



HOUSING

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CHAPTER 3 – HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Home ownership and affordability have long been recognized as one of the foundations of social stability. Well-designed, attractive, safe and affordable housing choices are important to the health of a community. Housing variety is one aspect of community character that helps establish a connection between residents and their neighborhoods.

This chapter provides a framework to address the diverse housing needs of all residents of Caroline County. The County's ordinances, policies and procedures are intended to ensure the provision and maintenance of adequate and safe housing. Housing needs are expressed in terms of affordability, variety, quality, quantity, location and amenities.

The County desires to promote clean, safe and attractive neighborhoods and eliminate substandard housing. The Housing Plan recognizes that the communities and neighborhoods in which people want to live, are clean and attractive; free from excessive traffic and noise pollution; and provide a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities.



Pendleton Townhouses

To accomplish the goals of this plan, the objectives and policies are designed to encourage the construction of housing that meets the needs of Caroline County's residents, including families, first time owners, and older residents who are looking for new residences that will meet their needs in light of changing employment and family dynamics. The Plan recognizes that a variety of housing types must be available to all residents. Finally, the Plan recommends the development of a program and/or mechanism to achieve safe, clean and affordable housing for all segments of the County's population.

HOUSING DEMOGRAPHICS

HOUSING INVENTORY & HOUSING INCOME

The availability of safe and affordable housing is an important determinant of the quality of life and vitality of a community. The cost and variety of new residential units should be compatible with the income of the County's workforce to ensure that those who wish to live in the County are able to find housing in the County. Increased commute distances and times have a negative impact on the environment, which lowers the quality of life of these residents and places more stress on the transportation network.

While residents of the County have been fortunate in that the value of their houses and properties has generally increased. However, this increased cost of housing has resulted in a situation where many working individuals cannot find housing in Caroline County. This has been most clearly seen in the decrease in the availability of "workforce housing".

Based on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) recommendation, an individual or family should not use more than 30% of its household income on housing. The Urban Land Institute (ULI) defines "workforce housing" as housing for households making between 60 and 120 percent of the area median income. To determine whether there is an adequate supply of workforce housing in the County, it is appropriate to apply HUD's recommendation to the County's median household income and utilize a target of no more than 80% of the median household income.

HOUSING LOCATION



Ladysmith Village

The location of new housing construction influences the County's ability to provide public services, the transportation network, the amount of land available for agriculture, and the rural and scenic character of the County. One only has to look to neighboring jurisdictions for examples of development policies that have had tremendous impacts on service delivery and costs.

Recognizing the costs of traditional rural development patterns, the County began designating growth areas as the most appropriate areas for growth to occur in 1987. However, the

County did not start developing its utility system until the late 80's, relying on private utility systems to provide service. Between 1980 and 1990, an average of 53.5% of the certificates of occupancy issued for new dwelling units were within designated growth areas. This percentage increased only slightly to 54.5% between 1990 and 2000. However, with the availability of public utilities to all of the primary growth areas, the percentage of housing units built in those areas dramatically increased to 69% between 2000 and 2007.

With the adoption of the Carmel Church and Ladysmith Area Plans, and the approval of developments within those areas, the County is providing for future growth within those specific areas. Since the 2000 Census, 1,067 lots have been zoned for residential development in the Carmel Church area, 633 single-family detached, 372 townhouses, and 62 age restricted. Of this amount, 290 have been built. In Ladysmith, 6,678 lots have been zoned for residential development, of which, 175 have been built.

While the planning policy is to direct development to designated growth areas, it must be recognized that not all residents desire to live on smaller lots or in housing units that are typical of those areas. A certain percentage of the population will want to live on larger parcels of land in rural areas or in large lot subdivisions. As previously stated, one of the objectives of this plan to provide for a variety of housing needs, including those needing or wanting to live in higher density areas.

HOUSING SUPPLY

There exists a need for housing variety and choice beyond traditional owner-occupied single family dwellings. This type of variety is most often utilized by younger individuals who are new to the workforce, those in transition between owner-occupied housing, those with limited incomes or who are unable to secure the credit necessary to purchase a house, and older residents who are looking for housing with significantly less maintenance and other responsibilities that accompany owner-occupied housing.

As expected, the predominant dwelling type in Caroline County is the single-family detached house, representing 83.7% of all housing units. Manufactured homes are the second largest housing component, representing 12.2% of the units.

GROWTH OF DEVELOPABLE RESIDENTIAL LOTS

As discussed in Chapter One, neighboring counties north of Caroline are experiencing phenomenal growth rates. Three of these neighbors, King George (79th), Spotsylvania (69th) and Stafford (62nd), are identified by the US Census in the 100 fastest growing communities. As growth continues to expand towards Caroline, the County will continue to face unprecedented development pressures.

As is evident by the residential land use analysis in Chapter 8, the current number of zoned lots far exceeds the anticipated population levels until 2030 and beyond, the current supply of developable lots could support an annual population growth rate of 6.5%.

This supply of by-right lots suggests that the County does not necessarily need to entertain additional rezoning amendments to accommodate more residential lots. However, the County building lot supply may be affected by the following factors:

Environmental: A parcel may not be developable if it is located in an environmentally sensitive area. For example, some properties may be located in wetland areas or floodplain and may not be developed.

Cultural: A parcel may not be buildable if it cannot meet setbacks. Section 15.2-2309 of the Virginia Code permits zoning variances from the Board of Zoning Appeals under certain circumstances.

Location: In order to reduce housing pressures in the rural areas and to support higher density in the growth areas, the County may wish to discourage development in certain areas by providing incentives.

