QC HOME ADVISORS
CHARLOTTE REAL ESTATE

Home *Seller's* Guide

A clear, step by step walk through preparing, pricing, and selling your home in Greater Charlotte.

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BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOMESERVICES | CAROLINAS REALTY

WELCOME

A note before you *begin*.

Selling a home is one of the larger financial decisions most people make. My goal is to make the process clear and steady, from the first conversation through closing. Whether you are moving up, relocating, or moving down into something that fits your life now, the steps are the same. What changes is the strategy.

Read it start to finish, or jump to the step you are in. The pieces that matter most, how your home is prepared and how its launch is positioned, are within your control. When you are ready to talk specifics, that is a conversation, and I am glad to have it.

Tim Petrinec
REALTOR® | BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOMESERVICES CAROLINAS REALTY

1	2	3	4
Set your goals	Price it strategically	Prepare & present	Launch & sell

THE SEVEN STEPS

ALSO INSIDE

LOCAL PROCESS

How Selling Works in North Carolina

North Carolina handles offers, disclosures, and closings differently from much of the country. Here is what to expect as a seller, so nothing catches you off guard.

THE DUE DILIGENCE FEE WORKS FOR YOU

When a buyer goes under contract, they typically pay you a due diligence fee. It is negotiated, generally non-refundable, and yours to keep even if the buyer later walks. A higher fee signals a more committed buyer.

THE DUE DILIGENCE PERIOD

During this negotiated window the buyer can inspect, review documents, and terminate for any reason. Understanding it before you list puts you in a stronger position when offers come in.

YOUR DISCLOSURE OBLIGATIONS

You must provide the NC Residential Property Disclosure Statement no later than the time a buyer makes an offer, plus any HOA and mineral and oil and gas disclosures that apply. Disclose known material defects. Late or missing disclosures can give a buyer the right to cancel.

CLOSING IS HANDLED BY AN ATTORNEY

North Carolina is an attorney-closing state. A real estate attorney handles the title search, prepares documents, and records the deed. Ownership transfers, and your proceeds are released, once the deed is recorded.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"Disclose what you know. The short-term benefit of hiding a defect is never worth the liability. We handle the paperwork early so your launch stays on schedule."*

STEP ONE

Start With Your Goals

— DEFINE WHAT THE SALE MUST ACCOMPLISH

Before we talk price or timing, answer a simpler question: what do you want this sale to do? If you need to move quickly, we structure for speed. If your priority is net proceeds for the next purchase, we may prepare more thoroughly and position differently.

— IS NOW THE RIGHT TIME

No one can time the market reliably. The most dependable factor in how a sale goes is not the month you list, it is whether the home is properly prepared and strategically launched. That part is within your control.

— WEIGH YOUR REAL POSITION

Your timeline, your equity after selling costs, the pace of recent sales in your price range, and how many buyers are active all shape the plan.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Clarify your timeline and the bandwidth to prepare
- [ ] Confirm enough equity to cover selling costs and your next move
- [ ] Review recent sale pace in your specific price range
- [ ] Decide what a successful outcome looks like for you

A TIP FROM TIM

"Make the best decision you can with the information you have today. If your situation is ready and the home can be properly prepared, that is the right time to sell."

STEP TWO

How Pricing Really Works

Pricing is the most important decision in the selling process, and the most misunderstood. The market sets the value of your home. My job is to read it accurately and position the home so the right buyers take it seriously from day one.

THE MYTH OF REDUCE-LATER

Pricing high with a plan to come down almost always backfires. The first days on the market draw the most attention. If the price is not compelling, active buyers move on, and by the time you reduce, the early energy is gone and the home looks like it is sitting.

WORTH VERSUS WHAT THE MARKET WILL PAY

What you paid, what you invested, or what a neighbor sold for does not reliably reflect current value. Market value is what a motivated, informed buyer will pay today against the alternatives in front of them.

