



**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2023  
MINUTES**

Chairman Higdon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance. All Board Members, County Manager Derek Roland, Deputy Clerk Tammy Keezer, Finance Director Lori Carpenter, and County Attorney Eric Ridenour were present, as were a number of county employees, media, and citizens.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None

**MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Led by Commissioner Antoine, the pledge to the flag was recited.

**PUBLIC HEARING(S):**

**(A) 5311 ADMINISTRATION GRANT APPLICATION TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN AREAS WITH POPULATIONS OF LESS THAN 50,000** –

Chairman Higdon opened the public hearing at 6:01 p.m. Transit Director Darlene Asher gave an overview of the 5311 Administration grant for rural areas to provide assistance to support public transportation in areas with populations of less than 50,000. She said this grant supports the administrative portion of the Transit budget, pays for three position salaries and benefits, drug and alcohol testing, office supplies, training, advertising, and more. Ms. Asher indicated that the funding amount is \$230,232 with a federal share of 85 percent, a state share of five percent, and a county share of 10 percent (\$23,024) with the funding from the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. Chairman Higdon closed the hearing at 6:04 p.m. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shearl, to approve the 5311 Administration grant application and resolution as requested. Vote was unanimous.

**(B) 5310 OPERATING GRANT APPLICATION TO IMPROVE MOBILITY FOR SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES BY REMOVING BARRIERS IN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** –

Chairman Higdon opened the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. Transit Director Darlene Asher

gave an overview of the 5310 Operating grant which is used to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation services. She reported that Macon County Transit made 11,160 trips under this funding in Fiscal Year 2023. Ms. Asher said Macon County Transit is asking for \$235,000 in funding from this grant which includes a 50/50 match less fares collected. She indicated that the county share will be met by using the EDTAP (Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program) portion of the ROAP (Rural Operating Assistance Program) funds and contract revenues from agencies which are billed for services. Ms. Asher said zero county funds will be used as a match. Chairman Higdon closed the hearing at 6:07 p.m. Commissioner Young made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shields, to approve the 5310 Operation grant application and as requested. Vote was unanimous.

**(C) CAPITAL GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF CAPITAL ITEMS AT MACON COUNTY TRANSIT** - Chairman Higdon opened the public hearing at 6:08 p.m. Transit Director Darlene Asher gave an overview of the Capital grant which allows rural systems the opportunity to apply for funding for capital projects. She said this grant comes with a schedule for the replacement of capital items. Ms. Asher is asking for the replacement of one minivan, one high-top van, and one 2022 cutaway van for Macon County Transit in Fiscal Year 2025. She reported that all three of these vehicles had 100,000 miles or more as of June 30, 2023, and met the replacement guidelines according to the Macon County Vehicle Replacement Schedule. Ms. Asher indicated that the minivan will be replaced with a high-top van to allow for more seating and another lift-equipped vehicle in the fleet. She said in addition to lettering and propane conversion kits for the vehicles, she is asking for a replacement scanner that is over seven years old and six new radios for the vans as the current radios are ten or more years old. Ms. Asher stated the total for this 80/20 grant is \$388,194 with the County's 20 percent share of \$77,369. Chairman Higdon closed the hearing at 6:10 p.m. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Young, to approve the Capital Grant application as requested. Vote was unanimous.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

**Steve Grissom** spoke about the Ashleigh Chapman event regarding human trafficking which will be held at Discover Church on October 11, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., and distributed a handout to those in attendance. **Maryann Ingram** spoke about human trafficking and suggested approval of a no-tolerance resolution. **Tim Shaw** gave an update on the SK828 skatepark project and expressed his thanks for the contributions from the community. He thanked the Board for partnering with the Town of Franklin in completing the project. **Mark Murrah**

handed a letter to each of the board members and shared his frustration with being a property owner since 1995 and not being able to get a road or water to his property despite paying taxes and HOA fees and has been involved in litigation for years.

**ADDITIONS, ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as adjusted as follows:

- (A) To move Item 9F, Follow-Up Discussion Regarding Changes to MOU Between Macon County Board of Commissioners, Cooperative Extension Services, NC State, and NC A&T State University under Old Business to the Consent Agenda, per Mr. Roland.

**REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

- (A) **Macon County Data Card and the 2023 Child Health Report Card -** NC Child Director of Community Engagement Kelvin Stallings provided a handout and informed the board about the Macon County Data Card, and the 2023 Child Health Report Card [Attachment 1]. Michael Cooper with NC Child also reviewed data and trends for 2021 statistics shown on the handout. He said Macon County is doing well, but the data suggests that there is a need to address mental health issues with an increase in suicide rates increasing since the pandemic.