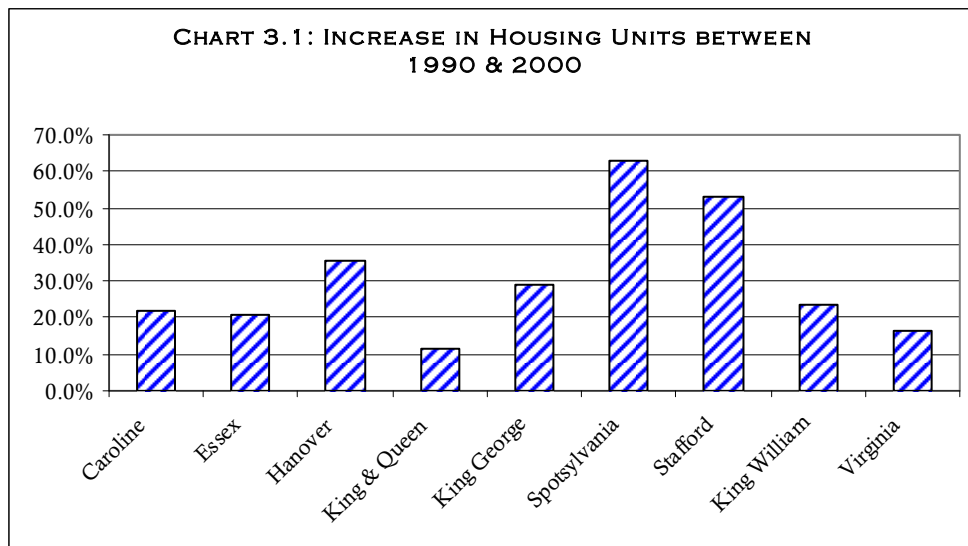
Choice: The inventory of available lots is limited to five or six major projects, which may not provide adequate choice to prospective homeowners. These projects may not meet the needs of certain segments of the population, such as those 55 and older.

Amenities: The approved projects may not adequately provide for necessary or desirable amenities and facilities.

HOUSING QUANTITY

Between 1990 and 2000, growth pressures influenced the housing stock both in terms of quantity and type. Caroline County housing stock grew 21.9% during this period. While this level is significantly less than Caroline's northern neighbors and Hanover, it is much more than its rural neighbors such as Essex and King & Queen Counties.

Virginia, by comparison, grew only 16.3% during the same period of time. While the County's housing stock grew less than the GWRC region as a whole, the growth rate exceeded that of the Commonwealth of Virginia by 1.34 times. Chart 3.1 reflects these regional and state trends.



EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

With expansive land areas and more agricultural types of industries, rural counties tend to develop more single family detached homes while urbanizing counties will develop more multi family or townhouse type housing. As the price of land increases, these types of homes permit more affordable alternatives for various lifestyles.

Percentage wise, Caroline's northern neighbors developed more multi-family structures between 2000 and 2006, with some increasing their multi-family housing stock 91.7% between 1990 and 2000. Conversely, the percentage of multi-family units built in Caroline County was much less, as shown in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1: PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN HOUSING TYPE 2000-2006

| | SFD | Duplex | 3-4 Units | 5+ Units | Manufactured Housing | Total Units |
|----------------|-------|--------|-----------|----------|----------------------|-------------|
| Caroline | 33.7% | 13.3% | 24.3% | 0.0% | 1.1% | 29.1% |
| King George | 42.3% | 21.6% | 2.1% | 12.3% | 2.4% | 34.3% |
| Spotsylvania | 36.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 48.8% | 1.1% | 34.0% |
| Stafford | 33.9% | 102.0% | 0.9% | 91.7% | 0.0% | 35.7% |
| Fredericksburg | 25.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 12.6% |
| GWRC | 35.0% | 22.0% | 2.5% | 34.0% | 1.0% | 32.0% |

As a result, Caroline County is currently carrying a larger percentage of single-family detached housing when compared to other localities. However, it should be noted that compared to its other neighbors to the north, the actual number single-family detached homes is relatively small.

TABLE 3.2: 2007 ESTIMATED HOUSING STOCK

| | SFD | Duplexes | 3-4 Unit Structure | 5+ Unit Structure | Manufactured House | Total Units |
|----------------|--------|----------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Caroline | 10,103 | 51 | 138 | 86 | 1,100 | 11,478 |
| King George | 7,558 | 124 | 191 | 394 | 890 | 9,157 |
| Spotsylvania | 39,257 | 111 | 266 | 2,555 | 2,146 | 44,675* |
| Stafford | 36,798 | 301 | 443 | 3,622 | 1,441 | 42,605* |
| Fredericksburg | 5,486 | 410 | 405 | 3,655 | 52 | 10,008 |
| GWRC | 99,202 | 997 | 1,443 | 10,312 | 5,969 | 117,923 |

*2006 ACS total housing stock estimate for Spotsylvania = 43,544 (w/ 4.97% vacant) 2006 ACS total house stock est. Stafford 41,791 (w/ 4.9% vacant)

