



# MOVING TO THE MIDLANDS

## FOR SCOUT MOTORS?

A practical relocation guide to Blythewood, Columbia and the surrounding South Carolina Midlands

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Updated July 2026 | [themarleygroup.net](http://themarleygroup.net)

Use this guide to compare commute, housing, schools, costs and day-to-day life before narrowing your search.

### Your move deserves more than a pin dropped on a map

The closest house is not always the best fit. A workable relocation plan balances commute, budget, housing style, school logistics, access to daily errands and the life you want after work.

#### WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

Areas to explore, practical commute ranges, county-level cost data, school research tools, the South Carolina buying process, new construction, local attractions and a moving timeline.

#### HOW WE HELP

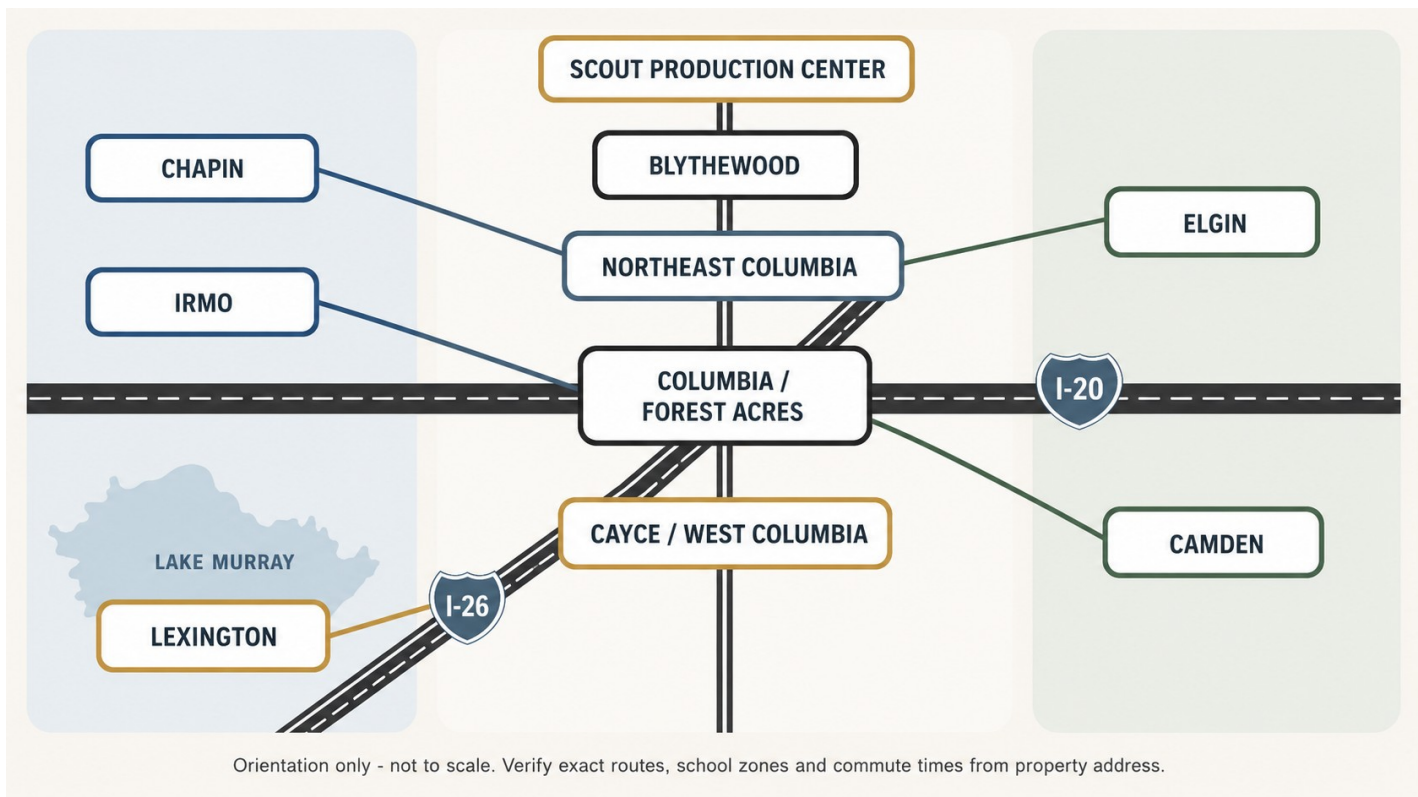
We compare locations objectively, preview homes by video, coordinate in-person tours, explain contracts and connect the move from first conversation through closing.