**Old Business**

- (A) **Continued Discussion on Fire Department Contracts Presented at the August 8, 2023, Regular Meeting –** Emergency Management Director Warren Cabe reminded the board about the contracts he brought to the regular meeting in August and asked if he could answer any questions or provide further information about those. Commissioner Shearl commented that these contracts will bring the fire departments back in line with what the taxpayers are looking for. Mr. Cabe said Section 7 of the contract has raised questions regarding assets and the reason that is included in the contract was to make sure that the taxpayers in a district understand that should divestiture of a fire department occur the district is not buying equipment a second or third time as it would stay in that district for use by that district. He explained that contracts will renew automatically but the contract includes an eight-month termination clause. Mr. Cabe said he still wants to have the contracts looked at every five years and the last time they were reviewed was in 2014 with some state standards changing in that period. He said the next step should be to terminate the current contracts and issue new contracts which gives the fire departments eight months from today to get the contracts signed. Mr. Cabe indicated that the new contract would be effective when the new document is signed. Commissioner Young

made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, to terminate the current contract eight months from today. Vote was unanimous. Commissioner Young made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shearl, to adopt the new contracts as presented. Vote was unanimous.

**(B) Franklin High School (FHS) Main Campus Construction**

**Documents** – Mr. Roland introduced LS3P staff Paul Boney and Emily Kite and said they are ready to enter into the construction phase for this project. Mr. Boney said the design has been completed and the next step is to have a public comment period. He suggested a large location where people could drop in and review the plans and provide feedback for a full day and requested to move forward to this next phase. Mr. Boney said the \$60 million in grant funding that we are trying to get is tied up in the State budget which has not been approved. Commissioner Young said he wants to keep the project moving forward but does not want to approve funds for construction development until a blessing is received from the public, school board, this board, etc. Mr. Boney said he is also here tonight to request money so that once we get the grant we will have significant skin in the game to move forward to the construction phase. Commissioner Shearl asked why we would throw money at this when the taxpayers cannot afford the new school as has been said all along. Mr. Boney said there is no better way to get the public involved than a referendum. Commissioner Higdon referenced the projected budget in Exhibit A Scope of Service of \$91 million. Mr. Boney said that was the budget at the time that the document was prepared and will be updated as the project moves along. Commissioner Higdon asked what the damage would be in pausing for one month on the requested \$166,565 million. Mr. Boney said LS3P will be at a standstill after public comment if the construction phase is not approved. Commissioner Shields said if we stop tonight we will not be able to get started again and feels the public comment period is necessary and we have to go to the people in a way they can visualize the project. Commissioner Shearl said he is not interested in throwing more money at this project without knowing if we will receive the grant. Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Higdon, to suspend funding to give us more time to see what the State does and let us apply for the grant to see if Macon County is going to receive a \$50 to \$60 million grant to build this school. Higdon asked if the application had been submitted. Mr. Boney said an application cannot be submitted until a month or two after the State budget is passed. Commissioner Antoine asked if we had done enough at this point to get the grant. Mr. Boney said we have done everything we can do but he cannot guarantee that we are going to get a grant. Commissioner Shields said education is an investment and is not an

expense and that if we pause we are throwing in our hat when we need to continue with this project. Commissioner Shearl clarified that his motion was to suspend funding indefinitely, that the grant is make or break this deal, and that if the grant fails we have to come up with another option. He said he feels it will benefit the taxpayers and residents of this county to pause this and see what happens in the next 45 to 60 days. Commissioner Antoine asked if pausing cost us the grant was Commissioner Shearl still willing to pause. Commissioner Shearl said without the grant we cannot move forward and we all signed an agreement saying we had to have the grant to move forward. Commissioner Shields said we are going to tell the grantors that we have given up and we have all worked hard and if we pause we will not get the grant. Commissioner Antoine said he is not willing to gamble on a pause that costs us getting the grant for the kids and if we don't get the grant and go to referendum. Commissioner Shearl said he would never vote against the will of the people and we just had an expert here saying we had the highest graduation percentage possible in the state. Commissioner Shearl said "Only a fool will build something with no way to pay for it. Vote was 3-2 with Commissioner Shearl and Commissioner Higdon voting in favor of the motion and Commissioner Young, Commissioner Shields, and Commissioner Antoine opposed. Commissioner Young made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shields, to proceed with Construction Documents as requested and to approve the Budget Amendment to appropriate \$1,666,560 from the general fund balance. The vote was 3-2 with Commissioner Young, Commissioner Shields, and Commissioner Antoine voting in favor of the motion and Commissioner Higdon and Commissioner Shearl opposed.

