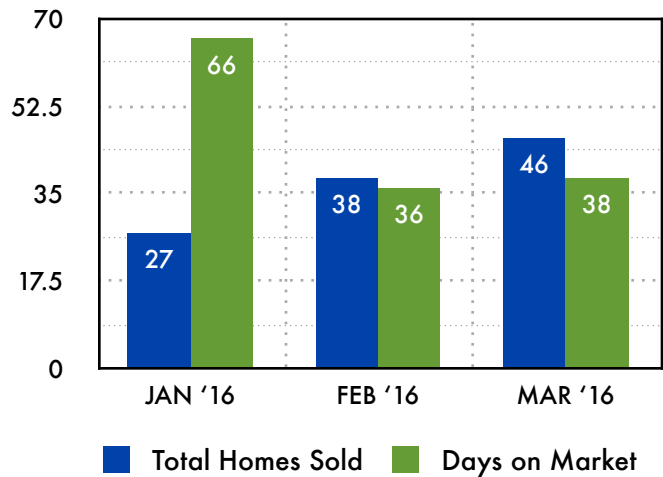
Courtesy of Paige Shafer - Ralston Group Properties



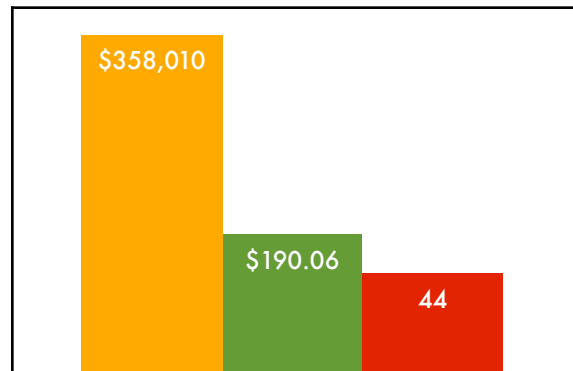
420 W Main | Unit 401

Courtesy of Alicia Ralston - Ralston Group Properties

North Boise (Area 100)



Average Sold Price



- Average Sold Price This Quarter
- Average Sold Price Per SQFT This Quarter
- Average Days on Market This Quarter

North Boise

In January, 27 single-family homes sold in North Boise with an average days on market of 66 and at an average price of \$331,138. Thirty-eight homes sold in February at an average sales price of \$380,500 (36 days on market), and 46 homes sold in March at 38 days on market (average sold price \$355,204). The highest sold price recorded in North Boise was \$1,898,000, with a lowest recorded sale of \$100,000. During the quarter, 111 properties sold averaging 44 days on market. Sold price in North Boise was up 7.6 percent from a year ago to \$358,010 (\$190 per square foot).



733 E Bannock

Courtesy of Melissa Galli - Keller Williams Realty Boise



216 N Mobley

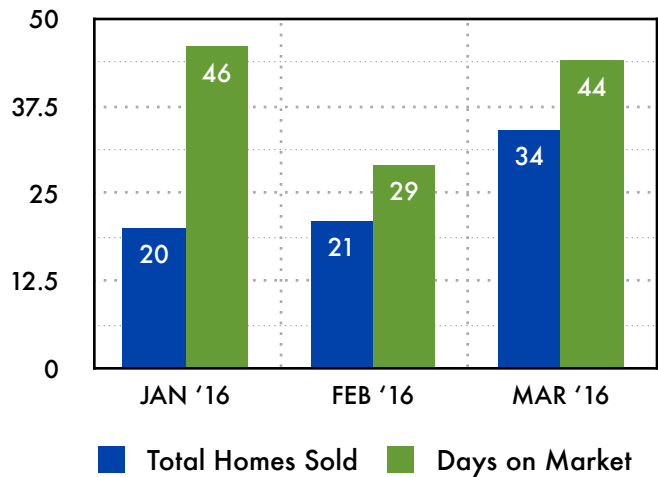
Courtesy of Lori Stevens - Coldwell Banker Tomlinson Group