## QUICK CONTENTS

|                                                                           |                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>02</b> Scout Motors and the Midlands at a glance                       | <b>12</b> Home buying in South Carolina |
| <b>03</b> Build your search around real life <b>18</b> QR resource center | <b>13</b> New construction              |
| <b>04</b> Area comparison                                                 | <b>14</b> Moving timeline               |
| <b>05-09</b> Community profiles                                           | <b>15</b> Your first 30 days            |
| <b>10</b> Cost comparison                                                 | <b>16</b> Things to do                  |
| <b>11</b> School information                                              | <b>17</b> Relocation worksheet          |

*Fair Housing note: We provide objective information and official research links. We do not rank neighborhoods or schools. The right fit is personal and school assignments must be verified for the exact address.*

A growing manufacturing hub with access to Columbia, interstates, rivers, Lake Murray and smaller towns.



### THE PRODUCTION CENTER

Scout Motors is building its South Carolina Production Center on more than 1,100 acres in Blythewood. The company has described the site as roughly 20 minutes northeast of Columbia.

### REGIONAL IMPACT

The core project represents more than \$2 billion in investment and is expected to create more than 4,000 permanent jobs. A later supplier park announcement added a planned \$300 million investment and about 1,000 supplier jobs.

### Timing changes. Verify before you plan around it.

Scout has targeted vehicle production by the end of 2026. Construction, hiring, supplier activity and road patterns can change, so use current employer information for your specific start date and work location.

A commute-only search can solve one problem and quietly create five more.

### 1. COMMUTE

Decide your maximum normal commute and your maximum bad-day commute. Test the route during the hours you expect to drive.

### 2. HOUSING

Choose the non-negotiables first: new or established, acreage or neighborhood, one story or two, HOA or no HOA, garage, yard and maintenance level.

### 3. WEEKDAY LIFE

Map groceries, medical care, childcare, gyms, restaurants, parks and the errands you will repeat. A pretty house 30 minutes from everything becomes less charming by Thursday.

### 4. BUDGET

Compare total monthly cost, not just price. Include taxes, insurance, HOA dues, commute fuel, utilities, repairs and new-construction upgrades.

### 5. SCHOOLS

Research the exact zoned schools with the district locator, then review official state report cards, program options, transportation and enrollment requirements.

### 6. RESALE FLEXIBILITY

Think about how broadly the home may appeal later. Location, condition, lot, floor plan, insurance and neighborhood restrictions can matter as much as square footage.

### The best first step

Pick three areas, not twelve. Tour one close-to-work option, one lifestyle option and one value option. The differences become obvious much faster in person.

Commute bands are planning estimates to the Blythewood production area, not promises. Exact route, shift time and traffic matter.

| AREA                    | PLANNING RANGE | HOUSING / DAILY LIFE                                                        | LIKELY DISTRICT(S)        |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Blythewood              | 5-20 min       | New construction, established subdivisions, larger lots and small-town core | Richland Two or Fairfield |
| Northeast Columbia      | 15-30 min      | Subdivisions, townhomes, retail, medical and convenient daily errands       | Richland Two              |
| Elgin                   | 20-35 min      | Newer communities, rural pockets and I-20 access                            | Kershaw County            |
| Camden                  | 35-50 min      | Historic homes, acreage, equestrian culture and a traditional downtown      | Kershaw County            |
| Columbia / Forest Acres | 25-45 min      | Urban amenities, older homes, dining, culture and USC access                | Richland One              |
| Cayce / West Columbia   | 30-50 min      | Ranches, townhomes, river access and quick downtown connections             | Lexington Two             |
| Irmo / Chapin           | 35-65 min      | Suburban neighborhoods, new construction and Lake Murray access             | Lexington-Richland Five   |
| Lexington               | 40-65 min      | Broad housing mix, active downtown and extensive shopping / dining          | Lexington One             |

