

# Rapid City Real Estate Update

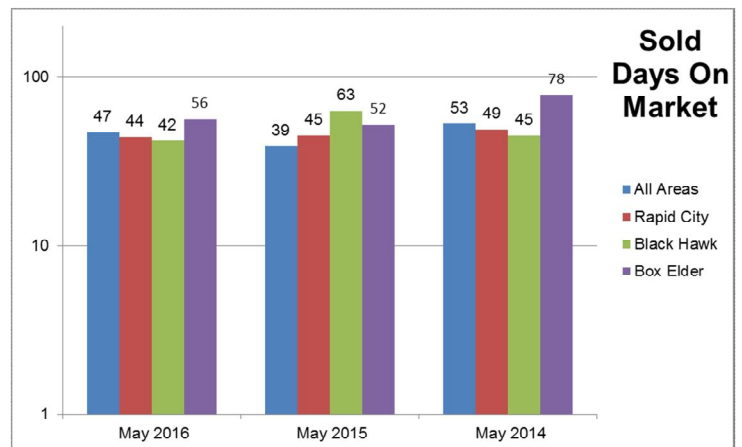
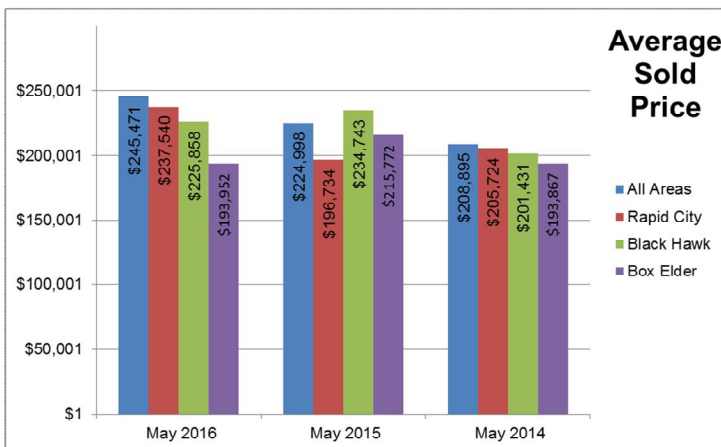
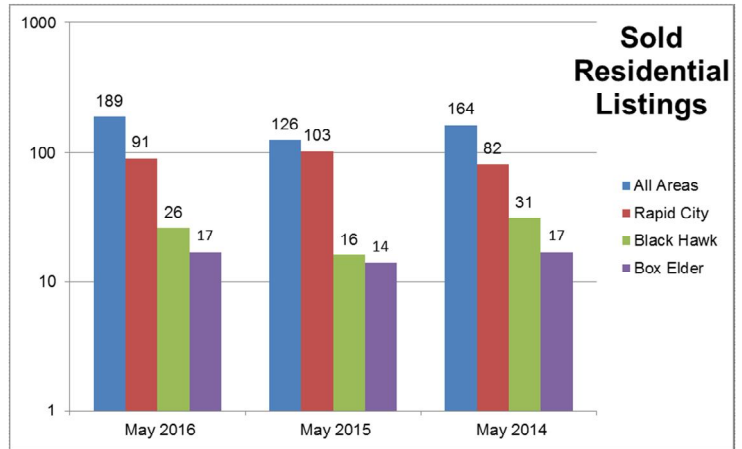
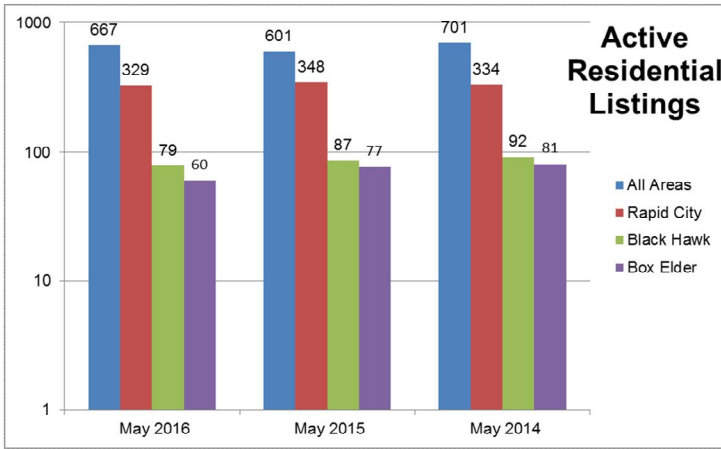


LEWIS-KIRKEBY-HALL  
REAL ESTATE, INC.

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## Rapid City & Area Market Conditions For May 2016



## 5 Front Yard Landscaping Tips That Will Wow Buyers

Your front yard is the red carpet inviting buyers into the beauty that is your home. If it's rugged, messy and unkempt, buyers will take one look and then keep on driving to the next property on their list. Don't let that happen by making your front yard luscious and as amazing as the inside of your home.

