



A COMPLETE GUIDE FOR BUYERS RELOCATING TO SOUTH CHARLOTTE

The Barclay Downs *Relocation Guide*

Everything a family moving to Charlotte needs to evaluate the neighborhood beside SouthPark — the housing stock, the streets, the schools, the market, the commute, and the ninety days after you arrive.

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SECTION 01

Why Barclay Downs

Three things set this neighborhood apart, and no other established Charlotte neighborhood combines all three.

A flat, quiet residential grid. Barclay Downs was platted in the late 1950s and 1960s on the former Barclay dairy farm, with English street names — Runnymede, Nottingham, Wickersham, Roxborough — chosen to give a brand-new suburb a sense of age. The grid was laid out without through-routes, so traffic on an interior street is almost always going to a house on that street.

A fully mature canopy. The willow oaks planted at construction are now sixty years old and meet overhead for most of the year. Summer afternoons under that canopy are measurably more tolerable than in open subdivisions, and the neighborhood reads as settled in a way newer south Charlotte development cannot replicate for another half-century.

Immediate adjacency to SouthPark. Charlotte's second downtown — roughly six million square feet of office, the highest-performing mall in the Carolinas, hundreds of restaurants and shops, hotels and medical offices — begins at the neighborhood's eastern edge. From the eastern half of the grid it is a genuine walk.

The honest trade-offs

- Perimeter traffic on Sharon Road and Fairview Road is real, and it peaks during holiday shopping season.
- The housing stock is mixed rather than uniform: original ranches sit next to new 6,000-square-foot custom homes.
- The western streets are not walkable to retail; that half of the neighborhood drives everywhere.
- Inventory is thin. In a typical month only a handful of homes are actively listed across the whole grid.

SECTION 02

Orientation & geography

Where the neighborhood sits, what borders it, and how long everything takes.

Barclay Downs occupies the block of south Charlotte broadly bounded by Fairview Road to the north, Barclay Downs Drive and Sharon Road to the east and south-east, and Colony Road to the west. Roughly a thousand homes sit inside that boundary, with a ring of smaller courts, enclaves and attached-housing pockets around it.

Destination	Distance	Typical drive
SouthPark Mall	0.5 mi	5 minutes (walkable from the east side)
Symphony Park	0.7 mi	6 minutes
Phillips Place	0.8 mi	3 minutes
Morrocroft Village	0.6 mi	4 minutes
Freedom Park	2.6 mi	8 minutes
Myers Park / Queens Rd West	2.5 mi	8 minutes
Uptown Charlotte	6 mi	15–20 minutes
Charlotte Douglas Airport (CLT)	9 mi	20 minutes
Ballantyne	9 mi	20 minutes
Lake Norman	28 mi	40 minutes
Charlotte Motor Speedway	22 mi	30 minutes
Asheville / NC mountains	130 mi	2 hours

A note on names

Listings frequently use “SouthPark” and “Barclay Downs” interchangeably. They are not the same thing: SouthPark is the commercial district, Barclay Downs is the residential neighborhood beside it. When you are comparing properties online, confirm the actual street rather than relying on the neighborhood field.

SECTION 03

The housing stock

What was built here, what has happened to it since, and what to inspect.

Most original homes date from 1958 to 1972: brick ranches and split-levels on quarter-acre lots, generously set back, with deep rear yards. The bones are usually excellent — solid masonry, sound framing, level ground. The plans are compartmentalized, the kitchens are closed and small, the primary bedrooms are modest, and the bathrooms are undersized by current expectations. All of that is fixable, and most of the neighborhood is somewhere along the path of fixing it.

What you'll see	Typical description	Who buys it
Original condition	1960s plan intact, dated kitchen and baths, original systems	Renovators and builders
Light renovation	Cosmetically updated, original footprint	Buyers wanting move-in without a project
Full renovation	Opened kitchen, rear addition or pop-top, systems replaced	Families wanting turn-key with character
New construction	4,000–7,000 sq ft, built within 15 years	Buyers who want new at the top of the range

Inspection checklist for a 1960s house

- Crawl space moisture, insulation and encapsulation.
- Sewer lateral condition — original clay or cast iron lines are near the end of their service life. Scope it.
- Framing, flashing and roof transitions on any added second story or rear addition.
- Electrical panel capacity and the presence of any remaining aluminum branch wiring.
- Drainage across flat rear yards, and where downspouts actually discharge.
- The health, species and location of significant trees, plus any prior root damage to foundations or drives.
- Window age and glazing; original single-pane units drive both comfort and bills.
- Permit history for every addition — undocumented work is discounted hard by later buyers.