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

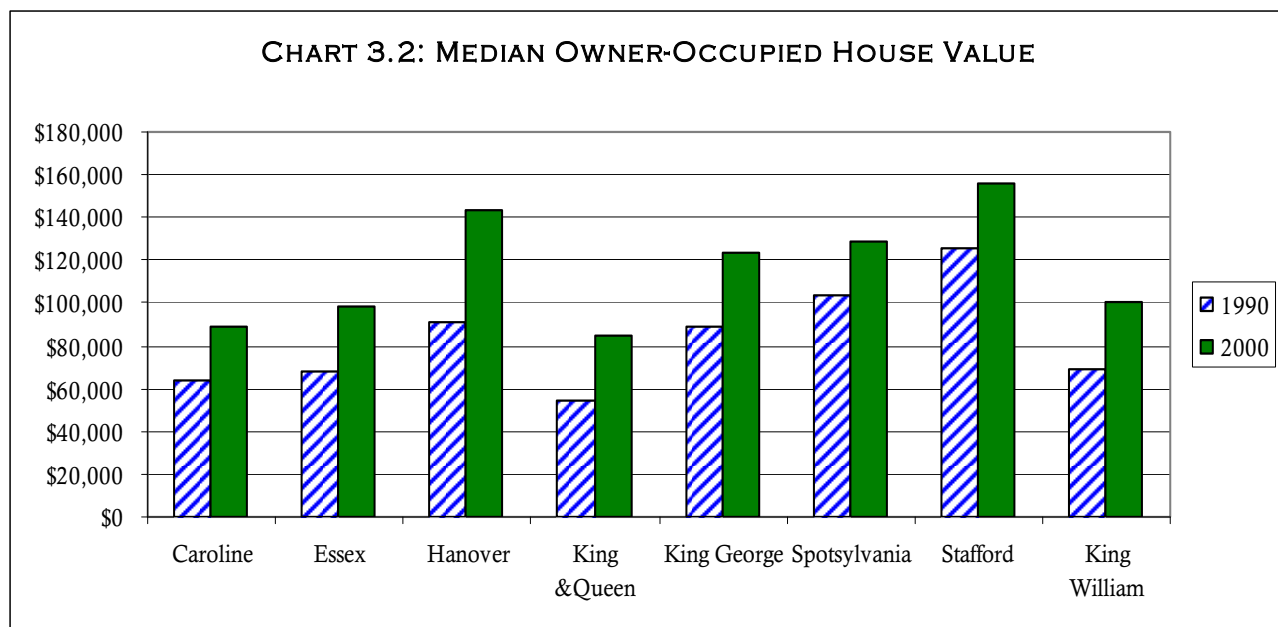
As Caroline County urbanizes, maintaining an adequate supply of affordable housing will be a challenge. As part of the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC), Caroline is in the region experiencing the fastest growing population in the Commonwealth.

There are two measures of housing affordability that indicate a household's ability to purchase a house. The first measure is the percentage of monthly income spent on household costs. Housing is considered affordable when the household costs are not more than 30% of the monthly income. The 2000 Census indicated 23% of the County's owner-occupied households spent more than 30% of their monthly income on housing costs, with a median monthly mortgage of \$875. The 2000 Census also indicates that the median monthly rent was \$587 and that 46.5% of renter-occupied households spent more than 30% of their monthly income on rent.

For owner-occupied housing, a second measure of affordability is a purchase price that does not exceed three times a household's annual income. The 2000 Census shows that the median family income was \$39,845 and the median house value was \$88,900. This results in a house value of 2.3 times annual income, indicating that the housing stock generally met this affordability standard. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates the 2007 median income as \$48,096. The median value of an owner-occupied house was estimated to be \$179,599 for 2007, resulting in a house value to annual income ratio of 3.7:1.

In December 2007, the GWRC Board created an Affordable Housing Task Force comprised of representatives from various community housing non-profit organizations and the business sector. The task force began meeting on a bi-weekly basis in February 2008 and issued a preliminary report for consideration to the Board and its local governments.

The Code of Virginia defines affordable housing as *"housing that is affordable to households with incomes at or below the area median income, provided that the occupant pays no more than thirty percent of his gross income for gross housing costs, including utilities"*. For the purpose of administering affordable dwelling unit ordinances authorized by this chapter, local governments may establish individual definitions of affordable housing and affordable dwelling units including determination of the appropriate percent of area median income and percent of gross income.



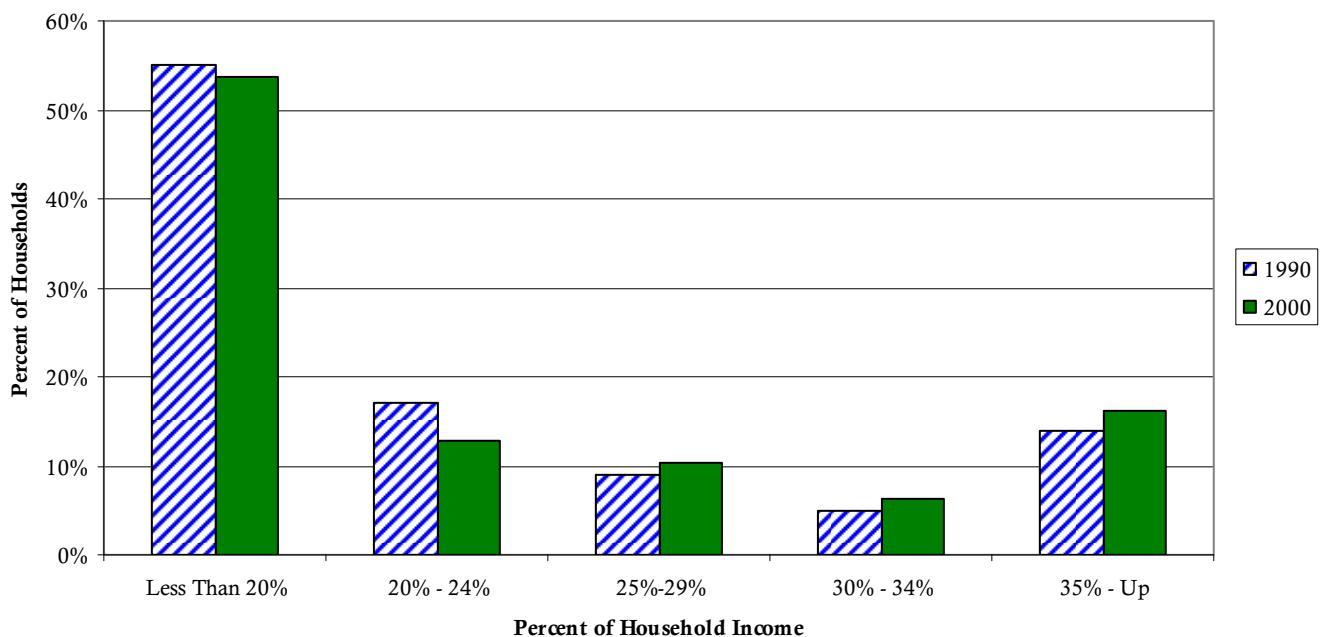
As Chart 3.2 shows, the median value of owner-occupied houses in the area increased between 1990 and 2000, as much as 57%. In Caroline County, the house price increased just over 38% to a median value of \$88,900. As median house values increase, the affordability can decrease if household incomes are not increasing at the same pace.