What areas should you focus on in your front yard? Where do you start? To help you break down the revitalization of your front yard, here are the steps you should take:

### 1. Cut the grass.

Buyers don't want to trudge through high grass as though they were in the Amazon or on a safari in Africa. This means the lawn mower needs to be out at least once a week if not every other week, keeping it trimmed and maintained. It also needs to be green so it looks alive and lush. Water so the sun doesn't dry out the lawn and turn it yellow or brown. A professional landscaper can help maintain a balance of trimming and growth so it looks just right for buyers.

### 2. Plant more shade trees.

One or two trees in the front yard are all right, but if you want to really add some shade, plant more. Shade trees will detract from the glare of the sun, and it can help decrease the temperature of the house if they're placed close to windows. It also will help keep the lawn green with moisture. You can plant trees that are shorter and will grow by the time the new owner buys the home, but be sure they're strong and can handle the climate.

### 3. Install outdoor lighting.

Outdoor lighting is a good way to both illuminate the house

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## Get A Head-Start On Your Summer To-Do List For Your Home

We know. You have all these great intentions of spiffing up your house, cleaning this, updating that, and decluttering EVERYTHING. But, before you know it, the kids will be out of school, and June will turn into July in a blink. Throw in a couple of pool parties and a family vacation, and before you know it, you'll be buying school supplies again.

No need to get anxious or give up and getting all those have-to's done. Here are 10 things you can easily take care of this weekend so your summer to-do list doesn't get lost in the shuffle.

1. Execute an air conditioner check: If you haven't had to turn on your air conditioning yet this year, do a little self-congratulatory dance and then flip it on and make sure everything is working properly. You don't want to find out you need a new fan belt on the first hot and sweaty day of the year.

2. Check out the area around your air conditioning units: If weeds or other plants have grown up around your AC units, you may want to trim them back. "Air conditioning units and heat pumps require plenty of air circulation to work efficiently, so it's important to keep shrubs trimmed back away from the unit," said Today's Homeowner. "Make sure there's at least 18" of room around the sides of the air conditioner, and three feet or more above the unit."

3. Do a ceiling fan once over: Now, go room to room checking all the ceiling fans to make sure they're in working order. But before you turn them on, note the dust level. If you haven't used them in a while, dust and dirt may be ready to fly off as soon as they get going. An old pillowcase spritzed with cleaner, then thrown over each blade and slid off is a great trick to get them clean without special tools.

4. Check those filters: Lastly - as it relates to your air conditioning - inspect your air filters.

If they're not changed out regularly, and, especially if you can see visible dirt, hair, or malformations because the filter is starting to pull into the unit, get yourself to Home Depot (and don't forget to measure first so you don't have to guess at the size while you're in the store).

5. Don't forget about your refrigerator filters: Filters in your refrigerator and icemaker are usually supposed to be replaced every six months (but check with your manufacturer). If it's been at least that long, change them out. The fresh taste of your water and ice will be worth the effort!

6. Clean your refrigerator coils: If you've never done this, you may be surprised by how gross they can get. But keeping your coils clean by shutting off the power to the unit and vacuuming the coils through the back can extend the use of your refrigerator and also save you money on your electric bill - up to \$100 a year!

7. Refresh your showerhead: If your shower isn't providing a strong stream of water anymore, it might not be your water pressure. Try cleaning the showerhead to remove mineral deposits. All it takes is a baggy full of vinegar tied around the showerhead and left overnight to soak. In the morning, run the water to see if it's made a difference.

8. Check your sprinklers: Lots of things can cause part or all of a sprinkler system to fail, and you'll want to know if you need to call a repairman because it's blazing hot outside. Today's Homeowner offers this tip for testing your sprinklers: "Place straight-sided tuna cans on the ground around the yard, and run your sprinkler as usual. If your irrigation system is set right, all of the cans should be filled to the same level." While you're at it, check your hoses for leaks. Replacing leaky hoses can save water, and save you money.

9. Check your deck: "Look over your deck for signs of rotting and hammer in any nails that are poking up," said The Nest. "Then, determine if your deck needs sealing. Sprinkle water on the deck's boards. If the water beads up, you're in good shape; but if it soaks right in, it's time to re-seal that sucker."

10. Mulch it: A layer of mulch in your yard will help "keep weeds down and help the ground retain its moisture in the heat," said The Nest. More importantly, it's one of the quickest, easiest, and cheapest ways to up your curb appeal - and that's important whether you plan to spend many more seasons in your home or you're thinking of getting ready to sell it.

*Written by Jaymi Naciri  
Courtesy of Realty Times*



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## 5 Smart Homebuyer Strategies

The National Association of REALTORS® has announced that there's a housing supply shortage. Homes are selling quickly and home prices are starting to inch up again. It's becoming a seller's market in many areas.

Any time the market changes, it's time to change strategies. During a buyer's market, buyers have the upper hand and can make more demands to sellers over their homes' price and condition. During a seller's market, buyers concede the upper hand to sellers and are more willing to accept higher prices and terms.

When homes are in short supply, buyers don't have the luxury of taking their time, teasing sellers with lowball offers, demanding that every little thing be fixed, and shopping for homes with multiple real estate agents. Do these five steps instead.