**(C) Request for Authorization of Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Furniture for Franklin High School (FHS) –** Mr. Roland explained the request for qualifications of furniture groups and clarified this was not a request for proposals. He said no furniture will ever be purchased until the facility is completed but that since we have approved the construction phase we need to coordinate with a furniture group to configure placement of outlets, classroom space, etc. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shearl, to move forward with developing an RFQ. Vote was unanimous.

**(D) Discussion and Approval of the Lease Between Macon County and the Macon County Board of Education for the Higdon Property –** Mr. Roland reminded the board they had previously signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work together with the school board to purchase the property and draft a lease. He announced that the school board had approved the lease with the

terms that were discussed. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Young, to approve the lease as presented. Commissioner Shearl said he was concerned about the County being responsible for the maintenance of the property and bringing the property up to ADA compliance. Commissioner Young said there is currently no intent to go in and do anything with remodeling or renovating. Attorney Ridenour clarified that we own the property and do not know how it is going to be utilized at this point. Mr. Roland indicated that routine maintenance will be handled by the school board and that the lease gives them access to the property to go through and see how the property will best meet their needs. He said if the school board identifies a project during that process it will be through the budget process just like any other project. Vote was 4-1 with Commissioner Higdon, Commissioner Shields, Commissioner Antoine, and Commissioner Young voting in favor of the motion and Commissioner Shearl opposed.

**(E) Discussion Regarding the Parks and Recreation Design** – McGill and Associates Project Planner James Ford stated that they have shared the plan with the public and designed a plan that takes that feedback into account. He said they have completed their due diligence by looking at the site which is located in a flood plain and looking at the flood zones. Mr. Ford said 347 online surveys were received which represented 642 individuals, followed by community meetings. He reviewed the data from the surveys including barriers where activities are not offered. Mr. Ford indicated that the top ten things people said they wanted were: indoor pool, walking/jogging trails, outdoor pool, outdoor playground, natural surface walking trails, accessible/inclusive playground, pickleball, picnic areas, fitness trail, and open space. He explained the design considerations and alternatives and spoke about phased development. Mr. Ford proposed six phases over a ten-year timeframe. He said Macon County can apply for grant funding every year and the written plan he will provide contains all the information needed for completing the grant applications. Mr. Ford gave an overview of the estimated cost totaling \$14.5 million based on projects he has completed over the past two years. Commissioner Young said he wanted to see the 4th of July moved back to the park and for families to be able to use the facilities for free. Commissioner Shearl said we have activities at Parker Meadows but that we want to put new life into the Macon County Rec Park to bring families back together and give them opportunities of a safe place to go. Chairman Higdon said he liked the idea presented. Mr. Ford suggested the adoption of the plan and that we would need construction documents and seek an architect or engineering firm. He said part of that could be paid for by Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) funds. Mr. Roland reminded the

board that some money had been set aside this year for pickleball courts which would be enough to get started. Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, to adopt the plan as presented. Vote was unanimous. Commissioner Young made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shearl to solicit a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Master Plan 1A [Attachment 2]. Vote was unanimous.

**(F) Follow-Up Discussion Regarding Changes to MOU Between Macon County Board of Commissioners, Cooperative Extension Services, NC State, and NC A&T State University** – Moved to Consent Agenda.

**(G) Discussion and Approval of the Network Design and Build Agreement for Broadband Services in Nantahala** – Broadband Committee Representative Jeff Lee presented a draft agreement as previously discussed and reviewed the highlights of that agreement. He indicated that Balsam West will construct and provide broadband service to five county facilities (Nantahala Fire Station on Wayah, Nantahala Fire Substation, Nantahala EMS on Junaluska, library and community center on White Oak and Wayah, and Nantahala recreation center on Winding Stairs), with a commitment to complete the project within six months of execution of the agreement and receipt of permits and after activation Balsam West will offer services to residences within 500 feet of the fiber routes. Mr. Lee said Balsam West is asking for \$350,000 as a non-recurring construction fee to help offset part of the construction cost with 50 percent due at the start of construction and 50 percent due at completion of the project. He said there is also a one-time lump-sum fee for internet service for the five facilities for the first year which can be split after that into individual fees. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shearl, to approve the agreement as well as a budget amendment to move \$350,000 from fund 55 for County Capital projects to the general fund. Vote was unanimous.

