

BUILDING BOOM CONTINUES

County's Growth Ranked Highest In State

BY TERRY POPE

There is a map at the Brunswick County Planning Department that's covered with 2,470 red dots. Most of the dots blanket the coastal areas and are heavily concentrated over the South Brunswick Islands.

Each red dot represents a new housing unit added to the county last year. Of the 2,470 red dots, approximately 1,195 are new permanent homes that helped to house an additional 3,415 people last year, making Brunswick County the fastest growing county in the state, according to figures released by the N.C. Department of Commerce.

In the five-year period from April 1, 1980 to April 1, 1985, there has been a 35.6 percent increase in permanent resident population and a 42.4 percent increase in total number of housing units in Brunswick County, reported Vonzenia Singleton, a planner II with the Brunswick County Planning Department. Ms. Singleton compiled the figures using building inspection reports from municipalities and electrical inspections from the county.

"I was staggered by Von's figures," said county planning director John Harvey. "I had no idea the numbers were so high. And this is a conservative estimate of our growth."

In one year alone, Brunswick County grew from 45,110 permanent residents in April 1984, to 48,525 permanent residents in April 1985. No other county in the state grew as rapidly last year.

Throughout Holden Beach, Shallotte, Ocean Isle Beach, Sunset Beach, Calabash and surrounding areas that make up the South Brunswick Islands, significant increases are expected to continue again in 1985, especially with the construction of new high-rise replacement bridges at both Holden and Ocean Isle beaches set for completion in early 1986.

Since the 1980 census, Brunswick County has gained an additional 12,748 residents and is rapidly closing in on the county's 64,300 population figure predicted by the state for the year 1990.

The largest percentage increase in number of housing units last year occurred in the Shallotte township with a 72 percent increase followed by the Lockwood Folly township at 46 percent and Smithville at 33 percent.

Just where is the growth most heavily concentrated? A town-by-town breakdown reveals the story.

Holden Beach

New home construction on Holden Beach steadied in 1984 while adding close to \$7 million to the town's \$68 million tax base. Last year, 112 building permits for new home construction valued at \$6,936,251 were issued compared to 116 permits issued for new homes in 1983.

Single-family dwellings made up all but three of the new residential building permits, which are condominium projects that were still under construction in December along with 52 single-family units.

The number of permanent residents also grew from 289 in April 1984 to 323 in March 1985. The number of permanent resident housing units on the island increased from 121 to 135 units.

Last year, 141 new homes were constructed on the island, giving the town a total of 1,495 housing units.

Ocean Isle Beach

At Ocean Isle, 200 new housing units were added to the island in 1984 while the permanent resident population increased from 402 persons to 487. The number of permanent resident homes also increased from 146 to 177.

Last year, 108 building permits were issued for new construction, 103 for single-family units and three multi-family developments that added an estimated valuation increase of \$9,623,102 to the town's \$75 million tax base. The town collected \$41,698 in

permit fees last year.

Building permits show that 103 single-family and 96 multi-family units were added to the town last year. Town officials also continued to push forward in 1984 with their \$4.16 million sewer system by collecting \$13,000 in sewer impact fees from new home builders.

Sunset Beach

At Sunset Beach, 115 building permits for new home construction were issued including 95 within the town limits and 20 within the town's extraterritorial zone.

"It's averaging about \$60,000 in valuation per unit," said Town Manager Wallace Martin.

In the first three months of 1985, the town issued 33 building permits for new construction, or 20 for homes within the town limits and 13 within the extraterritorial zone, Martin said.

Through changes in the town's zoning ordinance, many areas zoned mainland residential were opened to multi-family development last year. A multi-million golf course and housing development is also being constructed along N.C. 179 and bordering Oyster Bay.

Calabash

In 1984, Calabash issued 105 building permits for new construction for an estimated \$5.9 million in valuation, reported Town Clerk Janet Thomas.

Of those permits, 94 were for single-family units, seven for commercial buildings and four for additions to commercial businesses. Fifteen mobile home permits were also issued last year.

Within the town limits itself, permits for five new homes, one commercial building and three mobile homes were also issued adding \$368,500 to the town's \$6.2 million tax base.

Six new housing units were added to Calabash last year, giving the town a total of 90. Of those, 70 are permanent residents.

Ten new permanent residents moved into the town limits last year, increasing the population from 156 to 166, according to figures from the county planning department.

Shallotte

Figures from Shallotte's growth from March 1984 to April 1985 are staggering. Although the town issued just nine commercial building permits during the period, the total estimated valuation of the projects exceed \$8.3 million.

The construction of a \$2,013,944 shopping center (Coastal Plaza) south on U.S. 17 topped the list of commercial projects added since last March. A permit for another shopping center (Twin Creek Plaza), not yet under construction, between U.S. 17 and Smith Drive in Shallotte added another \$1.2 million in valuation.

Other listings included a Kentucky Fried Chicken permit for \$150,000 in valuation and \$300,000 in valuation for the construction of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Nineteen building permits for new homes were also issued by the town during the period for a total estimated valuation of \$2,246,450. Included among those projects is a \$700,000 housing development by JAG Inc. on N.C. 130.

Building permits for additions or alterations added another \$100,500 to the town's \$24.5 million tax base. Last year, the town's tax base jumped by \$843,799, or from \$23.7 million to \$24.5 million. Five mobile home permits were also issued by the town for total valuation of \$58,500.

Much of the new home construction permits issued were for developments in the Brierwood Estates subdivision south on N.C. 179.

According to the planning department's figures, Shallotte gained 12 housing units last year and 31 new permanent residents, from 720 to 751 persons.

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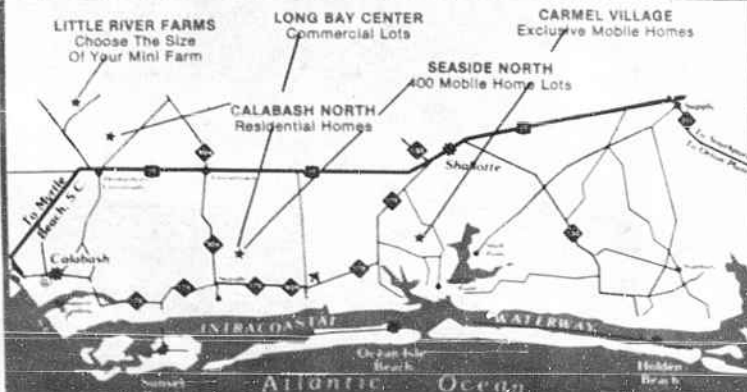
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