### Do not choose from the chart alone

Use it to narrow the map. Then compare actual homes, actual routes and actual monthly costs. Small location changes can cross district lines or materially change a commute.

The closest broad housing search to the production center and the natural first stop for many relocating employees.

## BLYTHEWOOD

### SCOUT COMMUTE

**about 5-20 minutes**

#### HOUSING MIX

A fast-growing mix of new construction, established golf and amenity communities, traditional subdivisions, larger lots and rural edges. Inventory and incentives change quickly.

#### DAY-TO-DAY

A small-town center with access to I-77. More shopping, dining and medical options are developing, while Northeast Columbia remains a frequent errand destination.

#### SCHOOLS

Primarily Richland School District Two, with some Fairfield County addresses. Always verify the exact parcel.

#### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Builder registration rules, future road changes, HOA costs, lot premiums, internet service and whether a “Blythewood” mailing address is actually in the town limits.

### New construction watch

Before visiting a model home, contact your agent. Some builders require agent registration on the first visit. The onsite representative works for the builder, not the buyer.

### Useful starting points

- Blythewood town center and I-77 access
- Blythewood Road, Killian Road and northern Richland County growth corridors
- New-home communities listed in The Marley Group Blythewood explorer
- Established communities where resale inventory may offer mature lots or completed amenities

A practical compromise for buyers who want a manageable Scout commute with a fuller menu of everyday services.

## NORTHEAST COLUMBIA

### SCOUT COMMUTE

**about 15-30 minutes**

### HOUSING MIX

A wide range of established subdivisions, newer communities, townhomes, condos and gated or amenity-focused neighborhoods. Prices and HOA structures vary considerably.

### DAY-TO-DAY

Strong access to shopping, restaurants, medical care, I-77, I-20 and Fort Jackson. It can be easier to handle daily life here without driving back toward central Columbia.

### SCHOOLS

Mostly Richland School District Two. Boundaries are address-specific and some attendance lines can change.

### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Peak-hour bottlenecks, military traffic near Fort Jackson, HOA rules, flood zones near waterways and the actual distance from an I-77 interchange.

### WHY PEOPLE START HERE

It usually offers more inventory and services than Blythewood while keeping the production area within a reasonable commute band.

### WHAT TO TEST

Drive the route at your expected shift time. A map estimate at 1:30 p.m. is charming fiction if you will commute at 7:30 a.m.

### Neighborhood names are not boundaries

Lake Carolina, Pontiac, Killian and other commonly used area names do not replace county, municipal, school or tax boundaries. Verify the exact address.

Kershaw County options for buyers who value space, newer growth or a more traditional small-town setting.

## ELGIN

SCOUT COMMUTE

**about 20-35 minutes**

### HOUSING MIX

Rapidly expanding new construction, established neighborhoods and rural properties. Buyers can find a different balance of lot size and price than closer-in Richland County.

### DAY-TO-DAY

I-20 access, local services and an easy connection to Camden and Northeast Columbia. Daily routines can vary sharply depending on how far a home sits from the main corridors.

### SCHOOLS

Kershaw County School District.

### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Septic or well systems, road maintenance, internet availability, construction around growing corridors and whether commute routes rely on two-lane roads.

## CAMDEN

SCOUT COMMUTE

**about 35-50 minutes**

### HOUSING MIX

Historic homes, traditional neighborhoods, newer development, acreage and equestrian properties. Housing styles are less uniform and can require more property-specific due diligence.

### DAY-TO-DAY

A walkable historic downtown, local restaurants, community events, access to the Wateree River and a strong equestrian identity.