### **New Business**

**(A) Resolution Declaring September as Preparedness Month** – Mr. Roland read the resolution which included, that Frank Williams, the Immediate Past president of the North Carolina County Commissioners Association (NCACC) initiated “100 Counties Prepared” during his most recent NCACC Presidency term and requested the resolution be considered by all 100 county boards. He read that the NCACC is partnering with NC Emergency Management (NCEM) and Duke Energy to hold in-depth training courses designed to equip county commissioners and county leadership with the knowledge, tools, and resources they need to effectively lead during emergency situations through one-day training

opportunities that include sessions on emergency management basics, funding for emergencies, roles and responsibilities in an emergency, and crisis communication strategies specifically designed for locally elected officials to gain a better understanding of the role they play in an emergency [Attachment 3]. Commissioner Young made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shields, to approve the resolution as presented. Vote was unanimous.

**(B) Consideration and Approval of Grant Funded Positions**

**Addendum to the County Personnel Policy** – HR and Safety Director Tammy Keezer explained that the proposed policy was discussed at the regular meeting in August. She said that following that discussion she had drafted the policy which would be an addendum to the personnel policy and requested approval. Commissioner Antoine made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Young, to approve the policy as presented. Vote was unanimous.

**(C) Consideration and Approval of Resolution Providing for Electronic Listing and Extending the Time for Filing Electronic Listings of Personal Property for Property Tax Reports** – Tax

Administrator Abby Braswell requested approval of a resolution to allow electronic listing and filing taxes. She said in January notices are sent out to businesses and property owners and this change would allow businesses in particular to upload their documents into the online portal which is part of the new software that the Tax Department is currently using. Ms. Braswell indicated this change would be implemented at no cost to the County. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Chairman Higdon, to approve the resolution as presented [Attachment 4]. Vote was unanimous.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented which includes: (A) Minutes of the August 8, 2023 regular meeting, (B) Budget Amendments #35-42, (C) Settlement report for FY 2022 taxes, (D) Tax releases for the month of July in the amount of \$49,457.42, (E) Monthly ad valorem tax collection report – no action necessary, and (F) Changes to MOU Between Macon County Board of Commissioners, Cooperative Extension Services, NC State, and NC A&T State University.

**APPOINTMENTS:** None

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**(A) Discussion and Consideration of Offer to Purchase Old Pine Grove School** – Attorney Ridenour stated an offer had been received to purchase the property for \$70,950.00. He said he understands it



has been the board's position to entertain an offer at tax value. Mr. Ridenour said he believes at the time the offer was made that was the tax value but we have since had a revaluation and the tax value is now \$102,910. Mr. Roland stated this property is also on the National Historic Register. After some discussion, Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Young to reject the offer. Vote was unanimous.

**CLOSED SESSION:** None

**ADJOURN:** At 8:54 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Shearl, the board voted unanimously to adjourn.



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Derek Roland  
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

