

WHAT'S IN & ON OUR GROUND?

A CURIOSITY-GUIDED TOUR OF CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG



Let this curiosity-guided tour lead you outside your comfort zone - and toward new learning about your neighbors, your city, and yourself!

Both the history "in our ground" and the things that stand on it today impact our community.

HOW TO PLAY

OBJECTIVE

Using the game card and this tour guide, choose sites to visit until you have checked off one in each neighborhood (column) and one in each category (row). Once you've completed your tour, discuss or consider the final questions to examine what you've learned.

EXTRA CREDIT

Challenge yourself to see more than the game requires. Let your curiosity be your guide.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO PLAY

Visit all locations within a particular category for a topical tour, or dive deep into a particular part of town for a geographic focus.

FINISHED

Send a photo to cbi@cbicharlotte.org or tag us on social media with the hashtag **#CBCharlotteTour** so we can celebrate your journey!



CATEGORIES



Arts & Culture: Let music, visual art or words show you a new perspective.



Food & Drink: Food brings people together. Grab a bite (or take out) from a place that's new to you.



Development: Planning and investment play a big part in how cities grow, and Charlotte is no exception.



History: What's "in the ground" that has shaped Charlotte's growth?

NEIGHBORHOODS

Center City: Now primarily home to businesses, government buildings, and higher-priced apartments and condominiums, part of Uptown was once a thriving Black neighborhood called Brooklyn. Even earlier, the Center City was home to people of diverse racial backgrounds and socioeconomic classes, living side by side.

West Charlotte: The Beatties Ford Road corridor connects some of Charlotte's oldest African-American neighborhoods as well as some of the oldest racially integrated ones. Located one mile from Center City, West Charlotte is home to vibrant businesses as well as Johnson C. Smith University.

East Charlotte: Once a typical image of mostly white suburbia, East Charlotte has become one of the most diverse parts of town, as many immigrants from Asia and Latin America have settled here. Now, with its quick access to Uptown, it is again undergoing rapid change.

GAME CARD

| CATEGORIES | Center City | West Charlotte | East Charlotte |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
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As you reflect on your experience in different parts of our community, here are some questions to provoke conversation and guide your thinking:

1. What did you notice about resources (grocery stores, banks, parks, bus stops, light rail, greenways, housing) in different areas? How does this compare with your own neighborhood?
2. What did you notice about how different areas have been laid out and designed? Who might have made these decisions? Using what rules?
3. What stories did you create or imagine about the different areas you visited? What story would you tell to others about what you experienced?
4. Did you meet anyone you'd like to know better? Did you learn anything new about yourself?
5. Why did you decide to live where you live? Could you see yourself living in any of the places you visited? Why or why not?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Interested in learning more about the places you've seen? These resources can help you dive deeper:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Quality of Life Explorer Maps
mcmap.org/qol

Charlotte History Toolkit
charlottehistorytoolkit.com

CBI's Things to Do
cbicharlotte.org/things-to-do

TOUR GUIDEBOOK

CENTER CITY



1. Bank of America Stadium - [800 S Mint St, Charlotte, NC 28202](#)

In 1891, the land that would become home to the Carolina Panthers was home to the Good Samaritan Hospital, Charlotte's first for African-American patients. In 1913 it was the site of Center City's only documented lynching, when 19-year-old Joe McNeely was dragged from the hospital and shot to death by a white mob.



2. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center - [600 E 4th St, Charlotte, NC 28202](#)

After Urban Renewal, the Second Ward area that was once Brooklyn became home to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center and other government buildings.



3. Cool Globes - [N Tryon from Trade to 11th St](#)

Throughout Uptown, this art installation speaks to the disproportionate impact of climate change on historically disenfranchised people.



4. Green's Lunch - [309 W 4th St, Charlotte, NC 28202](#)

So much has changed in Uptown Charlotte since Green's opened in 1926, but their famous menu of hot dogs and burgers is unchanged after nearly a century.



5. Mecklenburg Investment Company Building - [229 S Brevard St, Charlotte, NC 28202](#)

Built in 1922, this is one of the last surviving remnants of Brooklyn - a thriving, connected Black neighborhood in the first half of the 20th Century that was broken up during Urban Renewal. Next door, Grace AME Zion Church displays a mural of the church's founders, prominent residents of Brooklyn.



6. Marshall Park - [800 E 3rd St, Charlotte, NC 28202](#)

Parks like Marshall Park and others in Charlotte have played host to both celebrations (like MLK Jr. Day) and protests. Because of its proximity to the Government Center, it has seen protests including the Democratic National Convention, Moral Mondays, the unrest following the shooting of Keith Lamont Scott and the Movement for Black Lives following the murder of George Floyd.