### SCHOOLS

Kershaw County School District.

### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Age and condition of historic homes, insurance, outbuildings, land restrictions, septic systems and longer commute tolerance.

## COLUMBIA, FOREST ACRES, CAYCE AND WEST COLUMBIA

For relocators who want city access, established housing and a lifestyle that does not revolve entirely around the workplace.

### COLUMBIA / FOREST ACRES

SCOUT COMMUTE  
about 25-45 minutes

#### HOUSING MIX

Older brick homes, bungalows, renovated properties, condos and infill construction. Forest Acres offers a more suburban feel close to central Columbia.

#### DAY-TO-DAY

Dining, arts, USC, hospitals, the State House, sporting events and river access. This is the strongest urban-lifestyle option in the guide.

#### SCHOOLS

Generally Richland School District One.

#### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Older systems, crawl spaces, insurance, sewer lines, parking, city taxes, tree maintenance and neighborhood-specific renovation rules.

### CAYCE / WEST COLUMBIA

SCOUT COMMUTE  
about 30-50 minutes

#### HOUSING MIX

Brick ranches, established neighborhoods, townhomes, condos and newer infill. Housing ranges from quiet residential pockets to areas near active commercial corridors.

#### DAY-TO-DAY

Quick access to downtown Columbia, the airport, riverwalks, restaurants and I-26 / I-77 connections.

#### SCHOOLS

Lexington School District Two.

#### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Airport noise in some locations, flood zones, rail lines, traffic around river crossings and whether the property lies inside municipal limits.

Lifestyle-heavy choices for buyers willing to trade a longer Scout commute for lake access, broader shopping or a Lexington County base.

## IRMO / CHAPIN / LAKE MURRAY

### SCOUT COMMUTE

**about 35-65 minutes**

### HOUSING MIX

Established subdivisions, new construction, townhomes, waterfront and water-access communities. Prices rise quickly with water frontage, views and private dock rights.

### DAY-TO-DAY

Lake recreation, parks, shopping around Harbison and a suburban rhythm. Chapin feels smaller and generally adds commute time.

### SCHOOLS

Lexington-Richland School District Five in many areas. Other districts may apply around the lake.

### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Flood maps, dock permits, lake drawdown, shoreline ownership, HOA rules, boat storage, insurance and the difference between “lake access” and actual deeded rights.

## LEXINGTON

### SCOUT COMMUTE

**about 40-65 minutes**

### HOUSING MIX

One of the region’s broadest housing mixes: older homes, master-planned neighborhoods, new construction, acreage and higher-end communities.

### DAY-TO-DAY

A busy downtown, extensive shopping and dining, medical services and quick access to many parts of Lexington County.

### SCHOOLS

Primarily Lexington County School District One.

### CHECK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Long cross-town commute, road construction, HOA fees, property-tax jurisdiction and whether a listing’s “Lexington” mailing address is inside town limits.