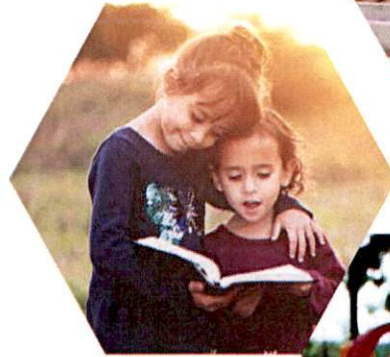


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Paul Higdon  
Board Chair



**NC Child**  
The Voice for North Carolina's Children



**2023**

# NORTH CAROLINA Child Health REPORT CARD



*Focus On:*  
**YOUTH MENTAL  
HEALTH**



Attachment 1

# Secure Homes & Neighborhoods

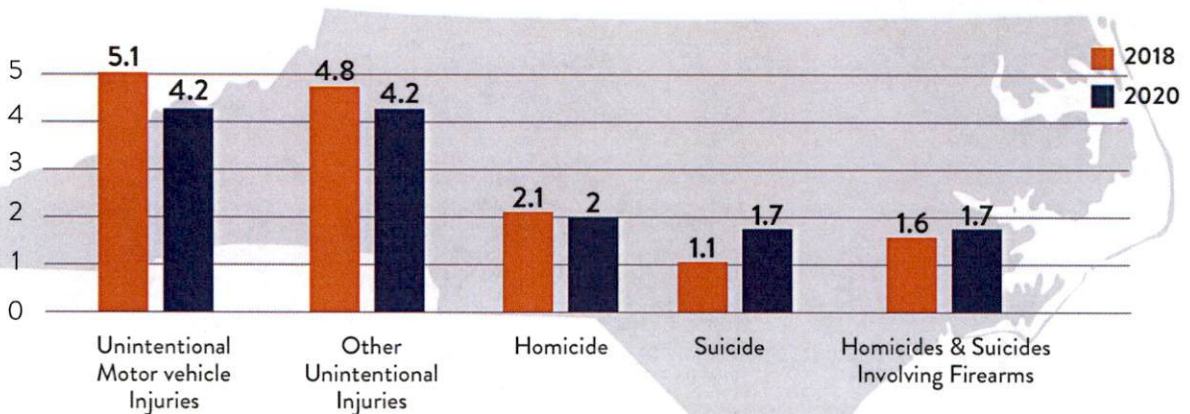
**40%**  
of children live in  
poor or low-income  
households

The environment in which children live, learn, and play has a huge influence on their health. Two out of five children live in poor or low-income homes, and 8% of North Carolina's children live in high-poverty neighborhoods. This is a small but marked improvement since the last report card: from 2018 to 2021, 9% fewer children lived in poor or low-income homes.

Families living on very low incomes have a harder time paying for their basic needs, and children often miss out on enrichment such as sports, camps, and after-school programs. In many low-income communities, there is less safe housing and healthy food, and there are fewer safe public parks available for play and exercise — all factors that increase the risk of poorer health outcomes. Public infrastructure like affordable housing, public transit, parks, and clean water are effective tools for improving children's health outcomes.

GRADE	INDICATOR	DATA YEARS	CURRENT	BASE	% CHANGE	AFRICAN AMERICAN or BLACK	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	HISPANIC or LATINX	OTHER	WHITE
F	<b>Housing &amp; Economic Security</b>										
	Children who live in high-poverty neighborhoods	2016-2020, 2014-2018	8.0%	9.0%	-11.1%	16.0%	26.0%	4.0%	12.0%	8.0%	3.0%
	Children who live in poor or low-income households (<200% FPL)	2021, 2018	40.0%	44.0%	-9.09%	57.0%		23.0%	61.0%	45.0%	27.0%
B	<b>Environmental Health</b>										
	Children who have an asthma diagnosis	2020-2021, 2018-2019	8.7%	11.0%	-20.91%	16.5%		2.4%	6.1%	9.7%	6.1%
D	<b>Child Abuse and Neglect</b>										
	Children who are assessed for child abuse or neglect	July 2021 -July 2022, July 2018 -July 2019	4.5%	5.7%	-21.6%						
	Children who exit to a permanent living situation within 24 months	2020-2021, 2018-2019	59.7%	60.8%	-1.8%	57.9%	67.2%			59.4%	61.5%

North Carolina Resident Child (Ages 0-17) Death Rates by Type of Death per 100,000







# Access to Care

Health care coverage is essential to the health of an entire family. Parents' coverage increases the likelihood of a child having coverage and receiving essential preventive care. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) of 2020 required states to keep people continuously enrolled in Medicaid in exchange for enhanced federal matching funds through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). As a result, we saw significant improvements in health care coverage. The number of North Carolina parents without health insurance decreased from 15% in 2019 to 13.9% in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic did affect preventive care as people avoided public spaces such as medical clinics; particularly the number of children who received well-child checks and age-appropriate immunizations. In 2020, 52.9% children with Medicaid received a well-child checkup in the past year, compared to 57.6% in 2018.

GRADE	INDICATOR	DATA YEARS	CURRENT	BASE	% CHANGE	AFRICAN AMERICAN or BLACK	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	HISPANIC or LATINX	OTHER	WHITE
	<b>Oral Health</b> Kindergarten students with untreated tooth decay	2020-2021, 2018-2019	16.0%	15.7%	1.9%						
	<b>School Health</b> School nurse ratio	2019-2020, 2018-2019	1:1,007	1:1,021	-1.4%						
	School counselor ratio	2021-2022, 2018-2019	1:316	1:354	12.0%						
	<b>Health Services Utilizations and Immunization</b> Children with Medicaid who received a well-child checkup in the past year	2020, 2018	52.9%	57.6%	-8.2%						
	Children ages 19-35 months with appropriate immunizations	2021, 2019	79.5%	80.0%	-0.6%						
	Adolescents ages 13-17 who have received 1 or more HPV vaccinations	2021, 2019	85.0%	71.3%	19.2%	68.5%			75.8%	66.6%	58.9%
	<b>Insurance Coverage</b> Percent of children with health insurance coverage	2021, 2019	94.5%	94.2%	0.3%	96.1%	93.7%	94.7%	86.7%	83.3%	95.6%
	Parents without health insurance coverage	2021, 2019	13.9%	15.1%	-7.9%	13.4%	19.1%	7.1%	50.0%	13.2%	9.3%