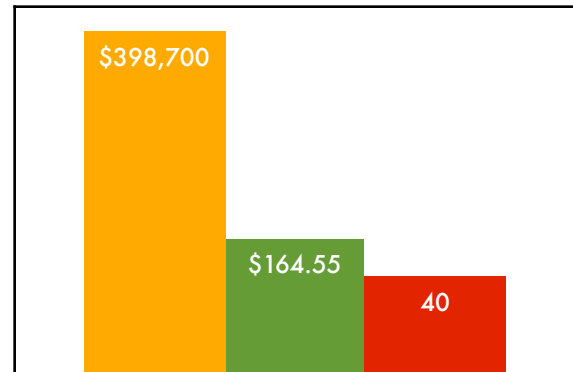
472 N Morningside

Courtesy of Jill Donahue- Ralston Group Properties

Northeast Boise (Area 200)



Average Sold Price



Average Sold Price This Quarter
Average Sold Price Per SQFT This Quarter
Average Days on Market This Quarter

Northeast Boise

In January, 20 single-family homes sold in Northeast Boise with an average days on market of 46 and at an average price of \$371,558. February included the sale of 21 homes at an average sales price of \$371,717 (29 days on market), and 34 homes sold in March at 44 days on market. Average sold price in March was \$431,333. The highest sold price recorded in Northeast Boise was \$820,000, with a lowest recorded sale of \$125,000. During the quarter, Northeast Boise recorded 75 home sales at an average of 40 days on market. Sold price in Northeast Boise was \$398,700 (\$165 per square foot) – up just 0.8 percent from a year ago.



1614 S Longmont

Courtesy of Paige Shafer - Ralston Group Properties



5746 S Olearia

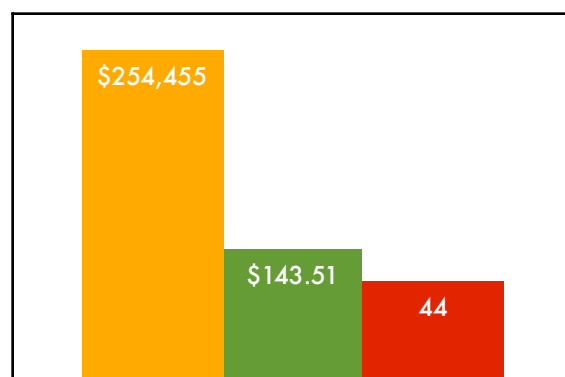
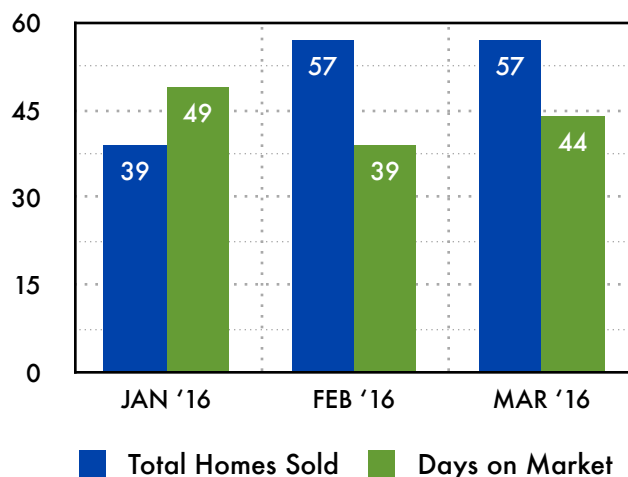
Courtesy of Jill Donahue - Ralston Group Properties



6126 S Schooner

Courtesy of Amy Berryhill - Ralston Group Properties

Southeast Boise (Area 300)



■ Average Sold Price This Quarter
■ Average Sold Price Per SQFT This Quarter
■ Average Days on Market This Quarter

Southeast Boise

In January, 39 single-family homes sold in Southeast Boise with an average days on market of 49 and at an average price of \$257,809. In February, 57 homes sold at an average sales price of \$243,979 (39 days on market), and 57 homes sold in March at 44 days on market with an average sold price of \$262,637. The highest sold price recorded in Southeast Boise was \$620,000, with a lowest recorded sale of \$105,000. During the quarter, Southeast Boise recorded the sale of 153 homes. Sold price in Southeast Boise was up 6.0 percent from the prior year to \$254,455 (\$144 per square foot), and homes averaged 44 days on market.