THE CASE FOR STRATEGIC PRICING

Pricing at, or slightly below, market value often draws more interest, more showings, and competition. When buyers compete, the market itself discovers the ceiling, which frequently beats pricing high and negotiating down with a single buyer who holds the leverage.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"The market sets the value, not the asking price. Pricing to match it is what gets your home in front of the most qualified buyers while attention is at its peak."*

PRICING ANALYSIS

What Goes Into Your Price

Behind every recommended price is an analysis, not a guess. A Comparative Market Analysis, or CMA, is how we read the market and arrive at a number with confidence.

WHAT A STRONG CMA WEIGHS

THE CMA INPUTS

- [ ] Recent comparable sales nearby, ideally within 90 days, in similar condition
- [ ] Active competition, the homes yours will be shown against right now
- [ ] Pending sales, the leading indicator of where the market is heading
- [ ] Price per square foot, adjusted for meaningful differences
- [ ] Days on market at different price points

YOUR HOME IS NOT THE ONE DOWN THE STREET

A neighbor's sale six months ago, under different conditions and with details you cannot fully judge from photos, is an imperfect guide. Comps set the frame. Preparation and a strong launch are what can reveal a ceiling no spreadsheet predicted.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"If anyone hands you a price with three comps and no explanation, that is a reason to ask more questions, not fewer."*

STEP THREE

Preparing Your Home

How you prepare the home directly affects how quickly it sells and the offers you receive. The goal is not perfection. It is removing the friction that causes buyers to hesitate or quietly discount their offer.

— START WITH A CLEAN SLATE

Declutter aggressively. Buyers need to picture themselves in the home, which is hard when it is full of someone else's life. Clear counters, closets, and the garage, and rent storage if it helps.

— ADDRESS THE SMALL STUFF, THEN DEEP CLEAN

Leaky faucets, sticking doors, cracked grout, and dead bulbs are cheap to fix and expensive to leave, since buyers read them as signs of bigger problems. Then clean more thoroughly than feels necessary.

— PAINT AND CURB APPEAL

Fresh, broadly appealing paint is one of the highest-return preparations there is. Outside, buyers form an opinion before they reach the door, so fresh mulch, trimmed shrubs, and a clean entry go a long way.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Declutter and depersonalize every room
- [ ] Complete minor repairs and replace worn fixtures
- [ ] Deep clean kitchens, baths, windows, and floors
- [ ] Refresh paint where it broadens appeal, and tidy the exterior

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"Before you spend on a big project, let's talk. A few thousand dollars placed where it changes how buyers feel almost always beats a renovation the sale will not pay back."*

THINK LIKE A BUYER

Seeing the Home as Buyers Will

The hardest part of preparing a home is emotional, not practical. You have lived here and you know why the quirks are fine. Buyers do not, and they are comparing your home against everything else available at the same price.

THE MOST USEFUL QUESTION TO ASK

What would a buyer think seeing this for the first time? Buyers do not know what you paid or how much you love the place. The sellers who do best can step back and look at the home as an asset.

WHAT ABOUT MAJOR RENOVATIONS

Major renovations rarely pay for themselves at sale, and the wrong ones narrow your buyer pool by making the home feel too specific. The better question is not what should I renovate, but what is preventing buyers from saying yes. Sometimes that is paint, sometimes staging, and once in a while a kitchen.

> **PRO TIP FROM TIM**
>
> *"I would rather help you put a few thousand dollars where it changes how buyers feel than watch you invest in a renovation the sale will not return."*

STEP FOUR

Staging & Presentation

Staging is not decorating. It is the work of removing distractions so the home itself is what a buyer remembers. Even light staging noticeably improves how a home photographs and how buyers feel when they walk in.

GIVE EVERY ROOM A CLEAR PURPOSE

Open up sightlines, let natural light through, and let the best features stand out. For an occupied home, much of this is editing and rearranging what you already have.

