REALTY **ONE** GROUP RESULTS

WINSTON-SALEM · GREENSBORO · HIGH POINT · KERNERSVILLE · 2026

The *Two-Lane* Market

The Triad didn't slow down this year. It split. Whether now is a good time to buy depends entirely on which lane you're in.

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THE SHORT ANSWER

Same city. Same week. Two different *markets.*

If you've been reading national headlines about buyer leverage returning and assuming that's true here, you are half right — and which half depends entirely on your price point.

Here is what is actually happening on the ground in Winston-Salem, Greensboro, High Point, Kernersville, and Clemmons. Move-in-ready homes accurately priced **under $500,000 are still selling in twelve to twenty-one days**, frequently with competing offers.

Meanwhile, homes **above $625,000 — or homes needing meaningful work at any price — sit sixty to ninety days**, and roughly a third of them take a price cut before they close.

That is the Two-Lane Market, and it is the single most important thing to understand before you write an offer this year. Your entire strategy — what you offer, what fee you write, what you ask for — changes depending on which lane you're in.

> *The $500K to $625K band is the buyer sweet spot right now. You are just barely into balanced territory and sellers are noticeably more flexible than the same seller would have been eighteen months ago. That is where I'm steering clients who have the flexibility.*
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THE SPLIT

12–21	60–90	~1 in 3	2.8–3.6
DAYS ON MARKET UNDER $500K	DAYS ON MARKET ABOVE $625K	LISTINGS ABOVE $625K TAKING A PRICE CUT	MONTHS OF SUPPLY STILL UNDER BALANCED

THE DATA

Find the *inflection* point.

Read this table by looking for where the numbers turn. It happens between $500,000 and $625,000, and everything about how you buy changes on the other side of it.

PRICE BAND	DAYS ON MARKET	SALE-TO-LIST	PRICE CUTS	WHO HAS LEVERAGE
Under $300K	12 — 18 days	99.4%	Under 8%	Sellers
$300K — $500K	18 — 30 days	98.7%	12%	Sellers
$500K — $625K	35 — 55 days	98.2%	18%	Balanced
$625K — $850K	60 — 90 days	97.6%	31%	Buyers
Above $850K	90 — 120 days	96.8%	38%	Buyers

Aggregated from Triad MLS sold data and active listings, August 2026. Bands blend multiple submarkets — your specific neighborhood will differ.

What this should do to your budget thinking

Stretching from $480,000 to $640,000 is not simply a bigger monthly payment for a bigger house. **It is walking out of a sellers market and into a buyers market.** Different competition, different negotiating room, different concessions available.

That is a genuinely unusual situation, and most buyers never think about it because they've been trained to see price as a single continuous scale. It isn't one here. It's two.

The corollary nobody says out loud

If you can flex upward past $625,000, you may buy more house with less negotiating pain than competing under $500,000 — where you'll lose offers, write at or above list, and have almost no room to ask for anything.

That does not mean stretch beyond what you can carry. Run the reserves math first. But if the budget genuinely flexes, the market is currently rewarding the higher lane.

CITY BY CITY

Nearly identical at the median. Different in the *tails.*

One of the most common questions this month is which Triad city is moving faster. The honest answer: at the median they're close to identical. The difference shows up at the extremes.

METRIC, AUGUST 2026	GREENSBORO	WINSTON-SALEM	HIGH POINT	KERNERSVILLE
Median sold price	$289,000	$295,000	$277,000	$315,000
Median days on market	47	44	42	46
Fast lane — under $400K	14 days	15 days	12 days	18 days
Slow lane — above $500K	72 days	65 days	80 days	55 days
Sale-to-list ratio	98.4%	98.7%	98.1%	98.9%

Kernersville is the standout

Highest median price, fastest slow-lane turnover, and the highest sale-to-list ratio of the four. That combination reflects school district demand and continued inflow from Guilford commuters looking for a shorter drive and a different tax picture.