OWNER-OCCUPIED AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In Virginia, affordable housing of selected monthly owner costs as a percent of household incomes decreased by 0.06% between 1990 and 2000 with 20.36% of owners paying more than 30% of their household income in 1990 and 20.3% of owners paying more than 30% of their household income in 2000.

The increases in the percentage of monthly owner costs as a percent of household income are reflective of the regional changes. Because of its rapid growth, the GWRC area saw a dramatic drop in affordable housing levels. Caroline County saw an increase of 3.4% in the number of households paying more than one third of their monthly income on housing expenses between 1990 and 2000. Chart 3.3 shows the percent of households in the County and the changes in how much of the monthly household income must be used for housing.

CHART 3.3: HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IN CAROLINE COUNTY



RENTER-OCCUPIED AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In Virginia, affordable housing for renters decreased by 6.8% between 1990 and 2000, while in Caroline County it decreased by 13.7%.

Neighboring jurisdictions provide two different scenarios of affordable housing. Rural, stable counties such as King George, King & Queen and Essex maintained little or moderate changes of affordable housing. Caroline's more urbanized neighbors, such as Stafford and King William Counties, experienced nearly a 20% and 51% drop in affordable housing, respectively.

QUALITY OF HOUSING

Housing quality can be very subjective and therefore, difficult to quantify. For example, certain traits may be desired by certain segments of the population, but deemed unimportant by other segments. In addition, technology, location (rural vs. urban) and population needs (age, lifestyle, etc) will modify the importance of certain characteristics. As a result, selecting good housing barometers should be grounded in the basic housing and living needs to sleep, rest, eat, and have proper sanitation. The following provides six indicators that attempt to read the current trends of housing quality in the County.

INDOOR PLUMBING

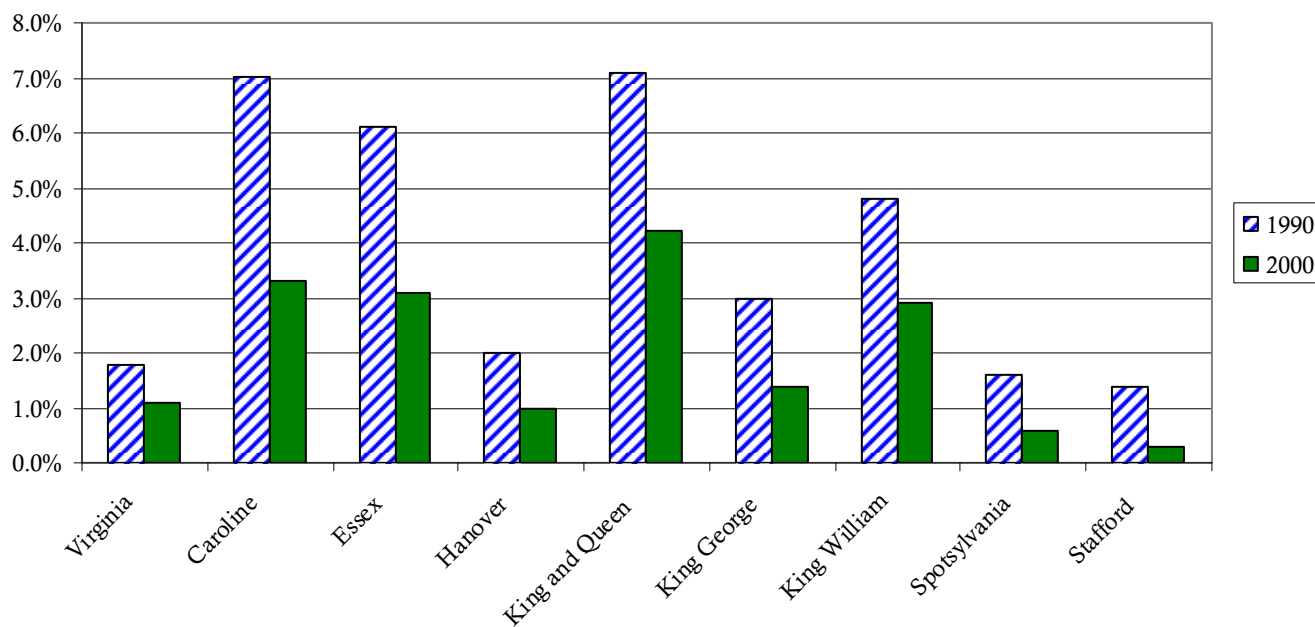
Quantifying the number of homes that lack indoor plumbing is a common standard used in determining housing stock quality. The Commonwealth has made a concerted effort to upgrade some of dwellings using privies and lacking running water through the Indoor Plumbing Program. During the 1990s, this program upgraded approximately 2,600 occupied units. Providing indoor plumbing has many public health benefits such as improved sanitation, waste removal, drinking water, reducing pollutant exposures to public and private well sources and convenience.

Complete plumbing facilities are defined as the combination of a flush toilet, a bathtub, shower, or both, and both hot and cold piped, running water. Like kitchen facilities, plumbing facilities must be located within the housing unit, although not necessarily in the same room. Thus, housing units lacking running water or sharing a bathroom with another housing unit would not be considered to have complete plumbing facilities.

Between 1990 and 2000, Virginia reduced the percent of units lacking indoor plumbing from 1.8% to 1.1% of the housing stock. In Caroline County, the percent of dwellings lacking indoor plumbing dropped from 7% in 1990 to 3.3% in 2000. This reduction is slightly faster than that of the Commonwealth as a whole.