VACANT HOMES NEED A PLAN

Empty rooms often photograph cold and read smaller than they are. For a vacant home, we discuss whether staging the key rooms is worth it.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Edit furniture so rooms feel open and purposeful
- [ ] Maximize natural light and neutralize bold personal decor
- [ ] Highlight the home's best architectural features
- [ ] Stage or style the rooms that drive the first impression

A TIP FROM TIM

"Buyers who feel good inside a home tend to value it more than buyers who feel indifferent. Presentation is making sure that feeling is the home at its best."

STEP FIVE

Marketing & Photography

Most agents treat marketing as a checklist: list on the MLS, post once or twice, and wait. That is table stakes, not a strategy. What drives interest is how your home is presented, to whom, and at what moment.

PHOTOGRAPHY IS NON-NEGOTIABLE

Buyers form their first impression online, and weak photos can disqualify a home before a single showing. Professional photography is a baseline, not a premium add-on. Where the home calls for it, video and aerial footage help buyers understand the property before they drive over.

TIMING THE LAUNCH

A strong launch is not just flipping the switch on the MLS. It is controlling the showing schedule so buyer energy builds rather than trickles in, and generating awareness before the home is officially listed where that fits.

WHERE YOUR HOME APPEARS

- **Canopy MLS.** The local multiple listing service, syndicated out to the major portals.
- **BHHS network.** The Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices brand and relocation reach.
- **National portals.** Zillow, Realtor.com, and the sites buyers search most.
- **Targeted social & email.** Active buyer and agent lists, and social promotion.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"The listing photos are the single highest-leverage marketing decision. We get those right first, then build the launch around them."*

STEP SIX

Launch & Showings

Once the home is ready, we launch. After that, how the home is shown matters as much as how it looks in photos.

CONCENTRATE ENERGY, DO NOT TRICKLE IT

A buyer touring an empty house alone, with no sense of competition, tends to focus on flaws and negotiate down. Concentrating showings into a defined window creates urgency, because buyers who see other buyers feel it.

KEEP THE HOME SHOW-READY

Stay flexible on access, tidy before leaving each day, keep odors neutral and the light in, set a comfortable temperature, and secure valuables and prescriptions.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Be flexible and accommodating on showing access
- [ ] Keep the home tidy, bright, and neutral-smelling
- [ ] Secure valuables, prescriptions, and personal documents
- [ ] Manage pets and step out so buyers can picture themselves there

A TIP FROM TIM

"You will not be present for most showings, and that is appropriate. Buyers need to talk openly. I keep you updated on volume and the feedback that comes back."

STEP SEVEN

Reviewing Offers

When offers come in, the instinct is to look at the price. Price matters, but it is not the only number that does, and the strongest offer is rarely just the highest one.

THE TERMS WE WEIGH TOGETHER

- **Due diligence fee.** Paid at contract and generally non-refundable. Real money to you, and a signal of commitment.
- **Due diligence period.** How long the buyer has to investigate. Shorter is generally better for you.
- **Closing date.** A timeline that fits your next move has real value.
- **Earnest money.** Held in escrow. Signals how serious the buyer is.
- **Financing.** Cash removes financing risk; a large down payment is a different risk profile than a small one.
- **Contingencies.** Fewer conditions mean a cleaner, more certain path to closing.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"With multiple offers you can accept one, counter one, or invite everyone to submit their highest and best. The goal is the offer most likely to actually close, on terms that work for you."*

AFTER THE FIRST OFFER

Negotiating From Strength

A strong launch and good preparation are what put you in a position to negotiate from strength rather than react from weakness. By the time offers arrive, most of the leverage has already been earned.

COUNTER ON TERMS, NOT JUST PRICE

If an offer is close on price but the closing date or contingencies do not work, that is a counter, not a rejection. Often the cleanest path to a higher net is improving terms, not squeezing the last dollar out of the price.

USE COMPETITION, DO NOT FAKE IT

Genuine multiple-offer situations are powerful. Manufacturing urgency that is not real damages trust and can cost you a buyer. We work with the demand the home actually generates.

