

7,703 sites ready for homes

Town's population up 38% since 2000, continues to build.

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FISHERS -- Spring thaw is nearing, and bulldozers are already breaking ground on thousands of new home sites for future residents.

New developments are springing up throughout town, but a concentration sits along Olio Road. Construction on Avalon and Saxony is under way north of 126th Street, and more land development has begun southeast of the mouth of Geist Reservoir.

Development is ready to go on 7,703 home sites on more than 2,600 acres, according to Interim Town Manager Jim Culotta, but developers say a few of those homes are already occupied, others will be built this year and some sites won't have a home for up to 10 years.

Fishers had already grown 38 percent to 52,390 between censuses in April 2000 and November 2003.

Boomerang Development, owned by Corby D. Thompson, has started five developments east of Cumberland Road -- Sedona, Tanglewood, The Boulders, Westminster of Fishers and Harrison Pointe -- with 1,200 single-family homes from \$160,000-\$600,000.

Thompson is Fishers Chamber of Commerce's board chairman and a town resident. He said the once-booming new-home market evened out in the last several years and may be declining slightly, but Fishers keeps attracting new-home buyers.

"It's not true that if you build it, they will come," he said. "Fishers has a lot to do with it."

He said the parks system, the community spirit, easy access to Indianapolis, and the high quality of Hamilton Southeastern Schools make the town a good place to live.

"We're fostering a creative community and volunteers are coming up with new ideas," he said. "We've started an arts council, we'll have a Renaissance festival this year and we have a popular summer concert series."

Work is also continuing on two large developments on Olio Road north of Hamilton Southeastern High School.

- Saxony straddles Interstate 69 at Exit 10 -- it's the Verizon Wireless Music Center exit -- and includes retail, industrial, office space, parks and homes on 725 acres in Noblesville and Fishers. While Saxony will have commercial developments in both municipalities, the homes will be in Fishers.

Ohio-based Republic Development is in charge of the project. Rick Arnos, Republic's president, said up to 2,000 single-family and multifamily homes will be built in the next 10 years. He said the school district, easy access to I-69, and the affluence of people living here make it a good place to build.

Development is under way on houses at \$220,000-\$1 million each and townhomes at \$135,000-\$300,000 each. He said 60 homes are already occupied.

- Just across Olio Road, work is under way on Avalon. Pulte Homes, Trinity and Beazer are building about 1,500 homes in the development. Avalon includes 50 acres of common area, lakes and walking trails. Several sections are already open and more are being added.

600 ACRES WITH 1,100 HOMES

Miles south from Avalon and Saxony on Olio Road, work has begun at Southeast Fishers. It's a \$425-million, 600-acre development south of 104th Street and east of Olio Road.

Southeast of the point where Fall Creek becomes the reservoir, five subdivisions will hold 1,100 homes at \$200,000-\$800,000 each, said Steve Hardin, a lawyer with the Bingham McHale firm in Noblesville. He represents the builders on planning and zoning issues.

The development will also include Geist Crossing, 18 acres with retail shops and offices located at 96th Street and Olio Road.

Hardin said the five housing developments of Southeast Fishers -- Brooks Park, Westbrook, Cardinal Pointe, Watercolors, Timberstone and Strongbow Gate -- would start in spring.

He said Watercolors, Cardinal Pointe and portions of Brooks Park and Timberstone will be for two key demographics that marketers are hoping to attract: empty nesters and active adults without children. He said the homeowners' association would handle lawn maintenance and snow removal, services that attract a demographic looking to relax and enjoy life more.

"The aging of baby boomers creates a demand," he said. "Grandparents would like to live near their kids or grandkids, and a growing number of young professionals (without children) would like to live in Fishers."