As shown in Chart 3.4, counties to the north of Caroline County, which are experiencing significant urbanization, saw a faster reduction in the percent of households without indoor plumbing, while other, more rural counties, except for King and Queen County, saw a much slower reduction.

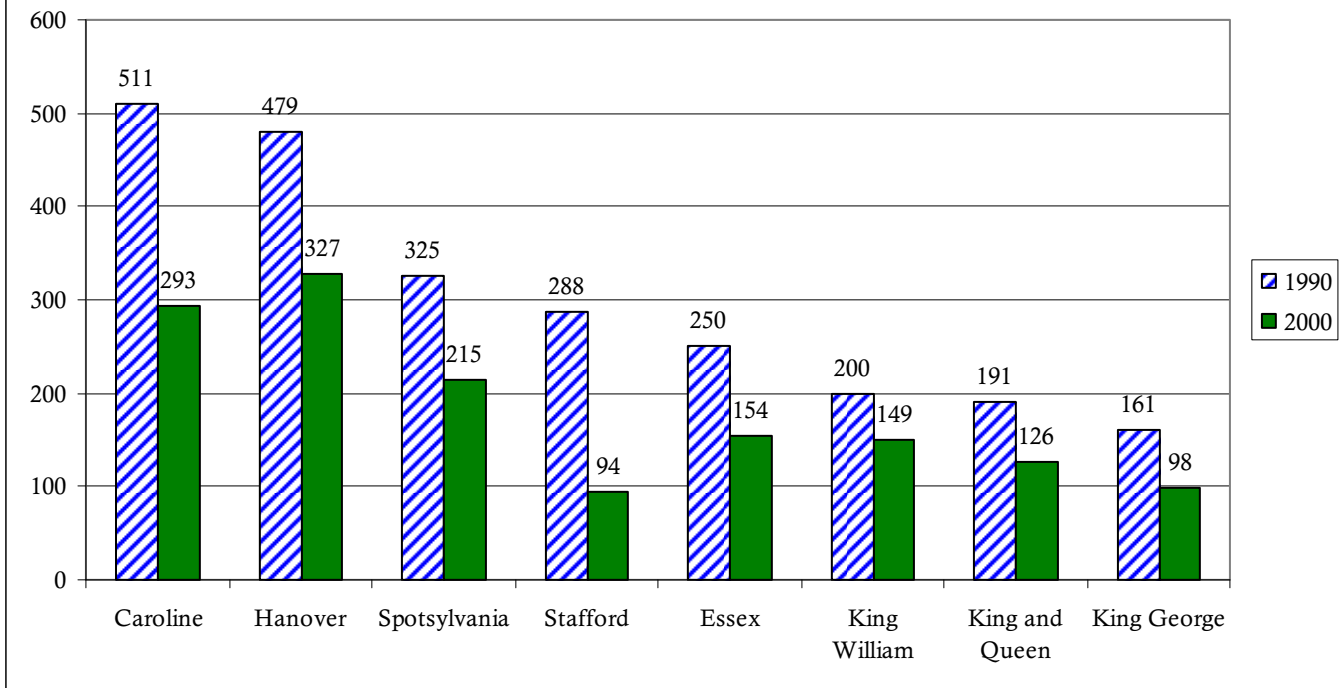
CHART 3.4: PERCENT OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS LACKING INDOOR PLUMBING



Source: US Census

Chart 3.4A shows the actual number of households without indoor plumbing for Caroline County and the surrounding localities. Caroline had the highest number of households lacking plumbing in 1990, but by 2000, the County dropped below Hanover by 34 households. Stafford saw the most dramatic drop in numbers, going from the fourth highest number of households lacking indoor plumbing to the lowest of the eight localities.

CHART 3.4A: HOUSEHOLDS LACKING INDOOR PLUMBING



Source: US Census

HOUSING LACKING COMPLETE KITCHEN FACILITIES

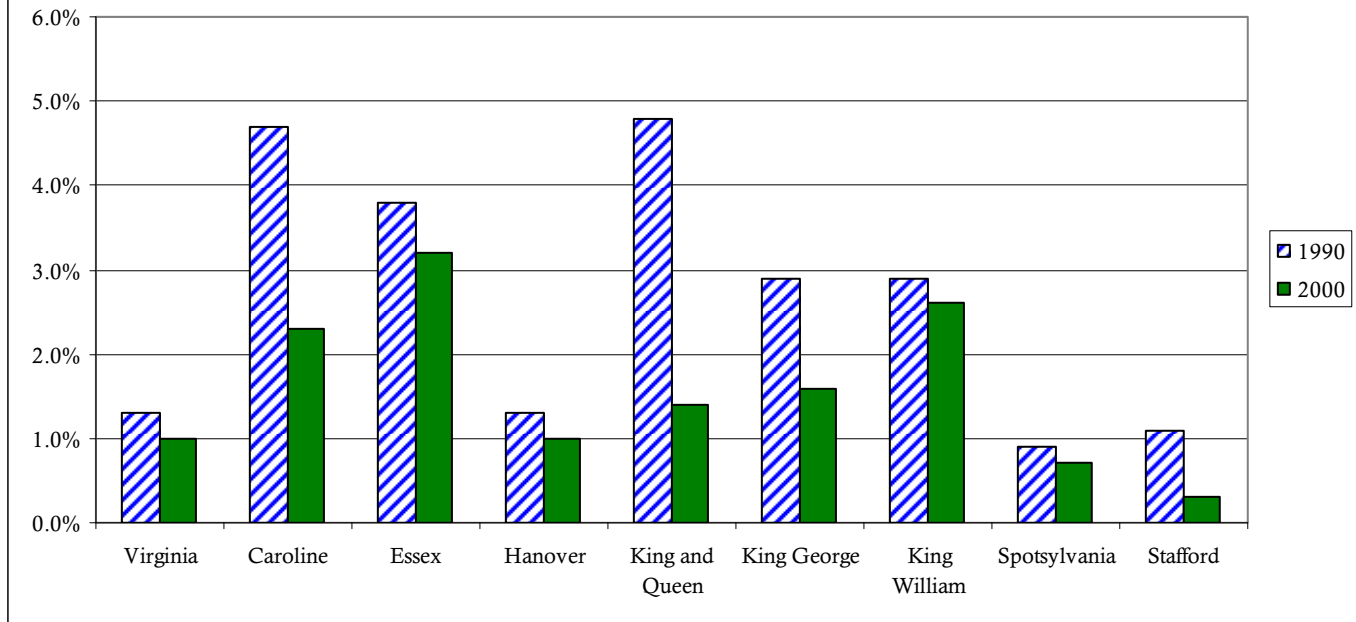
The ability to cook safely in the home marks another major indicator for addressing basic life functions. Similar to indoor plumbing, state and national trends indicate that this housing standard continues to improve. The US Census defines “complete kitchen facilities” as the combination of a sink with piped, running water, a refrigerator, an oven, and a cook top (oven and cook top may be separately placed or combined in a conventional range/stove). The facilities need not necessarily be located in a defined “kitchen,” but must be within the housing unit. Housing units containing only a microwave or hotplate or units lacking one of the four primary kitchen components are considered to have incomplete kitchen facilities.