KEEP EMOTION OUT OF THE ROOM

It is your home, and that makes objectivity hard. My job is to keep the focus on your goals and the numbers, so a single tense exchange does not derail a sale that is otherwise working.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"The buyer who offers slightly less with a clean, certain contract is frequently worth more than the buyer who offers more with conditions that may unravel before closing."*

WHAT TO EXPECT

Due Diligence & Inspections

Once you accept an offer, the buyer enters their due diligence period. Knowing what they will look at lets us anticipate issues rather than be surprised by them.

WHAT BUYERS TYPICALLY INSPECT

General home inspection baseline
Roof to foundation, plus HVAC, plumbing, and electrical. The most common source of repair requests.

Termite / wood-destroying organisms common
Required for FHA and VA buyers, and routine in our humid climate, especially in crawl spaces.

Sewer scope & radon older / as needed
Older homes may get a sewer camera; radon tests appear where soil conditions warrant.

Foundation if signs appear
Piedmont clay soil moves. Sloping floors or cracks can trigger a closer look.

REPAIR REQUESTS, AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM

Buyers may ask for repairs, a credit, or a price adjustment based on findings. A closing-cost credit is often cleaner than doing the work yourself, and a pre-listing inspection can remove surprises before they become leverage.

> PRO TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"Consider a pre-listing inspection. Knowing what a buyer's inspector will find lets us address it on our terms, or price it in, instead of negotiating from behind once we are under contract."*

Inspection types and costs vary by provider and property.

CONFIRMING VALUE

The Appraisal

When a buyer is financing, their lender orders an appraisal to confirm the home is worth the contract price. Most of the time it supports the price. When it comes in low, you have options.

WHY A LOW APPRAISAL HAPPENS

Appraisers rely on recent comparable sales. In a fast-moving market, sale prices can outpace the comps an appraiser has to work with, producing a value below what a motivated buyer agreed to pay.

YOUR THREE PATHS WHEN IT COMES IN LOW

- **Hold the price.** Ask the buyer to cover the gap in cash, which committed buyers, especially in a competitive purchase, often will.
- **Reduce to the appraised value.** Sometimes the cleanest path, particularly if the buyer cannot bring extra cash.
- **Meet in the middle.** Split the difference so both sides share the gap and the sale stays on track.

A TIP FROM TIM

"We can also challenge an appraisal with better comparable sales when the value looks wrong. Which path is right depends on the home, the market, and how strong your buyer is."

THE FINISH LINE

Closing in North Carolina

North Carolina is an attorney-closing state, so the final steps look different from many other places. Here is what to expect as the seller.

THE ATTORNEY RUNS THE CLOSING

A real estate attorney conducts the title search, clears any liens, prepares the deed and settlement documents, and handles the exchange of funds. You do not need to be in the same room as the buyer.

SIGN IN ADVANCE WHEN YOU CAN

Sellers often pre-sign their documents, including the deed, ahead of the closing date. That keeps the day itself simple and removes scheduling pressure.

WHEN YOU ACTUALLY GET PAID

Ownership transfers, and your proceeds are released, once the deed is recorded with the county. Recording usually happens the same day for closings scheduled early enough in the day.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Provide payoff information for any existing mortgage early
- [ ] Pre-sign the deed and closing documents where possible
- [ ] Confirm how net proceeds will be delivered to you
- [ ] Cancel or transfer utilities and homeowners insurance after recording

A TIP FROM TIM

"I am not an attorney, and your closing attorney confirms the legal specifics. Have your payoff and proceeds details lined up early so nothing holds up recording."

YOUR BOTTOM LINE

What It Costs to Sell

What matters is not the sale price, it is what you net. Selling costs come due at different stages, and knowing them up front prevents surprises at the closing table.