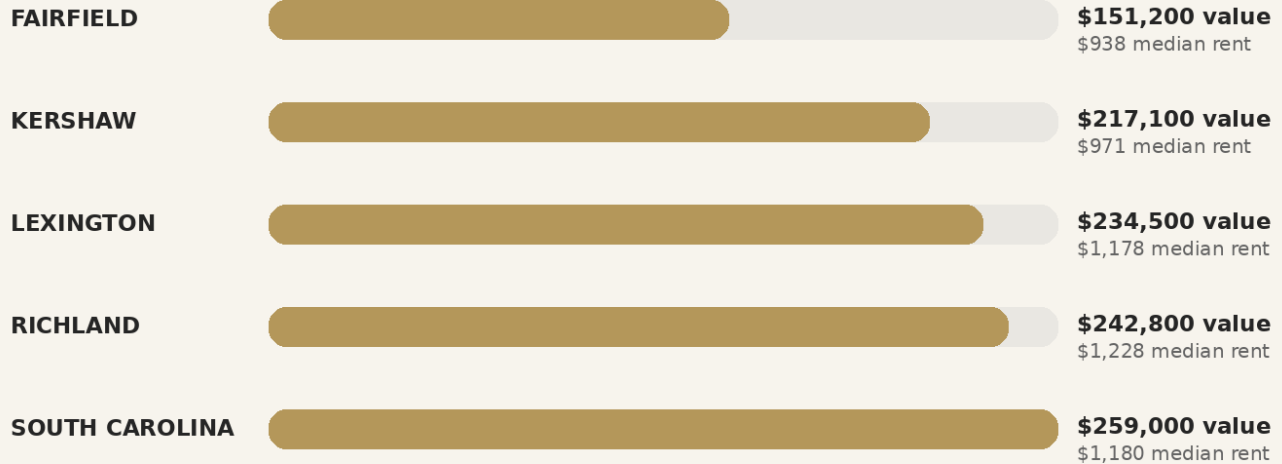
### Lake Murray reality check

A lake view, community ramp, boat storage, shared dock, deeded slip and private dock are six very different things. Get the rights, rules and costs in writing.

Use county medians for orientation only. Your actual home price and monthly payment will depend on the exact property, financing and insurance.

## CENSUS HOUSING COST SNAPSHOT

2020-2024 medians. These are not current asking prices or quotes.



### PROPERTY TAX BASICS

South Carolina owner-occupied legal residences generally use a 4% assessment ratio and receive relief from school operating taxes. Buyers must apply for legal-residence status after closing.

### SALES AND INCOME TAX

The statewide sales tax is 6%, with local additions depending on jurisdiction. State income-tax rules change, so confirm current withholding and filing guidance with SCDOR or a tax professional.

### Compare the whole monthly number

Mortgage principal and interest are only the opening act. Add property taxes, homeowners insurance, flood insurance when applicable, HOA dues, utilities, commute costs and maintenance.

School research should be factual, current and address-specific. Ratings alone do not tell a family whether a school fits its needs.

| AREA                           | DISTRICT TO RESEARCH             | OFFICIAL STARTING POINT                    |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Blythewood</b>              | Richland Two or Fairfield County | District locator and enrollment office     |
| <b>Northeast Columbia</b>      | Richland Two                     | Richland Two district maps / school search |
| <b>Elgin / Camden</b>          | Kershaw County                   | KCSD schools and registration              |
| <b>Columbia / Forest Acres</b> | Richland One                     | Richland One district site                 |
| <b>Cayce / West Columbia</b>   | Lexington Two                    | Lexington Two Find My School               |
| <b>Irmo / Chapin</b>           | Lexington-Richland Five          | GIS School Zone Locator                    |
| <b>Lexington</b>               | Lexington One                    | GuideK12 address search                    |

### A practical school research checklist

- Confirm the zoned elementary, middle and high school using the exact street address.
- Review the current South Carolina School Report Card and the district's own program information.
- Ask the district about magnet, choice, special education, gifted, career and technical education and transportation options.
- Verify enrollment documents, deadlines and whether zoning changes are planned.
- Visit or contact the school. A spreadsheet cannot tell you everything that matters to your child.

### Fair Housing and steering

Your real estate agent can provide official sources and property-specific facts. The final school and community decision belongs to the buyer.

The exact contract controls. Deadlines and fees are not “close enough” items.

- 1 CONSULT AND REPRESENTATION**  
Define goals, timing, budget and agency relationship. South Carolina brokerage agreements should be clear and in writing.
- 2 FINANCING**  
Obtain a strong preapproval or prepare proof of funds. Compare payment, cash needed, loan terms and insurance availability.
- 3 SEARCH AND VERIFY**  
Tour homes, test commute routes and research taxes, schools, HOA rules, utilities, flood zones and property condition.
- 4 OFFER**  
Review price, financing, closing costs, due-diligence terms, earnest money, fixtures, closing date and contingencies before signing.
- 5 DUE DILIGENCE**  
Complete inspections and other investigations within the contract deadlines. Repair requests and termination rights depend on the signed agreement.
- 6 TITLE, LOAN AND INSURANCE**  
The lender completes underwriting and appraisal. The closing attorney handles title work and attorney-supervised closing tasks.
- 7 FINAL WALK-THROUGH AND CLOSING**  
Confirm agreed condition, sign documents, fund the purchase and wait for recording / authorization before taking possession.