Housing that lacks one or more of these elements limits the occupant’s ability to independently prepare meals without reliance on outside sources. More importantly, equipment such as a refrigerator, oven or stovetop helps eliminate possible bacterial contamination or food poisoning. Finally, the lack of these facilities could encourage occupants to circumvent safe building design standards by using hot plates that could be potential fire hazards and other dangerous areas.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units in Virginia lacking complete kitchen facilities dropped from 1.3% to 1.0%. In Caroline County, housing lacking complete kitchen facilities dropped from 4.7% of the total housing stock to 2.3% between 1990 and 2000. The overall percentage reductions can be seen in Chart 3.5. While all neighboring counties, and Virginia, decreased the percent of housing units without complete kitchens, some progressed at a more rapid pace than others.

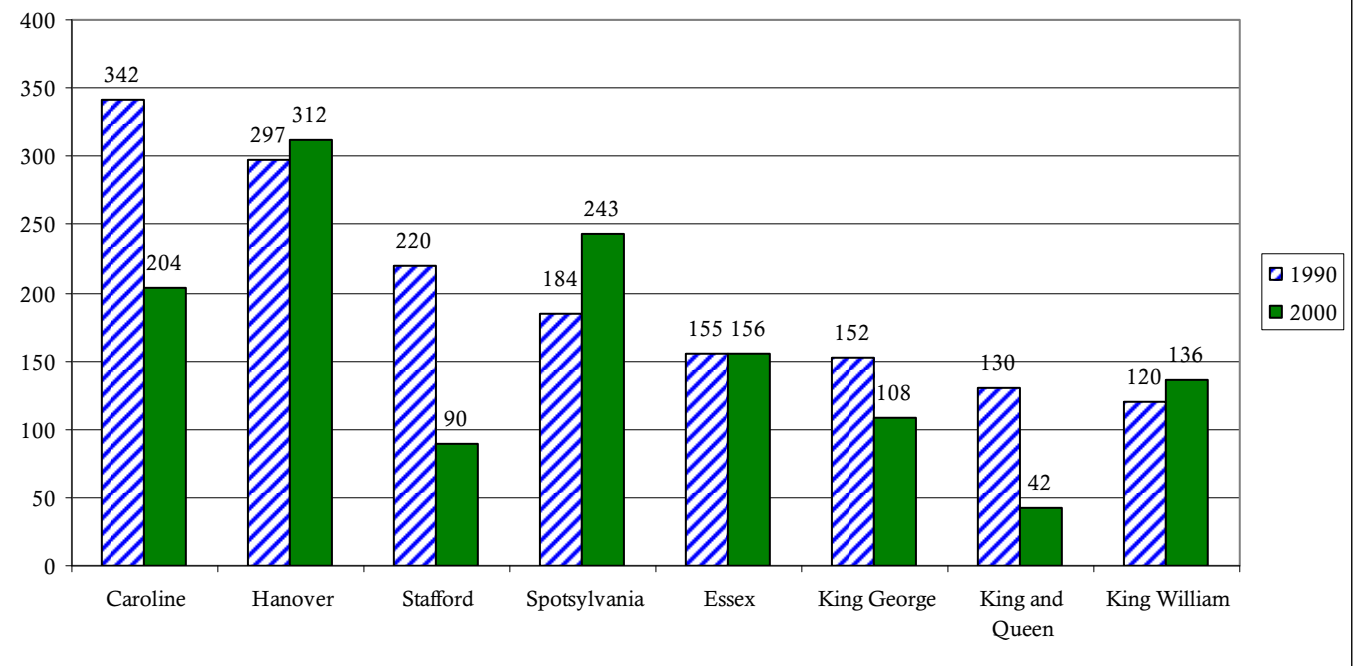
The actual number of households without complete kitchens in each locality between 1990 and 2000 is detailed in Chart 3.5A. While all the localities saw a decrease in the percentage of households without complete kitchens, three saw a measurable increase. Spotsylvania, Hanover and King William Counties all showed an increase in the number of households lacking kitchens. With the exception of Essex County, who gained one additional household lacking a complete kitchen, all other localities saw a decrease in percent of the total and number.