AT LISTING / PREPARATION

Home preparation	Repairs, cleaning, paint, and any staging, scaled to what the home needs
Carrying costs	Mortgage, taxes, insurance, and utilities while the home is on the market

DURING THE SALE

Negotiated repairs or credits	Possible outcomes of the buyer's due diligence

AT CLOSING

Real estate commission	Negotiated and agreed up front, paid from proceeds
Seller closing costs	Attorney coordination, excise tax, and prorations, commonly around 1 to 2 percent
Existing mortgage payoff	Your remaining loan balance, paid from proceeds

Note: in North Carolina the deed excise tax (the transfer tax) is customarily the seller's cost. Your attorney provides exact figures.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"Before you list, I prepare a seller net sheet, an estimate of your proceeds after every cost. You make decisions on the real number, not the headline price."*

FROM LIST TO CLOSE

The Selling Timeline

Every sale is different, but most follow a recognizable path. Here is the typical sequence, from the first conversation to recording.

BEFORE LISTING

Prepare and price

We set goals, prepare the home, complete a CMA, and finalize price and launch strategy.

LAUNCH

Go live

Professional photos, the MLS, syndication, and a controlled showing schedule that concentrates buyer energy.

FIRST DAYS

Showings & feedback

The busiest window for traffic. We track volume and feedback and adjust if needed.

OFFERS

Review & negotiate

Evaluate price and terms together, then counter or accept the offer most likely to close.

UNDER CONTRACT

Due diligence

The buyer inspects, appraises, and finances. We handle repair requests and any appraisal gap.

DUE DILIGENCE ENDS

Buyer is committed

After this negotiated deadline, the buyer's earnest money is generally at risk.

CLOSING

Sign & record

Sign with the attorney, the deed records, ownership transfers, and your proceeds are released.

Timeline is typical and varies by contract, financing, and property.

LEARN FROM OTHERS

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Most selling regrets trace back to a handful of avoidable mistakes. Knowing them in advance is half the battle.

- **Overpricing to leave room.** The most common and costly mistake. It burns the early attention that matters most and leads to a stale listing and a lower final price.
- **Skipping preparation.** Buyers notice deferred maintenance and quietly discount their offers, often by more than the repairs would have cost.
- **Weak photography.** Most buyers decide whether to visit based on the photos. Poor images disqualify a home before a showing ever happens.
- **Taking offers personally.** A low offer is a starting point, not an insult. Emotion in negotiation costs sellers money.
- **Hiding known problems.** Undisclosed defects invite cancellations and liability. Disclosure protects you.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *"Almost every one of these is avoidable with a plan made before the home ever hits the market. That is exactly what the first conversation is for."*

QUICK ANSWERS

Questions Sellers Ask Most

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO SELL?

It depends on price, condition, and the market, but a well-prepared and well-priced home typically draws its strongest interest in the first days. We set realistic expectations for your price range before listing.

SHOULD I MAKE REPAIRS BEFORE LISTING?

Usually the high-return ones, yes. Minor repairs, paint, and cleaning almost always pay for themselves. Major renovations rarely do. We decide together where your dollars do the most work.

DO I HAVE TO ACCEPT THE FIRST OFFER?

No. You can accept, counter, or wait. A strong early offer is often a good sign, but the right move depends on its terms and how the market is responding.

WHAT IF THE APPRAISAL COMES IN LOW?

You can hold the price and ask the buyer to cover the gap, meet in the middle, reduce to the appraised value, or challenge the appraisal with better comps. We choose based on your buyer and the market.

IS THE COMMISSION NEGOTIABLE?

Yes. Commission is agreed up front, and what matters is the full strategy behind it, what is done to prepare, position, and market your home to net you more.

> **A TIP FROM TIM**
>
> *"If a question here applies to your situation, bring it to our consultation. The right answer is almost always specific to your home and your timeline."*