**Make a good first impression.** Not only do you need to impress sellers, you need to impress real estate agents. Hire one agent and let him or her profile your needs to the marketplace. Be specific about your must-haves so you don't waste your agent's and your time viewing homes that lack what you want most. When you find the home you want, send the seller a letter along with your offer outlining why you love the home.

**Get preapproved by a lender.** Not only will you know how much home you can buy, you'll be ready to make an offer quickly. Your real estate agent can include the fact that you're financially preapproved by your lender in with the offer, which will carry weight with the seller.

**Shop within your price range.** In a seller's market, it's wise to shop for homes within or slightly below your price range. This will give you more room to make full-price offers or above in case the home you want is in a bidding war with other buyers. You'll be able to pay your own closing costs. Trying to buy a home out of your reach during a seller's market will only cause you and your agent frustration.

**Be flexible.** No home is perfect. To get more home for your money, you might shop for an older home that needs renovation. Try to look past ugly wallpaper and stained carpet and visualize the home with more attractive finishes. You may be able to get more living space in an established neighborhood than with a newer home that is priced higher for similar square footage.

**Be ready.** Be ready to see a new listing at a moment's notice. Be ready to make an offer when you believe this is the right home for your household. Once a seller has accepted your offer, proceed as if you're in a normal market. Set a reasonable closing date that accommodates the seller as much as possible. Confirm the offer with your lender. Schedule the inspections you'll need and don't nitpick the seller over small things.

Whether you're in a buyer's market or a seller's market, you should feel good about the home you choose, the deal you make, and the courteous way you treated all parties to the transaction.

*By Blanche Evans  
Courtesy of Realty Times*

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at night and accent parts of your yard. Depending on where you install the lights, your house will look very appealing at night to those buyers who might not have time to do their shopping during the day. Outdoor lighting also helps to illuminate a path like a sidewalk to get from the curb to your front door for easier navigation. It helps to accent the beauty of your landscaping which all together increases the beauty of your home.

4. Consider adding flowers for more color.

If your front yard has a lot of greenery, you should increase the yard appeal by adding more colors. Flowers are a great and simple way to do this, as well as shrubbery with different blooms. Perennials are the best for this because they last for more than a year, which means less maintenance for the seller and the new homeowner. They come in a wide variety of colors and types so the yard can be decorated with any number of them while still requiring less maintenance.

5. Keep everything clean!

In addition to keeping the lawn trimmed, everything else should be clean. Anywhere that can build up dirt or grime - siding, porch, front door, driveway - should be cleaned on a regular basis. Buyers don't want to see a lot of dirt and mess, and it will detract from them wanting to walk into the house. So take a broom, a power washer and a few hours on the weekend to keep everything sparkling clean. Don't have a power washer? A professional power washing service can cost as little as \$293.

*Courtesy of Realty Times*



## 5 Top Motivations For Selling

Inventories of homes are tight nationwide. So what's going to get home owners to finally sell? In a recent survey, realtor.com® researchers found some of the top motivations to sell:

1. Want to be in a different neighborhood (40%)
2. Need a home with different features (28%)
3. Need a bigger home (22%)
4. Want location with better weather, views, or lifestyle (19%)

5. Lower cost of living (17%)

Different motivators are more pressing to various age groups. Research found that households between the ages of 35 and 44 tend to be driven by the desire to be in a different neighborhood and have a bigger home. On the other hand, those 65 and older are more motivated by retirement and tend to be looking for a home with different features or trying to improve their weather, views, or lifestyle

*Courtesy of Realty Times*

# Black Hills Events

## Movies Under The Stars

June 6, 13, 20 & 27  
Main Street Square, Rapid City

## Summer Nights Concert

June 16, 23, & 30 - 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
Downtown Rapid City

## Main Street Square Concert Series

June 16, 23, & 30 - 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
Main Street, Square Rapid City

## Wild Bill Days

June 17 - 18  
Deadwood

## Crazy Horse Stampede &

Gift From Mother Earth  
June 17 - 19  
Crazy Horse Memorial, Custer

## 4th of July at Mount Rushmore

July 3 & 4  
Mount Rushmore

## 4th of July Celebration

June 4  
Main Street Square

## Badlands Astronomy Festival

July 8 - 10  
Ben Reifel Visitors Center  
Badlands National Park

## Information provided by:

[www.visitrapidcity.com](http://www.visitrapidcity.com)  
& [www.downtownrapidcity.com](http://www.downtownrapidcity.com)

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**BACK BY  
PUP-ULAR  
DEMAND**



**HOMES  
FOR DOGS  
PROJECT**

**Adopt a Pet  
.com**

## **WE'RE DOING IT AGAIN FINDING HOMES FOR DOGS IN 2016**

In 2015, Coldwell Banker's Homes For Dogs Project, along with Adopt-a-Pet.com helped find homes for over 20,000 dogs.

Since last year was so successful, we are extending our relationship with Adopt-a-Pet.com to help them match loving families with homeless dogs again this year.