### South Carolina closing detail

Residential real estate closings involve attorney supervision of title work, document preparation, closing, recording and disbursement. Ask who the attorney represents and direct legal questions to your attorney.

A builder's incentive can be useful. It is not a substitute for representation, inspection or math.

#### BEFORE THE MODEL HOME

Ask your agent to confirm builder registration rules. Bring representation from the first visit and disclose it immediately.

#### COMPARE THE REAL PRICE

Base price, lot premium, structural options, design-center selections, closing costs, rate incentives and HOA fees all affect the real number.

#### CONTRACT DIFFERENCES

Builder contracts are not the same as resale contracts. Completion dates, deposits, remedies and change orders may heavily favor the builder.

#### INSPECTIONS

Discuss independent inspections at appropriate stages, which may include pre-drywall and final inspection. Builder access rules vary.

#### LENDER INCENTIVES

Compare the builder-affiliated lender with outside options. A credit can be erased by rate, fees or price if nobody does the math.

#### WARRANTY AND WALK-THROUGH

Understand cosmetic standards, warranty coverage, punch-list procedures and the deadline for documenting concerns.

#### Questions worth asking in writing

- What is included in the advertised price?
- Are incentives tied to a specific lender or closing attorney?
- What is the expected completion window and what happens if it changes?
- Which amenities are complete, planned or controlled by a future HOA?
- What are the lot premium, HOA fee, transfer fee and capital contribution?
- Can the buyer conduct independent inspections and when?

Start earlier than feels necessary. Relocation has a habit of saving every annoying detail for the same week.

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8-12 WEEKS BEFORE | Confirm employment timing and work location. Set housing budget. Speak with a lender. Choose three target areas. Request video tours. Gather school and childcare records. |
| 6-8 WEEKS BEFORE  | Begin focused showings. Compare resale and new construction. Interview movers. Build a temporary-housing backup plan if timing is uncertain.                               |
| 4-6 WEEKS BEFORE  | Go under contract or finalize lease. Schedule inspections. Start insurance quotes. Notify current housing providers and plan utilities.                                    |
| 2-4 WEEKS BEFORE  | Confirm closing logistics. Arrange movers, storage and travel. Transfer medical records. Update employers, financial accounts and key subscriptions.                       |
| FINAL WEEK        | Complete final walk-through. Pack essentials separately. Confirm utility start dates, keys, garage access, trash schedule and first-night basics.                          |
| FIRST 45 DAYS     | Complete South Carolina driver's license and vehicle-registration requirements. Apply for legal-residence property-tax status after an owner-occupied purchase.            |

### Keep one relocation folder

Store the employment letter, preapproval, contract, inspection, insurance, closing documents, mover details, school records and utility confirmations in one shared digital folder.

A practical settling-in list for the items that are easy to forget once the boxes arrive.

**DRIVER AND VEHICLE**

New residents generally have 45 days to obtain an SC license or ID and transfer vehicle registration. Review required documents before visiting SCDMV.

**ADDRESS AND VOTER RECORDS**

Update your address with SCDMV. Online voter registration requires an SC driver's license or DMV ID and the residence address should be current.

**PROPERTY TAX**

After buying an owner-occupied home, apply with the county assessor for the 4% legal-residence assessment. Do not assume it happens automatically.

**UTILITIES**

Electric, water, sewer, gas, internet, trash and recycling providers depend on the exact address. Confirm deposits, transfer dates and whether any service is private.

**INSURANCE FILE**

Save policy, agent, deductible, flood information, roof documentation and claims contacts. Photograph the home and major belongings.

