

## CHAPTER 4:

## HOUSING

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the current composition of housing, housing demand, land availability, and resale market information for Storey County.

### 4.1 Composition of Housing

As reported by the County Assessor in 1989, there were a total of 1,019 housing units in Storey County (Table 4.1). Slightly over 50% of the county's housing units are classified as "Single Family Detached", the traditional single family home. It is significant that more than one third of Storey County's housing units are "Mobile Homes". Of the 1,019 existing housing units in Storey County, 992 housing units (97%) were occupied in 1989 which resulted in a persons per household ratio of 2.5.

### 4.2 Housing Demand

Total housing demand is based on population projections prepared by the Nevada State Demographer. Assuming the persons per household remains constant at 2.5 for the next ten years, the total number of additional housing units required to meet forecasted population growth is 648 units (Table 4.2). A housing unit forecast by type of unit has been projected through the year 2000 (Table 4.3). To a large extent local government officials can influence the type of housing development within their jurisdiction. Policy decisions regarding the type of housing units desired must be considered in light of the following issues:

1. Future population and economic growth in the county.
2. Future population and economic growth in the surrounding counties.
3. Goals established by local planning agencies and government entities.
4. Preservation of historical and natural resources.
5. Taxation of Real Property (Mobile Homes).\*

\*With regards to the taxation of real property, Nevada law (NRS 361.244) stipulates that a mobile home is eligible to become real property if the running gear is removed and the mobile home becomes permanently affixed to the land; and an affidavit of conversion has been signed by the owner, verified and filed with the appropriate agencies. Typically, a significant number of manufactured housing units are not taxed as real property. As a result, County residents who are owners of such units receive many of the same services as other property owners, but they do not have to pay property taxes on the mobile home.

### 4.3 Growth Prospects

Currently no future growth prospects have been identified in Storey County that would accelerate the County's population growth beyond the expected rate. Industrial growth along Highway 50 and Interstate 80, and in-migration from Washoe County, Carson City, and the State of California could increase the rate of population growth over the forecasts prepared by the State Demographer. Furthermore, as Washoe County and Carson City continue to grow, Storey County will play a larger role as a bedroom community. As a result the total number of housing unit demand may well exceed 648. One of the major constraint to growth is the availability of water.

### 4.4 Affordable Housing Demand

For the anticipated growth of Storey County adequate housing must include "affordable housing". Affordable housing units can be defined as a single family, multiple family, or mobile home unit which can be purchased or rented by a household with an income level at or below 50% of Storey County's median household income, assuming that no more than 20% of the household income is spent on housing. Of the 648 additional housing units demanded between 1990 and the year 2000, 205 of the 648 housing units must be considered affordable.

In 1989 the maximum affordable housing purchase price in Storey County was calculated to be \$42,500 with a maximum affordable rental rate of \$423 a month. In 1989, approximately 32% of households had a level of income at or below 50% of the area's median household income.

Affordable housing is often a concern to industries considering expanding or developing new facilities in an area. Gaming, retail trade, and certain sectors of the manufacturing and service industries traditionally pay low wages in Nevada. As such, the availability of affordable housing may influence future location or expansion decisions.

Affordable housing is always a concern with local residents, especially with young families and elderly persons. There are a number of federal and state agencies which provide housing assistance to low income individuals or households such as USDA Farmers Home Administration, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Nevada Rural Housing Authority, and the Nevada Housing Division, among others.

## 4.5 Land Inventory

The ability of Storey County to accommodate future growth is dependent upon available land suited for residential development. The primary developing regions are: Virginia City/Gold Hill, Mark Twain, Virginia Highlands and the River District. Currently, there are a number of land use codes which designate vacant land listed on the 1990-91 Storey County tax role. For purposes of this report, only vacant land having a land use code of 10, 11, 12, and 13 appear in the land inventory (Table 4.4). The following definitions correspond to the land use codes appearing in the tax role.

- 10: Vacant Unknown\*
- 11: Under Development
- 12: Vacant Single Family
- 13: Vacant Multi-residential

\*Vacant Unknown: Under current Storey County Code these parcels are zoned (F) Forestry and approved for one single family dwelling with the approval of a Special Use Permit.

There are approximately 1,415 parcels of land designated as vacant single family. A majority of such parcels are located in Virginia City, Gold Hill, Virginia Highlands, and Mark Twain. No vacant single family parcels were identified in the Truckee River Area. There are approximately 1,119 parcels of land which are designated "Vacant Unknown". Much of this land has been subdivided into parcels ranging in size from 10 to 40 acres and are generally unimproved. Virginia City and to a limited extent, Gold Hill are the only areas in Storey County which have sewer and water services. In the Lockwood area the Canyon General Improvement District (G.I.D.) has a sewer and water service with capacity to service 403 residents. As of 1993 there are 203 vacant lots available for single family dwelling to be serviced by the G.I.D. Outside these areas property owners are dependent upon well and septic systems.

Storey County land inventory suggests there are enough parcels of land to support growth through the year 2000. Much of the Vacant Unknown land is intended for residential use. Converting parcels of land from Vacant Unknown to Vacant Single Family will depend upon access to the land, water availability, suitability of the land for development, and required services. Future consideration should be made for households who earn relatively low wages by designating additional parcels of land for the development of multi-residential housing units. Based upon the availability of vacant land and accessibility, future growth can be expected to be limited to the four communities. However, there is a large amount of land in the north-central section of the county which is in private ownership and has considerable development potential.