Winston-Salem is the most balanced

Brisk activity under $400,000 and reasonable movement above $500,000, supported by steady employment at Truist, Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist, and Reynolds American. It is the least likely of the four to surprise you in either direction.

The single best search filter in this market

Target homes that have been active **forty days or more** — roughly a third of current Guilford and Forsyth inventory. Those sellers have already tested the market, missed the summer window, and know it. That is where negotiating room actually lives, at any price point.

THE FEE THAT REVEALS EVERYTHING

Due diligence fees are doing something *strange.*

North Carolina is one of the few states where a buyer pays the seller a separate, non-refundable fee at contract signing in exchange for the right to walk away during the inspection window. What buyers are actually writing tells you exactly where the leverage sits.

PRICE BAND	TYPICAL RANGE	MEDIAN	AS % OF PRICE
Under $300K	$500 – $3,000	$1,500	~0.5%
$300K – $500K	$2,500 – $8,000	$4,500	~1.1%
$500K – $625K	$5,000 – $15,000	$7,700	~1.4%
$625K – $850K	$3,000 – $12,000	$6,500	~0.9%
Above $850K	$0 – $15,000	$4,000	~0.4%

Notice what happens at the top

The fee **peaks in the $500K to $625K band and then falls.** That is the Two-Lane Market showing up in the money itself. Below $500,000, buyers write real fees to make an offer stand out in a crowd. Above $625,000, buyers hold the leverage — so they write smaller fees, or none at all, and sellers accept.

IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU OTHERWISE

If you are buying above $625,000 and your agent says you need a $15,000 due diligence fee to be competitive — **get a second opinion.** That was true in 2022. It is not true now, and it is your money at risk, not theirs.

A note on reading these figures: the $7,700 median belongs to the $500K–$625K band specifically, not to the Triad as a whole. With regional medians near $290,000, the typical Triad contract sits in the first two rows of this table. Match the fee to your band, not to the headline number. And remember the fee is separate from earnest money, goes directly to the seller, and is not refundable if you terminate outside the contract's covered conditions.

THE HEADLINE QUESTION

Are Guilford prices actually *dropping?*

Short answer: no, not in aggregate. But the softening chatter is real, and understanding where it comes from is more useful than the yes-or-no.

Guilford County's median sold price sits near **$289,000 in August 2026, up about 0.8% year over year.** That is functionally flat, not declining. The wider Triad region is up roughly 1.4%. So the county is marginally softer than the region — and nothing is dropping in any meaningful sense at the median.

Where the chatter comes from

It's concentrated, and it's genuine. Above $500,000 in select Greensboro submarkets — Irving Park, Sunset Hills, parts of Fisher Park — list-price adjustments of 3 to 5% and longer marketing periods have become common. Above $625,000 in those same submarkets, roughly 30% of listings have taken a cut.

That is what neighbors are talking about in Facebook groups, and they're not wrong. They are just describing one lane and calling it the market.

What is not softening

Guilford homes under $300,000 are still competitive, still selling in fourteen to twenty days, and still appreciating modestly. Rural Guilford, small ranches, entry-level townhomes — those markets look nothing like the softening headline suggests.

> *The dropping-prices narrative is a headline hunting for a story. The real story is a Two-Lane Market where entry-level Guilford is still hot and luxury Guilford has finally started to breathe. Both of those are true at the same time.*
>
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If someone quotes you a county-wide number as evidence about your specific purchase, ask which lane it describes. A median blends both, which makes it accurate and nearly useless for any individual decision.

The under-$500K market has a *tailwind* national data misses.

One reason the Triad hasn't softened broadly is sustained out-of-state relocation. The entry and mid bands are not being held up by local buyers alone.

EMPLOYER	LOCATION	HIRING IMPACT	BUYER BANDS
Boom Supersonic	PTI Airport, Greensboro	2,000+ jobs by 2030	$400K – $900K
Toyota Battery Manufacturing	Liberty, Randolph County	5,100 jobs by 2027	$225K – $550K
Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist	Winston-Salem	1,200+ positions	$300K – $850K
Cone Health / Novant	Greensboro & Winston-Salem	Steady expansion	$275K – $700K
Truist Financial	Winston-Salem	Corporate anchor	$450K – $1.2M

These are not speculative announcements. The Boom Superfactory is under construction at PTI. Toyota broke ground in Liberty and has been recruiting. The healthcare systems are hiring against an aging regional population that isn't going anywhere.