1035 S Abbey

Courtesy of Amy Berryhill - Ralston Group Properties



1218 S Atlantic

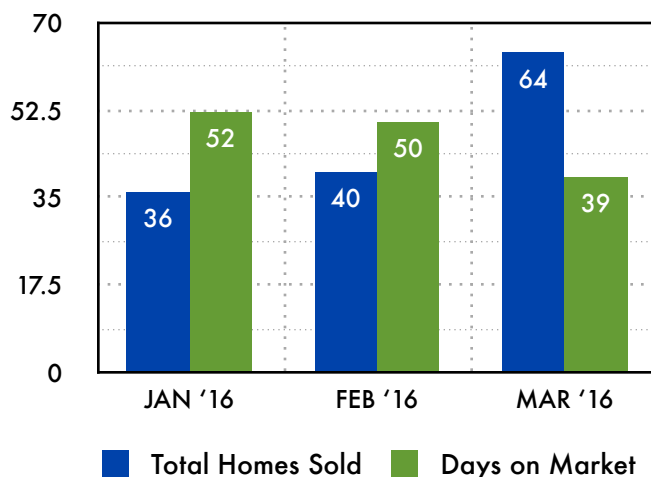
Courtesy of Paige Shafer - Ralston Group Properties



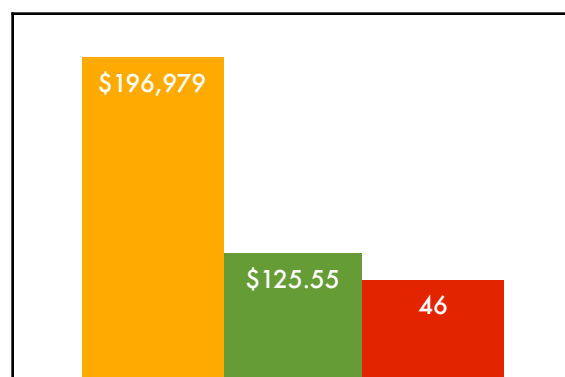
2109 W Nez Perce

Courtesy of Nick Roundtree - Nick Roundtree Real Estate

Boise Bench (Area 400)



Average Sold Price



- Average Sold Price This Quarter
- Average Sold Price Per SQFT This Quarter
- Average Days on Market This Quarter

Boise Bench

In January, 36 single-family homes sold on the Boise Bench with an average days on market of 52 and at an average price of \$176,862. Forty homes sold in February at an average sales price of \$203,195 (50 days on market), and 64 homes sold in March at 39 days on market with an average price of \$204,409. The highest sold price recorded on the Boise Bench was \$720,000, with a lowest recorded sale of \$53,000. During the quarter, the Bench recorded the sale of 140 homes. Average sold price rose 15.4 percent from the previous year on the Boise Bench. Average sold price was \$196,979 (\$126 per square foot), and 46 days on market.



3881 N 39th

Courtesy of Antonio Esquivel - Keller Williams Realty Boise



5972 N Bremerton

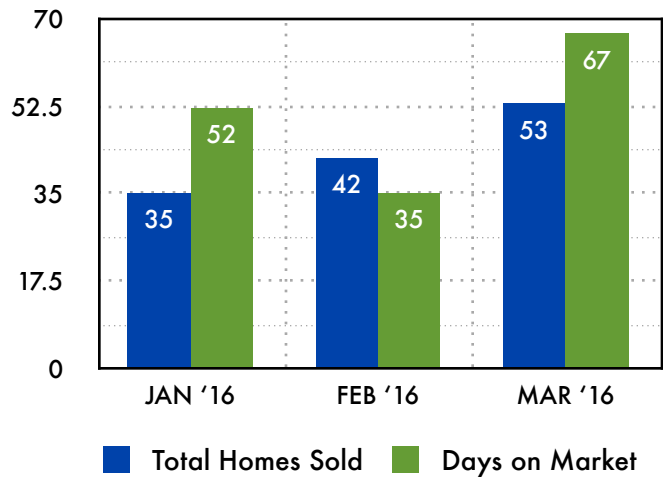
Courtesy of Kristin Barton - Core Group Realty