# Healthy Births

Public health emergency funding contributed to increased health coverage nationwide. While access to prenatal care can improve infant health outcomes, most recent data demonstrate that short-term increased access may not translate into sustained improvements in birth outcomes at the population level. In North Carolina, birth outcomes have remained relatively static, and unacceptable racial disparities persist. **Three times more African American babies die before their first birthday than white babies.** While North Carolina's teen birth rate is declining, it remains markedly higher than the national average, at 22.9 births for every 1,000 teen girls (the national rate is 17.4 births). Teen births are linked to long-term challenges for families, including reduced educational attainment and household income. **Investment in preventing teen pregnancy can improve the long-term health and financial outlook for young parents and their children.**

GRADE	INDICATOR	DATA YEARS	CURRENT	BASE	% CHANGE	AFRICAN AMERICAN or BLACK	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	HISPANIC or LATINX	OTHER	WHITE
	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Newborns who are breastfed exclusively for at least 6 months	2019, 2017	22.1%	23.3%	-5.2%						
	<b>Preconception and Maternal Health and Support</b> Women ages 18-44 with health insurance coverage	2021, 2018	86.9%	79.9%	8.8%	94.5%	75.2%		52.1%	88.4%	93.6%
	Women who receive early prenatal care	2020, 2019	73.1%	67.5%	8.3%	66.1%	69.1%		62.9%	72.4%	79.8%
	<b>Birth Outcomes</b> Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	2020, 2019	6.9	6.8	1.5%	12.8	3.3		5.8	4.2	4.8
	Babies who are born before 37 weeks of pregnancy	2020, 2019	10.8%	10.7%	0.9%	14.6%	11.1%		9.6%	8.7%	9.6%
	<b>Teen Births</b> Rate of births to teen girls ages 15-19 per 1,000	2020, 2019	22.9	24	-4.6%	33.9	35.0		39.5	8.2	13.7

# Health Risk Factors



Education creates many opportunities for better health, including higher wages and greater access to health-supporting resources like nutritious food and regular exercise. Unfortunately, the percentage of students reading at grade level has declined across all ethnic and racial groups, with dramatic disparities between African American, American Indian, and Hispanic children. Nationally and in North Carolina, the data show a **marked impact from the first two years of the pandemic**, as students from low-income communities often had reduced access to online learning and enrichment activities during school closures and the shift to virtual classrooms.

Where children live and go to school is also linked to health indicators such as obesity. The percentage of children aged 10-17 who are overweight or obese has increased to 33.5% since the last report card in 2021. African American children are more likely than white children to be obese. Investments in education and the built environment will support the health and wellbeing of North Carolina's children as they grow and age.

GRADE	INDICATOR	DATA YEARS	CURRENT	BASE	% CHANGE	AFRICAN AMERICAN or BLACK	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	HISPANIC or LATINX	OTHER	WHITE
D	<b>Healthy Eating &amp; Active Living</b>										
	Children ages 10-17 who are overweight or obese	2020-2021, 2018-2019	33.5%	30.7%	9.12%	47.5%		12.6%	31.3%	24.0%	29.7%
	Children who live in food insecure households	2020, 2018	17.1%	19.3%	-11.4%						
D	<b>Tobacco, Alcohol, and Substance Use</b>										
	High school students who currently use:										
	Cigarettes	2021, 2019	3.9%	8.3%	-53.0%	4.4%		2.6%	9.7%	5.8%	9.0%
	Electronic vapor products	2021, 2019	23.8%	35.5%	-33.0%	25.7%		27.3%	33.5%	41.0%	41.1%
	Alcohol (including beer)	2021, 2019	19.4%	24.2%	-19.8%	14.9%		13.4%	26.4%	24.7%	28.7%
High school students who have ever used:											
Prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription	2021, 2019	15.8%	16.6%	-4.8%	15.9%		20.0%	16.0%	22.4%	14.7%	
F	<b>Mental Health</b>										
	High school students who attempted suicide in the past year	2021, 2017	10.1%	8.2%	23.2%	11.5%		13.7%	10.6%		8.3%
	Past-year major depressive episode among adolescents aged 12-17	2018-2019, 2017-2018	15.1.0%	12.0%	25.8%	11.4%					
Percent of adolescents aged 12-17 with major depressive episode who received treatment for depression	2019, 2018	43.3%	41.4%	4.6%	35.6%						
D	<b>Education</b>										
	Third grade students reading at grade level	2021-2022 SY, 2018-2019 SY	46.4%	59.8%	-18.3%	31.0%	31.4%	70.6%	32.8%	47.0%	59.6%
	High school students who graduate on time	2021-2022 SY, 2020-2021 SY	86.4%	87.0%	-0.7%	83.4%	85.3%	>95%	80.2%	83.5%	89.9%