CHART 3.5: PERCENT OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS LACKING COMPLETE KITCHEN



Source: US Census

CHART 3.5A: HOUSEHOLDS LACKING COMPLETE KITCHENS



Source: US Census

MEAN NUMBER OF PERSONS PER ROOM

The number of rooms in a housing unit, by Census definitions, is the number of rooms intended for use as living space. A good rule of thumb is that if a space has walls and a person could sit in it comfortably for more than fifteen minutes at a time, it is probably a room by Census definitions. By this definition, bathrooms, closets, laundry rooms, and porches (unless they have been winterized as sun rooms) do not count as rooms. Living rooms and bedrooms are counted, as well as studies, recreation rooms, dining rooms, and finished basements. Since there are many varieties, kitchens are the most difficult areas to count. Generally speaking, if a kitchen is large enough to accommodate a table and forms a defined room with walls, then it counts as a room. However, if the kitchen is a narrow galley or Pullman kitchen no wider than a small hallway, a strip of countertop along one wall of a living room, or a large but open kitchen that has no walls separating it from a living room or dining room, then it is not counted as a room.

The US Housing and Urban Development Agency defines overcrowding as more than one person to a room intended for living space. Extreme overcrowding is defined as more than 1.5 persons per room intended for living space. Since the 1950's, the trend in housing has been a decrease in the number of persons per room.

Overcrowded housing is undesirable for reasons of safety, proper ventilation and privacy. Studying these trends is helpful in determining the quality of housing. For example, a family of four living in a small two-bedroom apartment with a small kitchenette would be considered overcrowded, but a family of four living in a two-bedroom house (which would include a living room) with a large eat-in kitchen would not be considered overcrowded.

Neither Virginia nor Caroline County maintains overcrowded housing, but it is a trend that can be evaluated. Between 1990 and 2000, Caroline County reduced the number of persons per room by 10.2%, while Virginia reduced the number of persons per room by 6.8%. Exact numbers of persons per household and per room for Caroline County, surrounding counties and Virginia can be seen in Table 3.3.

TABLE 3.3: PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD AND PER ROOM (1990 AND 2000)

| | Median in Household | | Mean per Room | |
|--------------|---------------------|------|---------------|------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 |
| Caroline | 2.53 | 2.49 | 0.49 | 0.44 |
| Essex | 2.28 | 2.02 | 0.44 | 0.35 |
| King George | 2.48 | 2.46 | 0.48 | 0.42 |
| King William | 2.54 | 2.53 | 0.46 | 0.42 |
| Hanover | 2.48 | 2.68 | 0.42 | 0.39 |
| Stafford | 2.90 | 2.90 | 0.45 | 0.41 |
| Spotsylvania | 2.82 | 2.71 | 0.47 | 0.42 |
| King & Queen | 2.36 | 2.20 | 0.46 | 0.37 |
| Virginia | 2.33 | 2.43 | 0.44 | 0.41 |

US Census DP - 4 Profiles of Selected Housing Characteristics: 2000 and DP-5 Housing Characteristics: 1990

MEDIAN PERSONS PER DWELLING UNIT

Both national and state trends have shown a continuous drop in the median number of persons per household and mean number of persons per room. As the baby boomer population continues to age and as the median family size continues to drop, the median number of people will continue to drop. This number reflects the type of population, as well as housing stock.

The median number of persons in a dwelling unit quantifies the impact of the dwelling on supporting facilities and infrastructure. If the number is low, then communities will determine there will be fewer student

generators per household, less need for police protection per household and less impact on roads and recreational facilities.

In Virginia, the median persons per household decreased by 4.3% between 1990 and 2000. In Caroline, the median number of people per household dropped only 1.6% between 1990 and 2000. In other words, while both groups are seeing fewer persons per household, the County is experiencing a lesser change.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO VEHICLE AVAILABLE

Compared to urban residents, rural residents must rely more on vehicular transportation or face isolation from employment, markets, emergency response and convenience. While most urban residents can rely on public transportation, but rural residents rarely have access to these systems. In fact, households in urban areas are more than twice as likely to be zero-vehicle households as those in rural areas. Since the suburban explosion of the 40s, the number of vehicles has risen dramatically. A minimum of one vehicle per household in rural or suburban areas is expected.

Households with no vehicles can be an income indicator as well as a lifestyle indicator. For example, nationwide, households with an annual income of less than \$25,000 are almost nine times as likely to be a zero-vehicle household as households with greater incomes. Rental occupied households are almost six times as likely to have no vehicle when compared to owner occupied. Condominium and apartment households are almost five times as likely to have no vehicle available when compared to single family or non-apartment dwellings. Nineteen percent of single-person households have no vehicle compared to four percent of multi-person households.

This evaluation considered only the percentage of households with no vehicles at all. In Virginia, the percent of households without a vehicle dropped from 9.0% to 7.7% between 1990 and 2000 for a total reduction of 15%. In Caroline County, the percent of households without vehicles dropped from 9.7% to 6.8%, a total reduction of 30%. This trend is dramatic. Prior to 1990, Caroline County exceeded the state average for households with no vehicles by 0.7% households, while in 2000 the number of Caroline households without vehicles was actually 0.9% lower than the state average.

Compared to its neighbors, Caroline experienced the largest reductions in dwellings with no vehicles. King William and Essex Counties saw similar reductions of 29%; however the remaining neighboring counties saw little or to no change.

HOUSING FOR OLDER RESIDENTS

The 2000 Census indicated that 2,972 of Caroline's residents are 60 years of age or older. This age group is expected to increase to 3,972 (39% increase) by 2010. Those born between 1946 and 1964, also known as "baby-boomers", are entering this age bracket, which is consistent with national population trend. It is easy to see how this age bracket will increase so significantly in the near future.

AGE-RESTRICTED VILLA

To date the only housing units specifically constructed for persons who are 55 years of age or older, were built in the Town of Bowling Green in the early 1980s. Typically these types of homes are designed to meet the needs of those people within this age group. The County has limited housing for those who may need greater care, such as independent living apartments, cottages, assisted living facilities, memory support and nursing care suites. Currently, the only such facility is the Bowling Green Health Care Center.