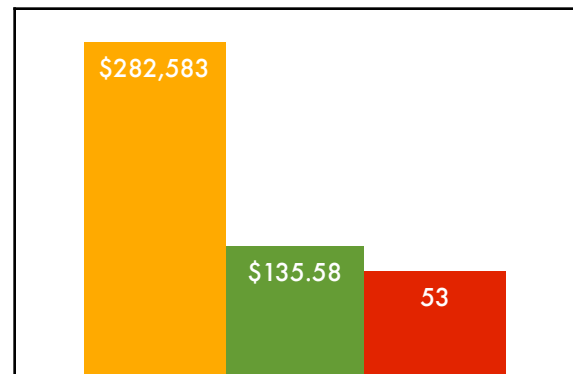
3564 N Ambergina

Courtesy of Victoria Coelho - Smith & Coelho

Northwest Boise (Area 800)



Average Sold Price



Average Sold Price This Quarter
Average Sold Price Per SQFT This Quarter
Average Days on Market This Quarter

Northwest Boise

In January, 35 single-family homes sold in Northwest Boise with an average days on market of 52 and at an average price of \$282,531. Forty-two homes sold in February at an average sales price of \$263,062 (35 days on market), and 53 homes sold in March at 67 days on market with an average price of \$298,086. The highest sold price recorded in Northwest Boise was \$918,500, with a lowest recorded sale of \$62,000. During the quarter, 130 homes sold. Average sold price was up 7.1 percent from the previous year in Northwest Boise. Average sold price was \$282,583 (\$136 per square foot), and 53 days on market.



1658 N Watson

Courtesy of Giovanna Vincenzi - Keller Williams Realty Boise



310 E Riversedge

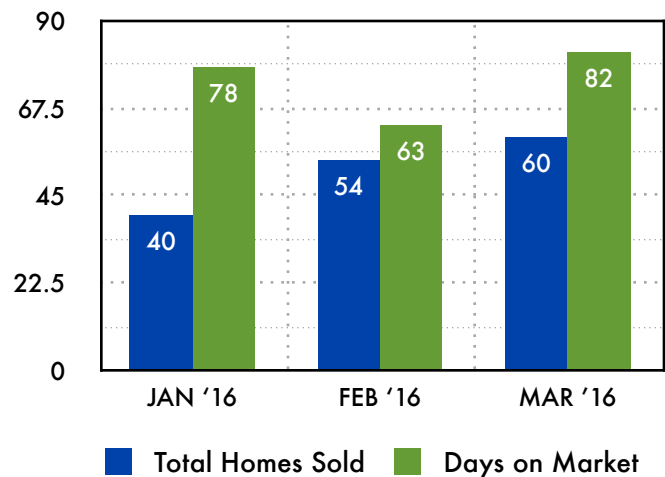
Courtesy of Denise Thiry - Keller Williams Realty Boise



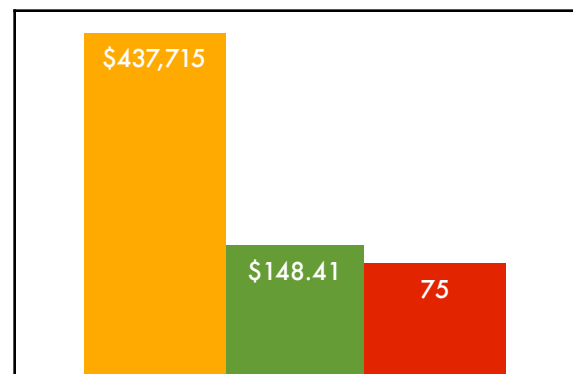
3640 N Holl

Courtesy of Carl Wuestehube - Mountain Bluebird Realty

Eagle (Area 900)



Average Sold Price



Average Sold Price This Quarter
Average Sold Price Per SQFT This Quarter
Average Days on Market This Quarter

Eagle

In January, 40 single-family homes sold in Eagle with an average days on market of 78 and at an average price of \$442,112. Fifty-four homes sold in February at an average price of \$442,748 (63 days on market), and 60 homes sold in March at 82 days on market. Average sold price in March was \$430,255. The highest sold price recorded in Eagle was \$1,690,000, with a lowest recorded sale of \$72,500. During the quarter, 154 homes sold. Average sold price in Eagle was \$437,715 – up 5.7 percent from a year ago. Price per square foot was \$148, with properties averaging 75 days on market.