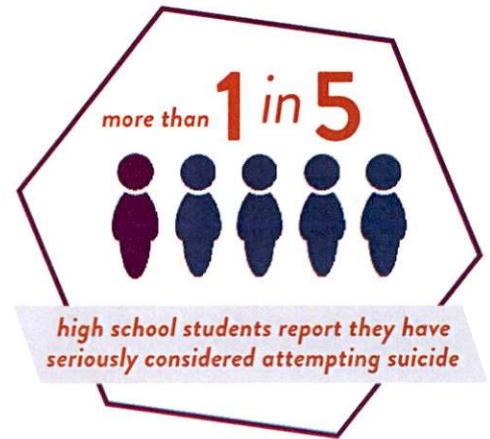


NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Whole Child Measure of Success. Learn more at: [www.buildthefoundation.org/pathways](http://www.buildthefoundation.org/pathways)

# Special Issue: Children's Mental Health

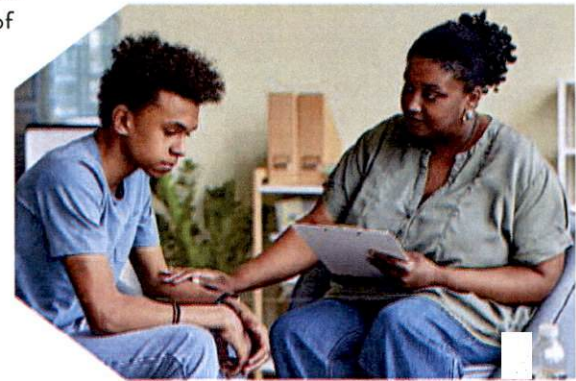
Long before pandemic school closures across the nation, clinicians were already seeing alarming trends across many indicators of child and adolescent mental health. We have tracked many of those indicators in past North Carolina Child Health Report Cards.

- Suicide became the leading cause of death for children ages 10-14 in 2019. In 2020, an unprecedented 67 children ages 0-18 died by suicide in North Carolina. One in five North Carolina high school students reported seriously considering attempting suicide in 2021, up from 16% in 2017. One in 10 reported actually making an attempt.
- Diagnoses of mental health concerns are also on the rise: More than one in 10 children ages 3-17 in North Carolina had a diagnosis of depression or anxiety in 2020 - a 49% increase from 2016.
- There are significant disparities in children's experiences of poor mental health. For example, students who experience higher rates of discrimination also report worse mental health. LGBTQ+ students are more than three times more likely to consider or attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers.<sup>1</sup>



These numbers are startling. From health care to education to law enforcement, it is incumbent on practitioners to learn more about children's mental health and what is driving rising rates of mental health concerns such as depression and anxiety, and to develop more ways to support the children they serve.

In October 2021, clinicians declared a "National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health" in a strongly worded statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and Children's Hospital Association. They recommended a number of changes, from clinical practice to public policy, to address this crisis head-on.



*Homicide and suicide are the only causes of child death that are increasing in North Carolina.*



*Stakeholders can safeguard children's mental health by:*

- Removing barriers to mental health care
- Enhancing the availability of mental health care and crisis intervention in public schools, particularly in rural areas where specialty care is less available
- Making it harder for children and youth to get access to lethal means of self-harm (e.g., safe storage of firearms and prescription drugs).

While the data on youth mental health are deeply troubling, there are bright spots as well. The sudden jump in attention to mental health issues since the pandemic means that the issue has landed squarely on the agenda for many parents, clinicians, and policy-makers. Increased attention can also mean decreased stigma, allowing our children and families to seek out the help they need with less fear of retribution.