## 4.6 Resale Market

Tables 4.5 and 4.6 provide information on land and residential resales in Storey County during 1989-90. In Virginia City and Gold Hill the average parcels sold for less than \$30,000 with an average price per square foot of \$1.16 in Virginia City and \$.64 in Gold Hill. Parcels in the

Virginia Highlands, which generally ranged in size from one acre to one and a half acres, and sold for \$25,000 or less, had an average price per acre of \$7,706. Most of the available parcels in the Virginia Highlands ranged in size from ten acres to fifteen acres.

Most residential housing units in Storey County sold for more than \$55,000. The average price for homes in Storey County was \$57/sqft. During the 4th quarter of 1989, residential detached housing units in the City of Sparks averaged \$54/sqft. to \$65/sqft. and the Reno average was from \$61/sqft to \$79.60/sqft.

Most mobile home resales occurred in the Mark Twain area. The average sale price was \$28,416.

**HOUSING COMPOSITION**  
**Storey County, 1989**  
**Table 4.1**

<b>TYPE OF UNIT</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Single Family Detached	515	50.5%
Single Family Attached	16	1.5%
Multi-Family 126	12.4%	
Agri. Residential	12	1.2%
Mobile Homes	350	34.4%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Office of the Nevada State Demographer

**HOUSING UNIT FORECAST**  
**Storey County, 1989-2000**  
**Table 4.2**

Year	Population	No. of Households	Total Units Required	Affordable Units Req'd.
1989	2,480	992		
1990	2,526	1,068	76	24
1991	2,860	1,144	76	24
1992	3,040	1,216	72	23
1993	3,210	1,284	68	22
1994	3,380	1,352	68	22
1995	3,560	1,424	72	23
2000+	4,100	1,640	216	67
		<b>TOTAL</b>	648	205

\*Estimate based on Historical Growth Rate.  
Source: Population figures from Nevada State Demographer.

**HOUSING UNIT FORECAST BY TYPE OF UNIT**  
**Storey County, 1990-2000**  
**Table 4.3**

Year	Single Family Detached	Single Family Attached	Mobile Homes	Ag. Residential	Total Units Required	Affordable Units Required
1990	38	1	26	1	66	24
1991	38	1	26	1	66	24
1992	36	1	25	1	63	23
1993	34	1	23	1	59	22
1994	34	1	23	1	59	22
1995	36	1	25	1	63	23
2000	109	3	74	3	189	67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>205</b>

**VACANT RESIDENTIAL LAND PARCEL INVENTORY**  
**Storey County, 1993-94**                      **Table 4.4**

<b>Total Unit Type</b>	<b>Virginia City</b>	<b>Gold Hill</b>	<b>Virginia Highlands</b>	<b>Sunny Hill Ranchos</b>	<b>Mark Twain</b>	<b>River Dist.</b>	<b>Rainbow Bend</b>	<b>Total</b>
Vacant Unknown	4	38	738	154	0	460	0	1394
Underdeveloped	11	0	20	0	10	5	0	46
Single Family	325	158	718	0	165	203	203	1569
Multi-residential	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

## LAND RESALES

### Storey County, 1990      Table 4.5

Price	Virginia City	Gold Hill	Virginia Highlands	Mark Twain	River District	TOTAL
<\$10,000	3	2	15	2	0	22
\$10,000 - \$14,999	1	1	15	1	0	18
\$15,000 - \$19,999	1	0	1 (2)*	0	0	3
\$20,000 - \$24,999	1	0	1 (2)*	0	0	6
\$25,000 - \$29,999	0	0	0	0	0	10
\$30,000 - \$34,999	0	0	0	0	0	5
\$35,000 - \$39,999	1	0	1 (3)	0	0	3
\$40,000 - \$44,999	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$45,000 - \$49,999	0	0	0	0	0	2
\$50,000 - +	0	0	0	0	0	2

Price/Unit area                      \$1.16 sq. ft.   \$ .64 sq. ft.   \$7706/acre   \$2758/acre

Source: Storey County Assessor's Office  
 (\*) indicates number of parcels.

## RESIDENTIAL UNIT RESALES

### Storey County, 1990      Table 4.6

Price	Virginia City	Gold Hill	Virginia Highlands	Mark Twain	River District	TOTAL
<\$25,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$25,000 - \$34,999	1	0	0	0	0	1
\$35,000 - \$44,999	1	0	1	0	0	1
\$45,000 - \$54,999	0	0	0	1	0	3
\$55,000 - \$64,999	2	2	0	0	0	2
\$65,000 - \$74,999	0	0	0	1	0	1
\$75,000 - \$84,999	1	0	0	1	0	2
\$85,000 - \$94,999	2	0	2	0	0	4
\$95,000 - \$104,999	1	0	3	0	0	4
\$105,000 - \$114,999	1	1	1	0	0	3
\$115,000 - \$124,999	0	2	3	0	0	5
\$124,000 - \$134,999	0	0	2	0	0	2
\$135,000 - \$144,999	0	0	2	0	0	2
\$145,000 - \$174,000	0	0	4	0	0	4
\$175,000 - +	1	0	0	0	1	2

Ave. Price/sq. ft.                      \$38.91      \$49.93      \$69.17      \$49.99      n/a      \$57.00

Source: Storey County Assessor's Office.