SECTION 04

Understanding the market

Why a single average price is useless here, and what to look at instead.

In an established neighborhood with a mixed housing stock, the land carries most of the value. A 1962 ranch and a 2021 custom home on the same street are not competing products, but they sit on the same underlying parcel value — and in Barclay Downs that parcel value has risen steadily for two decades because the supply of quarter-acre lots five minutes from SouthPark is permanently fixed.

The practical consequence: the cheapest houses here are rarely bargains in the ordinary sense. They are lots with a serviceable structure on them, and they should be priced that way.

What moves a specific house within its tier

- Street position and canopy quality — interior streets outperform perimeter streets.
- Lot depth and rear-yard usability.
- Distance from Sharon Road and Fairview Road traffic noise.
- Whether the primary bedroom is on the main level.
- Garage count and driveway configuration.
- Documented drainage and flood history.
- School assignment at the time of sale.

The inventory calendar

Listing volume peaks in April and May and falls to its thinnest point between Thanksgiving and mid-January. Relocating buyers with a fixed start date should be pre-approved and represented before their first visit — well-priced houses on the central streets frequently trade before or immediately after reaching the public market, and they will not wait for a second trip.

SECTION 05

Cost of ownership

The lines beyond the mortgage that relocating buyers most often underestimate.

Cost	How it works	What to verify
Property tax	Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte each levy per \$100 of assessed value; both apply to a Barclay Downs address.	Current combined rate and the parcel's assessed value — the county revalues on a cycle.
Insurance	Priced on replacement cost, roof age and claim history. Mature trees and hail exposure matter.	Get a bindable quote before removing the due-diligence contingency.
HOA dues	The core grid is generally not governed by a mandatory association. Some adjoining pockets and attached-housing enclaves are.	Confirm for the specific parcel — do not assume from the neighborhood name.
Utilities	Duke Energy for power; Charlotte Water for water and sewer; Piedmont Natural Gas where connected.	Ask the seller for twelve months of history on an original, un-insulated house.
Tree care	Sixty-year-old willow oaks require real maintenance and occasional removal, which is regulated.	Budget annually; get an arborist opinion on any leaning or storm-damaged specimen.
Yard and leaf	Autumn leaf volume under a mature canopy is substantial.	Most owners contract it out.

North Carolina charges no local transfer tax beyond the state excise stamp, and closings are attorney-conducted rather than escrow-agent-conducted — two differences that surprise buyers relocating from the West Coast and the Northeast.

SECTION 06

Buying: process & timeline

How a North Carolina purchase differs from what you may be used to.

Stage	What happens	Typical timing
Pre-approval	Full underwriting where possible, not a rate quote.	Before your first visit
Search	An agent working this neighborhood hears about listings early. In a thin market that access is the product.	2 weeks – 6 months
Offer	North Carolina uses a Due Diligence Fee (non-refundable, paid to seller) plus an Earnest Money Deposit. The fee buys an unconditional right to walk away during the due-diligence period.	1–3 days
Due diligence	Inspections, sewer scope, survey, insurance binding, appraisal, HOA and permit review. You may terminate for any reason until it expires.	14–30 days
Closing	Conducted by a North Carolina attorney. Funds must be wired in advance.	30–45 days from contract

The Due Diligence Fee, explained

This is the single biggest procedural difference for out-of-state buyers. In North Carolina you pay the seller a negotiated, non-refundable fee for the right to investigate the property. If you terminate during that window you lose the fee but recover your earnest money. A larger fee makes an offer stronger without raising the price — which is exactly how competitive Barclay Downs offers are usually structured.

SECTION 07

Renovating and building

What a project on a 1960s Barclay Downs lot actually involves.

The three standard renovations

- **Kitchen and rear living.** Remove the wall between kitchen and den, relocate the range, add glazing to the rear yard. The highest-return project in the neighborhood.
- **Primary suite addition.** Push 500–900 square feet into the deep rear yard for a bedroom, bath and closet.
- **Second-story pop-top.** The most expensive and disruptive, and the one that most changes street presence. Requires a structural assessment before design begins.

