

By Angie Mayes

Farming was important to the La Vergne area in the 1960's. A.B. Paul farmed on 190 acres. while Almond Chaney grew sorghum on two farms, totaling 459 acres. Melvin Meadows had a dairy farm on 650 acres and Benton Mason had cows, silage, mile and alfalfa on 330 acres. Bob Alexander had 500 acres which was a dairy and beef cow farm. Many of the farms which thrived in 1962 are now gone, making way for residences, commercial businesses and industry.

During World War II, La Vergne had 300 people in the area. By the 1970 census, the number of people had steadily grown to 2,000. Just two years later, with the incorporation of the town, the count was at 5,209. In 1980, the city claimed 5,495 people.

The modern day growth of La Vergne started in the 1990s. At the beginning of the decade, the city claimed 7,449 but four years later stood at 11,088. By 1996, another special census was taken, listing the official population at 14,273. And earlier this year, the population broke the 16,000 mark by one. In eight years, the population grew by 114 percent!

The city, located between Nashville and Murfreesboro is close to three interstates. It is located on Interstate 24 and is 13 miles to Interstate 65 and 15 miles to Interstate 40. Due to this -- and the fact that the city is located within 550 miles of 60 percent of the country's population -- La Vergne is prime property for not only people but business and industry to relocate.

In 1996, the La Vergne codes department issued 333 single family dwelling permits with a total valuation of \$17.7 million. That number reflects a 30 percent drop from the 1995 number of 478; however, Dwayne Hicks, city planning director, reported that 205 single family permits were still outstanding and would be carried over to 1997.

Add those numbers together the total number of permits were 538, a 12 percent increase over 1995.

The housing numbers have obviously gone up since 1990 when 184 single family dwelling permits with a valuation of \$8.7 million, were issued. In 1991, a 10 percent increase (203 homes) was shown while a 26 percent increase (256 homes) was shown in 1992. In 1993, 293 single family building permits were issued with a total valuation of \$15.4 million. Three hundred sixty nine home permits were issued in 1994. The 1995 number was 29.53 percent higher than 1994.

Why the growth in the city?

Water and sewer availability made the city a prime piece of land for families and businesses. The low property tax is another reason people locate to La Vergne. At 50 cents per \$100 assessment, families can move to La Vergne and get the small town feel with big city luxuries.

When the farmers began selling their land, many probably never knew that the city would become such a booming city filled with homes and businesses. That's just what has happened.