QUICK REFERENCE

Terms Worth Knowing

- **CMA**
  Comparative Market Analysis. The study of recent sales, active listings, and pending sales used to price a home.
- **Due diligence fee**
  A negotiated, generally non-refundable fee the buyer pays you in NC for the right to investigate the home.
- **Due diligence period**
  The negotiated window when the buyer inspects, appraises, and finances, and can terminate.
- **Earnest money**
  A good-faith deposit held in escrow. Refundable to the buyer during due diligence, at risk after.
- **Disclosure statement**
  The NC Residential Property Disclosure Statement, provided to buyers no later than their offer.
- **Comps**
  Recent comparable sales used to gauge value and support a price.
- **Days on market**
  How long a listing has been active. Long counts can signal an overpriced or stale home.
- **Appraisal**
  A licensed appraiser's opinion of value, ordered by the buyer's lender to support the loan.
- **Appraisal gap**
  The shortfall when a home appraises below the contract price. Covered, split, or renegotiated.
- **Contingency**
  A condition that must be met for the contract to proceed, such as financing or appraisal.
- **Seller concession**
  An agreed amount you apply toward the buyer's closing costs, capped by loan type.
- **Excise tax**
  North Carolina's deed transfer tax, customarily paid by the seller at closing.
- **Net proceeds**
  What you keep after commission, payoff, and selling costs are subtracted from the sale price.
- **Pre-listing inspection**
  An inspection you order before listing to find and address issues on your own terms.
- **Staging**
  Editing and styling a home so its space and features, not the furnishings, are what buyers remember.
- **Closing / recording**
  Signing with the attorney and recording the deed, which transfers ownership and releases proceeds.

KEEP THIS HANDY

Your Home-Selling Checklist

The whole journey on one page. Check off as you go, and bring your questions to our next conversation.

BEFORE YOU LIST

- [ ] Clarify goals, timeline, and target net
- [ ] Review a CMA and set a strategic price
- [ ] Prepare a seller net sheet
- [ ] Gather disclosure and HOA documents

PREPARING THE HOME

- [ ] Declutter and depersonalize every room
- [ ] Complete minor repairs and deep clean
- [ ] Refresh paint and tidy the exterior
- [ ] Stage or style the key rooms

LAUNCH & SHOWINGS

- [ ] Confirm professional photography
- [ ] Go live and syndicate to the portals
- [ ] Keep the home show-ready and flexible
- [ ] Secure valuables and prescriptions

UNDER CONTRACT & CLOSE

- [ ] Review offers on price and terms
- [ ] Handle inspection and appraisal items
- [ ] Provide mortgage payoff early
- [ ] Pre-sign, record, and transfer utilities

ABOUT

Working *With Me*

Most people see a house. *Tim sees a financial decision.*

TIM PETRINEC, REALTOR®

That distinction shapes every conversation. When Tim works with a seller, he is thinking about what buyers in the current market will actually pay, which improvements move the needle, and how to create the kind of early momentum that drives stronger offers. When he works with a buyer, he is evaluating the neighborhood trajectory, the exit potential, and the real cost of ownership over time, not just whether the layout works.

Before real estate, Tim spent years at Edward Jones as a Financial Advisor, learning how to evaluate investments in terms of long-term value, risk, and return. He later built and led the Sales and Service division of a digital agency inside a medical device company. Those two experiences gave him a way of thinking about pricing that goes beyond what a typical market report shows. He understands it as strategy.

Since 2020, Tim has closed more than 200 transactions across the greater Charlotte region and nearby South Carolina communities. He also invests actively in real estate, with firsthand experience in property acquisitions, flips, long-term rentals, and short-term rentals. That experience changes how he evaluates every property he walks through.

His practice is built on a one-on-one model. Every client works directly with Tim, from the first conversation through closing. No handoffs, no team assistants handling the parts of the process that matter most. That is a deliberate choice, and it shapes everything about how he works.

Tim has called Charlotte home since 2007. Eighteen years of watching this city grow has given him a depth of knowledge about how its neighborhoods work, how they have changed, and what those changes mean for buyers and sellers making decisions today.

Outside of real estate, his favorite way to spend time is anything with his wife, stepson, their dog, and their friends. They love checking out different restaurants around Charlotte and exploring hiking trails around the region. On Sunday mornings, you can usually find them at Mecklenburg Community Church. In the fall, they enjoy getting their hopes up for a Buffalo Bills Super Bowl run. With family spread across Mexico, Indiana, New Jersey, and Buffalo, they treasure the time they get to visit.

Ready when *you are*.

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