260 S 2nd Ave

Courtesy of Penny Leopold - Ralston Group Properties



113 Dandelion West

Courtesy of Penny Leopold - Ralston Group Properties



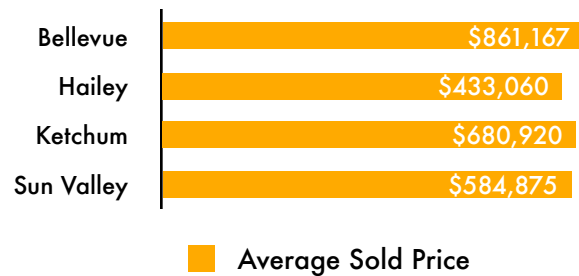
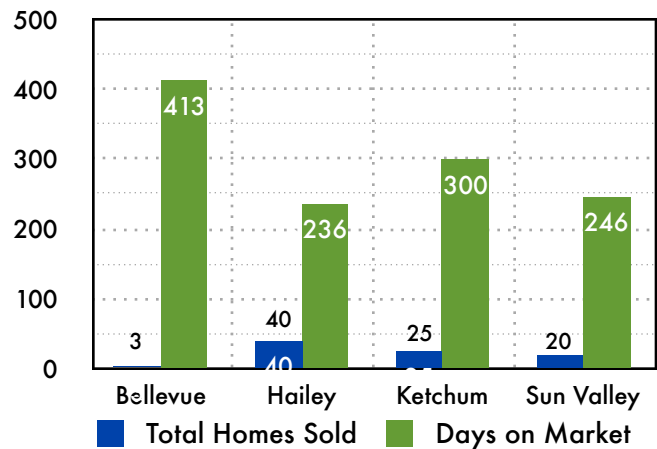
610 S Leadville

Courtesy of Penny Leopold - Ralston Group Properties

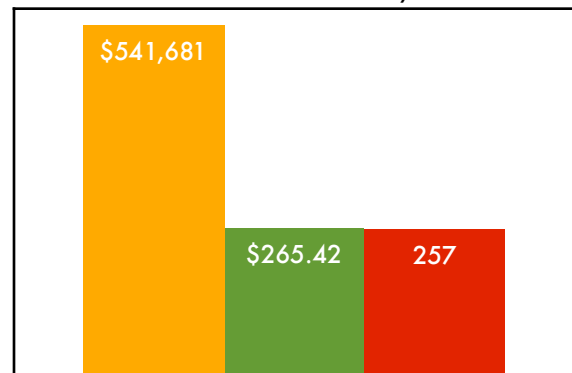
Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum & Sun Valley

Three single-family home sales (single-family includes homes/condominiums/townhouses) were recorded in Bellevue in the quarter at an average of 413 days on market and an average sales price of \$861,167 – an anomaly for Bellevue. Hailey recorded the sale of 40 homes with an average days on market of 236 and at an average price of \$433,060 (\$196 per square foot). In Ketchum, 25 homes sold at an average sales price of \$680,920 at an average of 300 days on market; per square foot price was \$343. Sun Valley records indicated 20 home sales at an average price of \$584,875 (\$308 per square foot) and at an average of 246 days on market. In the quarter, average sold price in Blaine Co. was down 4.5 percent from a year ago. Average sold price was \$541,681 – \$265 per square foot; 257 average days on market. The lowest priced single-family home sold for \$60,000, with the highest sold price at \$2,850,000 in the quarter.

Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum & Sun Valley During The Quarter



NOTE: Bellevue has not been included in the Blaine Co. graph below. For purposes of this report Blaine Co. includes Hailey, Ketchum & Sun Valley.



■ Blaine Co. Average Sold Price This Quarter
■ Blaine Co. Average Sold Price Per SQFT This Quarter
■ Blaine Co. Average Days on Market This Quarter

Commercial Downtown Boise at a glance

Multi-Family

Trend data indicates no change in median asking sales price per unit compared to the prior 3 months, with no change from last year's prices. Median price was \$90,732 per unit for multi-family properties in Boise. Rental data was not available

Office

Trend data indicates a decrease of -0.5% in median asking sales price per square foot (sf) compared to prior 3 months, with an increase of +2.6% from prior year's prices. Median price was \$120/sf. Rental rates increased +0.4% from prior 3 months, a +2.3% increase from last year. Average asking rent/sf/year was \$13.88

Retail

Trend data indicates a +2.3% increase in asking rental rate/sf/year from prior 3 months – average asking rent/sf/year was \$12.98. This is a -3.3% decrease from a year ago.

