

Home construction booming in Hobbs

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NEWS-SUN

If the city of Hobbs is going to reach a population of 35,000 by 2020 as foretold in an economic report issued early last year, more than a few homes need to be built on a yearly basis.

The current population of Hobbs is about 30,000, so that means quite a few homes need to be built in the next 15 years. If three new residents were to live in each new home, roughly 111 new homes would have to be built each year to accommodate all 5,000 new residents.

That's a lot of homes in a community with a half dozen or so contractors, but maybe not considering the total might include apartments or subdivisions by new developers bringing their own contractors from outside Hobbs.

With a 100-lot complex going up near Zia Park Race Track and the 60-unit Willow Bend Villas being constructed at Marland and Sanger, for example, local contractors might feel less harried. And while the residential construction market may not yet be on par with 111 homes annually, the market is getting busier — much busier compared to years past.

In 2004, 47 new homes broke ground in Hobbs compared to 28 in 2003 and 12 in 2002.

In 2004, the total value of new homes was \$8.1 million compared to \$4.4 million in 2003 and \$1.8 million in 2002.

Hobbs building inspector Manny Marquez said the residential construction market is on track for another impressive year.

"I see that trend already happening with the permits we have going right now," Marquez said. "It's starting to escalate on the permits we have issued for residential and commercial (construction). A lot of people are spending more on remodeling too, not only on commercial but residential."

What's more, some contractors have found the housing boom in Hobbs has spread elsewhere.

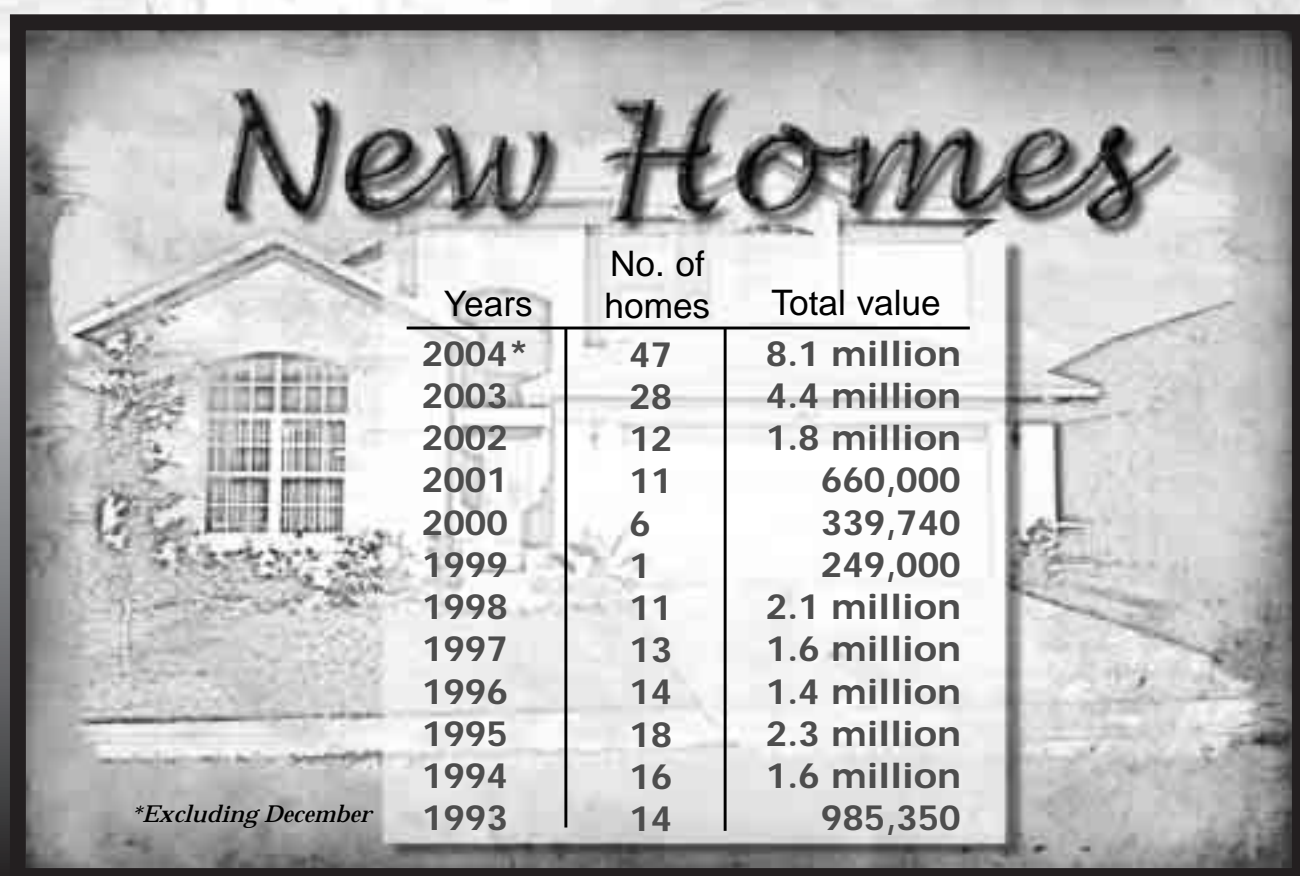
Tony Garcia of Garcia and Son just finished a speculation, or spec, home on 1302 W. Ave. L in Lovington. A spec home is a property that has been built before a buyer has been found, whereas a custom home is sold before it's been built.

Meanwhile, Pam and Zac Zimmerman are preparing to begin construction on one standard home and three garden homes on Birch Avenue in Lovington and Cecil Halsell is planning three town homes in Lovington.

Garcia, who would like to build more Lovington homes in the future after selling his current project, estimated it's been 10 years since a spec home was built in Lovington.

Donny Shaw of Shaw Ventures is currently working on three custom homes — 2105 Catalpa, behind Green Meadows Lake in Hobbs; 1304 W. Ave. J in Lovington; and County Road 301 in Seminole.

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