Bowling Green Health Care Facility

CONCLUSIONS

- The current lot supply supports higher density residential development in the designated growth areas throughout the County. However, there may be compelling reasons to support additional high density development in other areas on a case by case basis.
- Assuming that the growth pressures of the Washington, D.C. area continue to influence Caroline County, the County will experience high demand for single family housing in the near future. As land values rise and urbanization occurs, the County will also see a need for multi-family housing.
- As the county faces growth pressures from the north, affordable housing is a continued concern. Caroline's more rural neighbors are not experiencing the same rapid changes in housing affordability.
- Caroline County is experiencing a clear improvement in housing quality that meets or exceeds Virginia trends. This is particularly true for housing with complete kitchens, indoor plumbing and vehicle access. Generally, the trends in housing quality are comparable to the northern counties.
- The County should annually review the number of existing and new homes that are affordable to households meeting the "workforce" definition to ensure that an adequate supply of workforce housing exists. The County will identify opportunities to encourage greater variety of housing types priced to meet the needs of the workforce segment of the housing market. The County will encourage new housing projects to partner with a non-profit to provide new and existing workforce housing opportunities and other segments of the housing market such as the low-income elderly and handicapped segments.
- As the County's population continues to grow older it will have a significant impact on the quality of life in the County and it is anticipated that the demand for housing to accommodate this population will increase significantly within the next decade.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

GOAL 3.1: IDENTIFY SUFFICIENT LOCATIONS AND CONSISTENT CRITERIA FOR THE PROVISION OF DIVERSE HOUSING POSSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL SEGMENTS OF THE COUNTY'S POPULATION.

GOAL 3.2: PROTECT EXISTING RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY TO ENSURE THAT HOUSING REMAINS SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE.

OBJECTIVE – PRESERVE AND IMPROVE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND ENSURE THAT CAROLINE COUNTY'S NEIGHBORHOODS PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE RESIDENTS.

Action Strategy 3.2.1: Encourage the creation and continued operation and effectiveness of property owner associations within the communities through recognition, coordination, and appropriate public awareness programs.

Action Strategy 3.2.2: Encourage greater voluntary cooperation between the representatives of property owners associations in the County and the appropriate building and zoning code enforcement personnel to increase communication and coordination of these resources in matters pertaining to neighborhood preservation and enhancement.

Action Strategy 3.2.3: Continue to promote the formation and use of neighborhood watch and similar programs, as well as connections between neighborhood liaisons and local law enforcement agencies.

Action Strategy 3.2.4: Prepare an annual housing report to summarize the conditions of housing in the County and identify geographic areas of special concern.

Action Strategy 3.2.5: Periodically conduct Countywide evaluations of older and lower cost neighborhoods to prioritize those areas of the County that have concentrations of neighborhood blight consisting of illegal occupancy, excessive signs, trash/debris and inoperable motor vehicles. Focus more intensive code enforcement in these identified areas.

Action Strategy 3.2.6: Maintain Health Department and code enforcement standards to ensure compliance with occupancy and sanitary standards.

Action Strategy 3.2.7: Evaluate code revisions to improve the ability of the County to enforce occupancy, health, and sanitation standards for residential structures.

Action Strategy 3.2.8: Identify neighborhoods in need of new or repair of existing sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and street pavement. Initiate a repair/installation program using public and private funding and grants.

Action Strategy 3.2.9: Provide incentives for the re-development of sites, as opposed to developing new sites for residential construction.

Action Strategy 3.2.10: Improve the operation and effectiveness of the County's code provisions to promote on-going assistance and encourage clean, safe, and un-blighted neighborhoods.

Action Strategy 3.2.11: Require all new residential developments to include supporting infrastructure, such as mass transit, pedestrian networks, schools, parks, open space, and emergency services.

GOAL 3.3: PROVIDE SAFE, EFFICIENT AND APPROPRIATE HOUSING FOR ALL CITIZENS OF CAROLINE COUNTY.

OBJECTIVE – ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL SEGMENTS OF THE COUNTY'S POPULATION.

Action Strategy 3.3.1: Support the development of rental and moderate cost housing, including multi-family and condominium housing.

Action Strategy 3.3.2: Encourage the development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and construction of workforce housing to encourage the location of businesses to the County and provide jobs to those who live within the County.

Action Strategy 3.3.3: Provide for a density bonus, if a development provides at least 10% of its units to be acquired by the low-income, handicapped, and workforce segments of the housing market.

Action Strategy 3.3.4: As part of the rezoning process and/or use permit process, encourage developers to provide affordable housing dispersed through their neighborhoods to meet the needs of a wide range of low-income groups and populations with special needs living in the County.

Action Strategy 3.3.5: Offer incentives to promote the development of “workforce” housing and provide new locations for rental communities.

Action Strategy 3.3.6: Revise ordinances to allow accessory apartments, cottages, and live-work units in appropriate locations in Caroline County.

Action Strategy 3.3.7: Encourage the development of housing intended for older residents in appropriate locations throughout the County, which will allow these residents to remain within the community in which they have lived and been active.

GOAL 3.4: RECOGNIZE THE HOUSING NEEDS OF ALL CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY REGARDLESS OF AGE OR INCOME LEVELS.

OBJECTIVE – SUPPORT STATE AND FEDERAL HOUSING DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ALL PORTIONS OF THE POPULATION, INCLUDING THE DISABLED AND ELDERLY.

Action Strategy 3.4.1: Utilize available revenue sources to fund home improvements, especially those that enhance the safety and efficiency of the existing housing stock.

Action Strategy 3.4.2: Revise County codes to incorporate state and federal standards and better accommodate the disabled and elderly.

Action Strategy 3.4.3: Promote the use of small-scale group homes for the disabled and elderly in a variety of residential neighborhoods.

Action Strategy 3.4.4: Develop partnerships with non-profits to promote affordable housing opportunities.

Action Strategy 3.4.5: Take maximum advantage of federal, state, and private funding for assisting income eligible County renters in achieving home ownership.

Action Strategy 3.4.6: Require all new housing projects or rehabilitation of existing housing units to meet Energy Star Guidelines as provided by the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection for HVAC, appliances, insulation and lighting.