The information provided in this report was compiled from multiple sources including: Idaho's Intermountain Multiple Listing Service (IMLS), Sun Valley/Sawtooth MLS, & various community websites. The data is believed to be accurate and reliable, but cannot be warranted by Ralston Group Properties. The commercial data provided in the table above is merely "trend data," and was collected from LOOPNET. Statistics for this quarter's Ralston Report were current at publication. Commercial data for Blaine County can be found on page 6 of this report.

Community Q&A

Melinda Kim

As you know, some of our long-time clients are asking us to help first-time homebuyers (kids, grandkids, their friends' children) purchase homes. What are the top five things a first-time homebuyer should do to prepare for purchasing a home?

Build your credit! Establish and use credit responsibly – use a gas card or other credit card for routine purchases, but pay the full balance off each month to avoid interest charges. Student loans can make a difference – know when you need to start re-paying your student loans, and what your monthly payments will be. Don't open new credit with retailers just to get a one time discount; be watchful of new credit inquiries. Put utilities, leases and insurance in your own name.

Save and organize your paperwork. Financial planning and the loan process go much more smoothly if you have complete and accurate documentation. Here's the list that is generally required: most recent 30 days

of pay stubs; most recent 2 years of federal taxes, including W-2s; most recent 2 months of bank statements, all pages, for checking, savings and investment accounts; a copy of a current driver's license; and as appropriate, divorce decrees, support orders, and bankruptcy paperwork. This list gets modified for self-employed borrowers.

Understand your tax situation. Often owning a home can be less expensive than renting after factoring in the tax savings. It's helpful to visit with your accountant or financial planner (or a good mortgage consultant), to look at your whole financial picture, before deciding on a specific strategy.

Start saving monthly! Even if you're only setting aside a small amount each month, having some money in savings for a down payment, closing costs or just to show reserves, can make a difference in how much you qualify for.

Get an official loan pre-approval. This process will determine: what you qualify for, what the best loan programs and down payment options are for your situation, and

what monthly payments you're comfortable with!

Once you've done this homework, you'll be ready to meet with your favorite realtor to start house hunting!

Note: Melinda regularly sits down with our client's children and their children to discuss financial responsibility and accountability, and how to prepare for purchasing a home.



Melinda Kim is a leading Idaho lending expert. More about Melinda can be found on our website. Melinda earned her MBA from Harvard Business

School and BS degrees in Finance and Marketing from the University of Utah.

Downtown Update

Boise

Boise's downtown construction boom is unprecedented. Depending on how you define downtown, there are seven to fifteen major projects underway (defined by big cranes). Have you seen JUMP lately? Have you taken a tour? JUMP is offering it's first public programs/classes. JUMP's neighbor "Simplot World Headquarters" is expected to ready by this fall.

Hyatt Place (an 152-room hotel on Bannock) is scheduled to open at the end of 1Q17. The Marriott Residence Inn Hotel and the 110-room boutique hotel a.k.a "Inn@500" (both on Capitol Boulevard) should open spring/summer 2017. The 150-unit apartment (mixed use) building near both hotels is also scheduled for a spring 2017 completion. The 26 condos at 10th & Grove – "One Nineteen" – are

scheduled for completion this summer. The 28-unit Afton on S. 8th Street near the library is scheduled for a spring 2017 completion. Main Street Station/Clearwater Building at the Grove is moving quickly with expected completion this August.

Ketchum - Sun Valley

In March, Sun Valley hosted the US Alpine Championships for the first time since 1977. Visitors saw progress at the Limelight Hotel, which is expected to open this winter. The Auberge (conceptually shown below) is scheduled to be permitted next month.

"Bogey" Ralston



Did You Know?

Many homeowners don't consider their water as an energy cost. However, much of the water that is used for laundry, showers and doing the dishes is heated, and thus, requires energy. Installing low-flow showerheads can increase energy savings dramatically because most showerheads typically use 2.5 gallons of water per minute. Low-flow bathroom sink faucets and low-flow toilets are also good ideas.