**HOME SYSTEMS**

Locate the water shutoff, electrical panel, HVAC filters, septic access, irrigation controls and HOA contacts before you need them at 11:47 p.m.

**Tax information is not tax advice**

South Carolina tax laws and rates change. Use SCDOR, your county and a qualified tax professional for current guidance.

The Midlands is more than a commute radius. A few places help newcomers understand the region quickly.

|                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>RIVERBANKS ZOO &amp; GARDEN</b><br>A major family attraction on the Saluda River with animals, botanical gardens and events. | <b>LAKE MURRAY</b><br>Boating, fishing, waterfront dining, public parks and sunsets. Access rules differ by location and community. |
| <b>CONGAREE NATIONAL PARK</b><br>Old-growth bottomland hardwood forest, boardwalks, paddling and seasonal natural events.       | <b>SODA CITY MARKET</b><br>A Saturday Main Street market with food, makers and a useful introduction to downtown Columbia.          |
| <b>THREE RIVERS GREENWAY</b><br>Riverwalk sections in Columbia, Cayce and West Columbia for walking, biking and water views.    | <b>SOUTH CAROLINA STATE MUSEUM</b><br>State history, science, art and a planetarium in the historic mill district.                  |
| <b>USC SPORTS AND ARTS</b><br>College athletics, concerts, theater and campus events in central Columbia.                       | <b>CAMDEN AND KERSHAW COUNTY</b><br>Historic downtown, equestrian traditions, local events and access to the Wateree River.         |

### Local test-drive idea

Spend one free afternoon in each finalist area. Buy groceries, drive to work, find dinner, visit a park and make one normal errand. It reveals more than another hour of listing photos.

Complete this before your first focused tour. It keeps the search from wandering off into the weeds.

|                                             |  |
|---------------------------------------------|--|
| Target start date                           |  |
| Ideal move-in date                          |  |
| Maximum comfortable commute                 |  |
| Maximum purchase price / monthly payment    |  |
| Financing status and lender                 |  |
| Must-have home features                     |  |
| Features that would be nice, but negotiable |  |
| Areas currently under consideration         |  |
| School / childcare needs to research        |  |
| Pets, vehicles, boats or storage needs      |  |
| New construction: yes / no / maybe          |  |
| Biggest concern about the move              |  |

### Your three-area shortlist

1. Closest practical option: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Lifestyle option: \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Value option: \_\_\_\_\_

Scan the live Marley Group resources below. The relocation hub can be updated as new neighborhood tours are published.

### SCOUT RELOCATION HUB



Area comparisons, relocation content and current resources.

### BLYTHEWOOD NEW HOMES



Builder communities and direct community links near Scout Motors.

### REQUEST A CUSTOM TOUR



Ask for a video preview, neighborhood drive-through or relocation call.

### SC SCHOOL REPORT CARDS



Official state school and district data. Verify zoning separately.

### Tour requests can be specific

Examples: "Show me the drive from Blythewood to the plant," "Compare two new-home communities," "Walk the grocery and restaurant area near this house" or "Preview this property before I fly in."

Straight answers, local research and a plan that makes the move manageable.

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### Important disclosures

This guide is an independent real estate resource and is not affiliated with or endorsed by Scout Motors, Inc. Information is general, can change and should be verified for the exact property and date. It is not legal, tax, lending, insurance or school-placement advice. Equal Housing Opportunity.

### PRIMARY SOURCES AND VERIFICATION LINKS

|                                                   |                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Scout Motors April 2026 Production Center Update  | SCDOR Moving to South Carolina Guide  |
| Scout Motors Groundbreaking and Production Timing | Richland County Property Tax          |
| SC Department of Commerce Project Announcement    | Lexington County Property Tax Amounts |
| South Carolina Real Estate Commission Resources   | South Carolina School Report Cards    |
| South Carolina Bar Ethics Opinion 09-01           | Riverbanks Zoo and Garden             |
| U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts                     | Congaree National Park                |
| SCDMV Moving to South Carolina                    | Experience Columbia SC Attractions    |