Building new

Every Barclay Downs new build starts with an existing house that must come down and a set of trees that mostly cannot. Lot selection therefore drives the design: buildable envelope after setbacks, tree-save area, drainage and the street's existing scale all constrain the plan before a single elevation is drawn.

Phase	Includes	Range
Feasibility & design	Survey, design, engineering, permit set	2–5 months
Permitting & demolition	Mecklenburg County permits, erosion control, demolition	1–2 months
Construction	Foundation through certificate of occupancy	9–14 months

Questions to ask any builder

- Can you give me addresses of completed work within two miles — not renderings?
- How did you handle a tree-save conflict on a recent project?
- Who holds the schedule, and how is it reported to me?
- May I see a real line-item budget from a comparable house?
- Are the low-voltage, lighting and shade systems designed before framing or retrofitted after?

SECTION 08

Schools & family life

Assignments, independent options, and how to verify any of it.

Verify before you rely on anything. School assignment in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is set by address and changes periodically through boundary reviews and student assignment plans. Nothing in this guide — or in any real estate listing — substitutes for checking the current CMS school locator for the exact address you are considering, in the year you are considering it.

Type	School	Note
CMS elementary	Selwyn Elementary	Historic assignment for much of the neighborhood
CMS middle	Alexander Graham Middle	Serves the SouthPark / Barclay Downs area
CMS high	Myers Park High	IB Diploma Programme; among the largest in the state
Independent	Charlotte Country Day School	K-12, roughly 7 minutes north-west
Independent	Providence Day School	K-12, roughly 12 minutes east
Independent	Charlotte Latin School	K-12, roughly 15 minutes south-east
Independent	Charlotte Christian; Trinity Episcopal	Additional widely considered options nearby

Practical notes for families

- CMS magnet lotteries run in the winter for the following academic year; the language-immersion and IB programs are heavily subscribed.
- Independent-school admissions timelines start roughly a year ahead. Begin before you have a house.
- Waiting lists at the established church-affiliated preschools in the SouthPark area can exceed a year.
- School-run traffic on Fairview and Sharon between 7:15 and 8:15 is the neighborhood's one real daily friction point.

SECTION 09

Settling in: the first 90 days

The administrative and practical list, in the order it actually matters.

Timing	Task
Week 1	Transfer Duke Energy, Charlotte Water and Piedmont Natural Gas accounts. Set up trash, recycling and yard-waste collection with the City of Charlotte.
Week 1-2	Register with a local physician, dentist and veterinarian — SouthPark and Cotswold practices fill quickly.
Within 60 days	North Carolina driver's licence and vehicle registration. NC requires a safety inspection (and an emissions inspection in Mecklenburg County) before registration.
Within 60 days	Register to vote in Mecklenburg County.
Month 1	Meet the neighbors on either side and directly behind. Tenure here is long; the informal knowledge is worth more than any report.
Month 1-2	Have an arborist assess the trees before your first storm season, and confirm where your stormwater actually goes.
Month 2-3	Join what you'll actually use: the greenway, a club, the symphony series at Symphony Park, a school parents' association.
Ongoing	Learn the interior routes that avoid the Fairview and Sharon peaks. Every long-tenured resident has them.

SECTION 10

Contacts & resources

Who to call, and what this guide is.

Firm	Discipline	What they do here
Peters & Associates	Real estate	Buyer and seller representation across Barclay Downs, SouthPark, Myers Park and Foxcroft, including quiet inventory.
Peters Custom Homes	Construction	Custom builds and whole-house renovation on Barclay Downs lots, working within the neighborhood's scale and tree constraints.
Emerald & Oak	Interior design	Full-house interiors, renovation packages and new-construction selections, coordinated from the framing stage.
Peters Audio Video	Technology	Networking, lighting control, shades, security, whole-home audio and dedicated theaters — designed at rough-in.

Public resources to verify anything in this guide

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools — school locator, by address, for current assignment.
- Mecklenburg County Assessor — parcel data, assessed value and tax rates.
- Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement — permit history for any property.
- City of Charlotte — tree ordinance, stormwater and solid waste services.
- FEMA Flood Map Service Center — flood zone for a specific parcel.

About this guide

Discover Barclay Downs is an independent editorial guide to the neighborhood. It is published alongside a group of affiliated and independently operated Carolinas real estate, construction, design and technology businesses; enquiries submitted through the website may be routed to those firms and may result in a commercial engagement. Compensation never buys editorial placement or the removal of accurate information.

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