A TRADITION OF TRUST

Ralston Group is a small, vibrant residential & commercial real estate "boutique" focused in Boise, Eagle and the Sun Valley/Wood River Valley. In Boise, Ralston Group specializes in and around the downtown including the North End, Highlands & Foothills, East Side (North and South); West Side and the Bench above the University and Ann Morrison Park. Ralston Group also has expertise in Eagle, and is often asked to partner on unique projects including, vacation & investment properties, ranches, vineyards, and sustainable design/builds. In the Wood River Valley, Ralston Group serves both the residential and commercial real estate markets. Ralston Group has an entirely different outlook and methodology of delivering real estate services. It's grounded in the belief that creating long-term, trust-based relationships and always serving the client's needs first, is both good business and the right thing to do. *We don't aspire to be the biggest – we do aspire to be the best.* This basic company ethos, coupled with extensive local market knowledge, an excellent team, and industry-leading search and related tools, provides Ralston Group the ideal platform to provide clients the most personalized, reliable and cost-effective real estate services in the Treasure and Sun Valley/Wood River Valleys.

We invite you to download our new search App on your mobile devices by searching for Ralston Group Properties at the App Store





Alicia Ralston

Owner and Broker, Alicia Ralston created Ralston Group Properties determined to challenge the status quo within the real estate industry. After 14 years on corporate America's "fast track," Alicia left the Environmental & Construction industry in 2004 to pursue her passion for real estate and helping people. [Read more about Alicia](#)

Cell: 208-850-7638
Email: alicia@ralstongrp.com



Jill Donahue

Associate Broker Jill Donahue focuses on serving clients interested in access to the Boise foothills trails system, our vibrant downtown area, and the river/greenbelt – essentially the Boise lifestyle! Her market knowledge and the trust she earns with clients and colleagues alike is evidenced by her referral and repeat business – 95% over career. [Read more about Jill](#)

Cell: 208-861-5455
Email: jill@ralstongrp.com



Scout O'Gara

Scout specializes in residential real estate principally on the West Side, Eagle, Meridian, and acreage properties in outlying areas. A perfect fit for the ethos of Ralston Group, she's invested in and passionate about each of her clients' successes. In short, it's not just "another transaction" with Scout, but personal and deeply meaningful. [Read more about Scout](#)

Cell: 208-830-7111
Email: scout@ralstongrp.com



Penny Leopold

Penny Leopold and the phrase "Sun Valley real estate" are virtually synonymous. Widely recognized by clients and peers alike as one of the most knowledgeable, effective professionals in the Wood River Valley and throughout Blaine County, Penny recognizes that real estate is a business transaction. [Read more about Penny](#)

Cell: 208-309-1130
Email: penny@ralstongrp.com



Amy Berryhill

Amy specializes in Boise downtown to Boise's East Side, focusing on residential housing – including condos, vacation & investment properties, and relocations. Her passion and intuition in truly understanding clients' wants and needs and her desire to go the extra mile for every client is reflective of her successful career. [Read more about Amy](#)

Cell: 208-890-2069
Email: amyberryhill@ralstongrp.com



Currie Bucher

Currie exemplifies all of the best qualities & experiences of someone born and raised in the Deep South. While new to real estate in the Treasure Valley, she personifies the ethos of Ralston Group, and over time will unquestionably earn the reputation as one of the leading real estate professionals in the Treasure Valley. [Read more about Currie](#)

Cell: 208-971-7767
Email: currie@ralstongrp.com



Paige Shafer

Paige blends market knowledge, client advocacy, and project management, balanced with emotional empathy – earning her reputation for consistently delivering client satisfaction. She enjoys significant experience in the North End, Bench, Northwest, and East Boise. Paige also serves her client's McCall, Idaho needs. [Read more about Paige](#)

Cell: 208-841-8301
Email: paigeshafer@ralstongrp.com



David Ralston

David focuses primarily on supporting "back-office" activities that are important to ensuring a sustainable, quality-conscious brokerage. David's contributions to the team include business planning, strategy, recruitment, marketing, and agent coaching/professional development. [Read more about David](#)

Cell: 208-761-5397
Email: dralston@ralstongrp.com