Relocating buyers arrive from Florida, New York, New Jersey, Northern Virginia, and coastal California — and they typically bring stronger down payments than local buyers. **Most of them shop under $500,000 first**, because they're being cautious in an unfamiliar market. Which is precisely why that lane stays competitive even as national coverage talks about softening.

What this means if you're a local buyer under $500K

Your competition is often someone selling a house in a more expensive state. That is not a reason to panic or overpay — but it is a reason to be fully pre-approved, decisive, and clean on paperwork. Speed and certainty beat a slightly higher number more often than people think.

Three lanes, three different *playbooks.*

1

Under $500,000 — compete

Be pre-approved before you tour anything. When a home meets your criteria, move within twenty-four hours of it hitting the MLS. Offer at or slightly above list. Write clean, with a due diligence fee at the median for your band. Don't ask for closing-cost help without a specific reason. **Expect to lose a few before you win one** — that is normal here, not a sign you're doing it wrong.

2

$500,000 to $625,000 — the sweet spot

Thirty-five to fifty-five days on market means you have room to think, but not a month between showings. Open two to three percent below list with a market-median fee. If it doesn't stick, negotiate. Sellers here are meaningfully more flexible than below $500K — and they are not desperate. Treat them accordingly.

3

Above $625,000 — negotiate

Start five to eight percent below list. Write a modest fee, or none at all if the property has been sitting past ninety days. Ask for seller-paid closing costs and repair credits. Take the inspection seriously and negotiate every item that surfaces. **You are not being aggressive — the market has already softened.** You're meeting it where it is.

One rule that applies in every lane

Know which lane you're in before you tour a single house. Offer structure, due diligence fee, inspection posture, and how fast you have to move all follow from that one determination — and a buyer running Lane One tactics in Lane Two leaves real money behind, while a buyer running Lane Two tactics in Lane One simply never wins a house.

Should you wait for rates to *drop?*

This is the most common question we get, and it deserves a straight answer rather than a slogan.

The case against waiting

Rate declines don't arrive quietly. Every meaningful downward move brings a wave of buyers back into the market at the same time — which pushes prices up and shrinks negotiating room, especially under $500,000 where inventory is already tight. **Lower rate, higher price, more competition** is a common trade, and it isn't obviously a better one.

There is also the part nobody enjoys hearing: a buyer who purchased at a higher rate and later refinanced has been paying down principal the whole time. A buyer still waiting has not.

The honest caveats

- **Nobody can promise you a refinance.** Rates may fall, hold, or rise. "Marry the house, date the rate" only works if the date eventually happens — plan a payment you can carry at today's rate, not at a hoped-for one.
- **Waiting genuinely does make sense sometimes.** If your reserves aren't built, your credit is mid-repair, or your job situation is unsettled, buying now is the worse move regardless of what rates do.
- **In Lane Two, patience pays differently.** Above $625,000 the leverage is already yours. Time in that lane buys negotiating power, not just a rate.

What forecasters are saying — and how much to weigh it

Most regional forecasts for 2026 land in a narrow zero-to-three-percent appreciation range for this market, with inventory at 2.8 to 3.6 months — still below the four to six months that defines balance. A broad price decline is not the base case.

Treat every forecast as a scenario, not a plan. The decision that actually matters is whether your numbers work at today's payment, in your lane, on a specific house.

REALTY **ONE** GROUP RESULTS

Which lane are you *buying in?*

Every neighborhood in the Triad behaves differently inside the Two-Lane Market. Before you write a first offer, we'll run the actual pricing, days on market, sale-to-list ratio, and negotiation norms for your specific ZIP codes and price band. First call is free and goes directly to Teresa — no funnel, no phone tree.

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