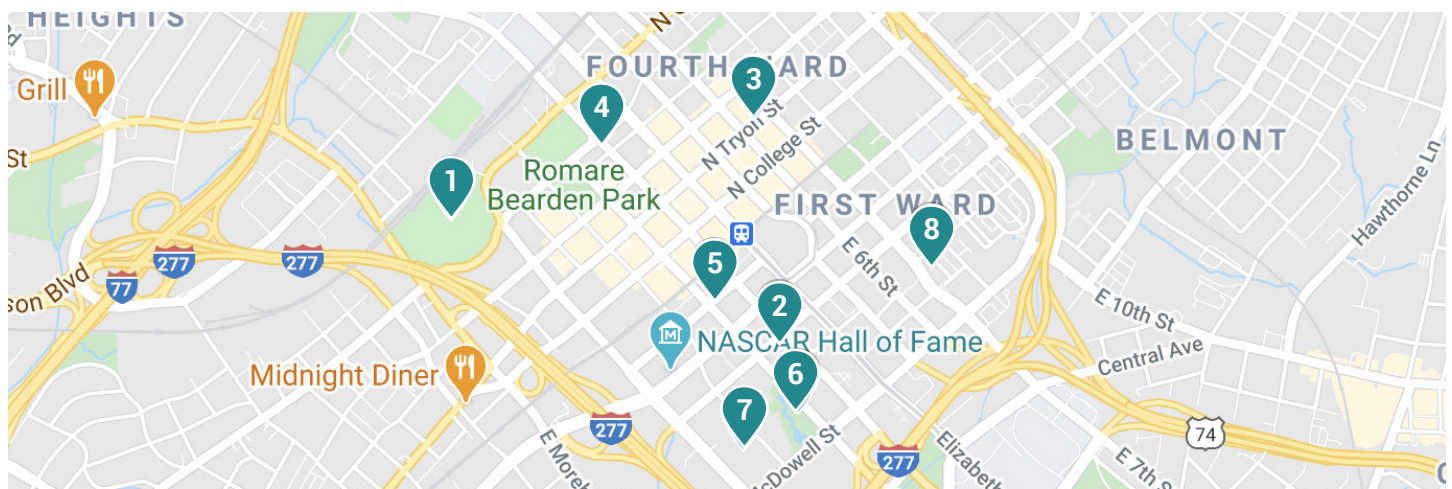
7. Second Ward High School Gymnasium - [710 E M.L.K. Jr. Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28202](#)

Second Ward High School was opened in 1923 as the city's first high school for African American children. Closed in 1969, the school was bulldozed during urban renewal. The gym is now a Mecklenburg County Recreation facility.



8. Shotgun Houses - [7th St, between McDowell and Alexander](#)

These homes represent a common style of dwellings inhabited by Charlotte's working poor residents of different races in the early 20th century. Why do you think they were called "shotgun" houses?



WEST CHARLOTTE



1. Enderly Coffee Company - [2620 Tuckaseegee Rd, Charlotte, NC 28208](#)

This coffee shop creates community (and job opportunities) in the rapidly-changing Enderly Park neighborhood.



2. Excelsior Club - [921 Beatties Ford Rd, Charlotte, NC 28216](#)

This historic social club opened in 1944 and attracted Black professionals, politicians, and musicians throughout the Southeast. Entertainers like Louis Armstrong, Sam Cooke, and James Brown played here.



3. Former Harding High School - [329 N Irwin Ave, Charlotte, NC 28202](#)

Dorothy Counts was the first Black student to attend the formerly all-white school in 1957.



4. LuLu's Maryland-Style Chicken & Seafood - [2400 Tuckaseegee Rd, Charlotte, NC 28208](#)

This new spot in Wesley Heights claims to have the "best and only Maryland-style crab cake, chicken and seafood in Charlotte."



5. McCrorey Heights Neighborhood - [Along Oaklawn Ave](#)

Developed in the 20th century for teachers, preachers and doctors, near Johnson C. Smith University. Home of Julius Chambers, Reginald Hawkins, the DeLaine family, and many others important to that time.



6. Mr. Charles Chicken & Fish - [3100 Statesville Ave, Charlotte, NC 28206](#)

A local staple, Mr. Charles was voted by QCMetro as having the best fried chicken in town!



7. Northwest School of the Arts - [1415 Beatties Ford Rd, Charlotte, NC 28216](#)

Opened in 1938 as the original West Charlotte High School, it is now a nationally-ranked arts magnet school. In 2015 its theater program won Broadway's first Tony Award for Theater Arts Education!



8. Open Kitchen - [1318 W Morehead St, Charlotte, NC 28208](#)

Since 1952, Open Kitchen has drawn guests to the Westside as one of Charlotte's first restaurants serving Italian food.



9. Patterson-Logan Grocery Store - [2515 Booker Ave, Charlotte, NC 28216](#)

A mainstay of Black entrepreneurship in the 1920s, this small store provided foodstuffs and a gathering place for residents of Washington Heights, one of the nation's only Black "streetcar suburbs."



10. Rosa Parks Farmers Market - [2020 Beatties Ford Rd, Charlotte, NC 28216](#)

Open Tuesdays, 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm, the Rosa Parks Farmers Market brings fresh fruits and vegetables to the Greater West Charlotte area.



11. Savona Mill - [500 S Turner Ave, Charlotte, NC 28208](#)

One of the only mills in East or West Charlotte that still survives, in the midst of a changing neighborhood.



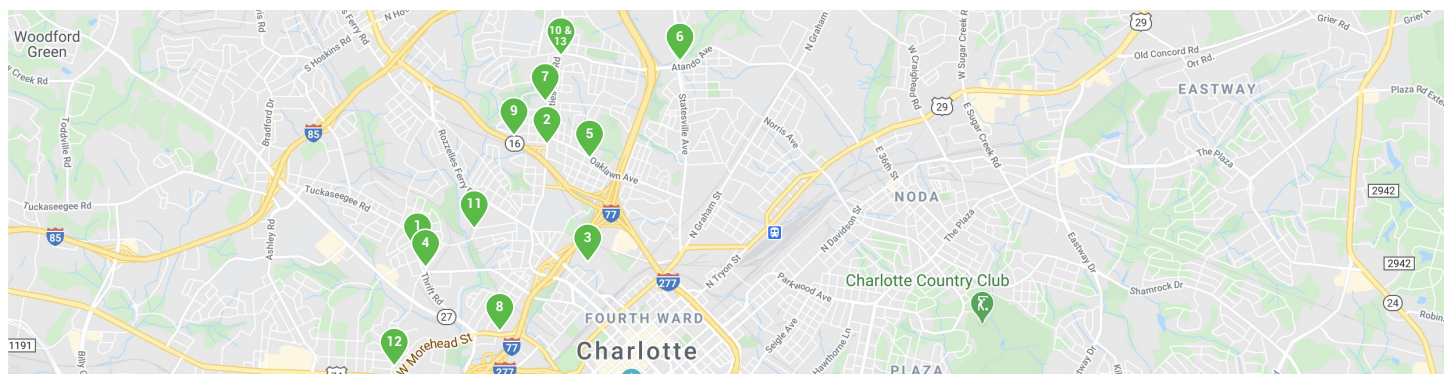
12. The Pauline Tea-Bar Apothecary - [2326 Arty Ave, Charlotte, NC 28208](#)

Delight the senses; Enjoy delicious teas, desserts, scentsational aromatherapy and beautiful local art.



13. West End Mural - [2020 Beatties Ford Rd, Charlotte, NC 28216](#)

This community-funded mural paints a new narrative in a neighborhood that has seen both triumph and tragedy in 2020.



EAST CHARLOTTE



1. Cultural Festivals - charlottecultureguide.com

Cultural festivals frequently bring music, art, shopping and dining opportunities to places like Plaza-Midwood and the former site of Eastland Mall.



2. Eastside Pride Mural - [3718 Central Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28205](#)

Rosalia Torres-Weiner's mural celebrates the Eastside's vibrant cultural diversity.



3. House of Africa - [1215 Thomas Ave, Charlotte, NC 28205](#)

Since 1997 Pape "Pap" Ndiaye from Senegal has presided over this friendly art-filled store, an informal gathering spot for African émigrés as well as non-Africans interested in the Mother Continent. Don't miss the annual Juneteenth street festival here.



4. Islamic Center of Charlotte - [1700 Progress Ln, Charlotte, NC 28205](#)

In a city with prominent churches, the biggest Muslim congregation can be found behind Evergreen Nature Center.



5. International Restaurants - [Central Ave and Albemarle Rd Corridors](#)

Follow your appetite and try a meal from any of the myriad immigrant-owned restaurants, with food from Latin America, Asia, or the Middle East.



6. Landmark Diner - [4429 Central Ave, Charlotte, NC 28205](#)

Greek-American spot known for its breakfast menu and its dessert case. Greek immigrant entrepreneurs played a big role in the growth of Charlotte's restaurant scene during the 20th century.



7. Manolo's Bakery - [4405 Central Ave, Charlotte, NC 28205](#)

Charlotte's longest-running Latino bakery. Started by the Martinez family from Mexico in 1997, it is now led by Manolo Betancur from Colombia. A popular gathering place for eastsiders of every background.



8. Petra's Bar - [1919 Commonwealth Ave, Charlotte, NC 28205](#)

Petra's is a staple of Plaza-Midwood's nightlife, especially for the LGBTQIA+ community.



9. Plaza Midwood Historic District - [The Plaza and Thomas Ave](#)

Laid out in the 1910s, The Plaza with its gracious landscaped median attracted some of Charlotte's leading families, while Thomas Avenue held humbler bungalows.

★ It's a fun area to explore on foot: [Plaza Midwood Historic District Walking Tour](#)



10. Thirsty Beaver Saloon - [1225 Central Ave, Charlotte, NC 28204](#)

A "dive bar" going back to Plaza-Midwood's grittier days, it still stands as high-end apartment buildings have built up around it - quite literally!



11. Time Out Youth - [3800 Monroe Rd, Charlotte, NC 28205](#)

Since 1991, Time Out Youth has offered support, advocacy, and opportunities for personal development and social interaction to LGBTQ youth ages 11 - 20.



12. White Rabbit Bookstore - [920 Central Ave, Charlotte, NC 28204](#)

Originally opened in Dilworth and in its current location since 2010, White Rabbit (with its distinctive mural) has long been a landmark for Charlotte's LGBTQIA+ community.