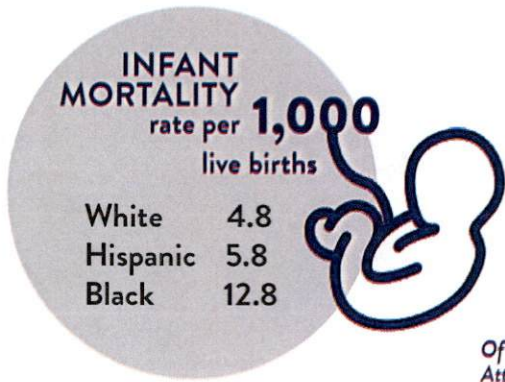
Every child deserves a chance to thrive. The mental health crisis is daunting, but adults have a duty to rise to the moment for our children and youth.



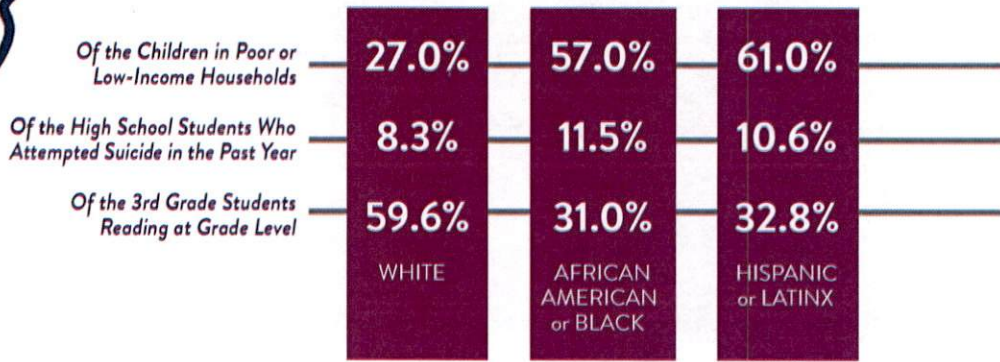
# DEMOGRAPHICS



	TOTAL CURRENT	AFRICAN AMERICAN or BLACK	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	HISPANIC or LATINX	OTHER	WHITE
Number of babies born (Live births)	116,755	28,545	1,503		19,449	5,443	61,815
Percent of total live births	100%	24.4%	1.3%		16.7%	4.7%	52.9%
Children under age 18 (%)	100%	20.7%	1.2%	3.5%	17.2%	7.9%	45.5%
	2,299,746	476,993	26,791	80,127	395,191	181,065	1,047,006



## DISPARITIES BY RACE PERSIST IN NORTH CAROLINA ACROSS MANY AREAS OF CHILD WELL-BEING:



**QUESTIONS?**

**NC Child**  
The Voice for North Carolina's Children  
3101 Poplarwood Court, Suite 300  
Raleigh, NC 27604  
www.ncchild.org | 919.834.6623

**NCIOM**  
725 Martin Luther King, Jr., Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516  
www.nciom.org | 919.445.6500

**GRADES AND CHANGE OVER TIME:** Grades are assigned by a panel of health experts to bring attention to the current status of North Carolina children in salient measures of health and well-being. Grades and trends are based on North Carolina's performance year-to-year, disparities by race/ethnicity, and what level of child health and safety North Carolina should aspire to, regardless of how we compare to other states or the nation as a whole.

Grades are subjective measures of how children in North Carolina are faring in a particular area and are not meant to judge the performance of a state agency or agencies providing data or services. Please note that several agencies have made a great deal of progress in recent years, which may not be reflected in these grades.

Data sources and additional references can be found online at: [www.nciom.org](http://www.nciom.org) or [www.ncchild.org](http://www.ncchild.org)

This project was supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and North Carolina Essentials for Childhood. NC Child and the North Carolina Institute of Medicine thank our supporters and acknowledge that the findings and conclusions do not necessarily reflect the opinions of financial supporters.

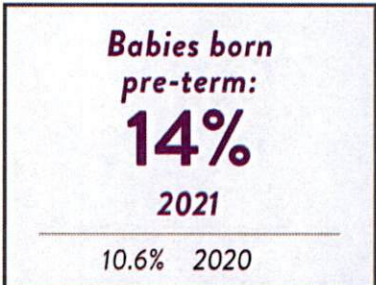
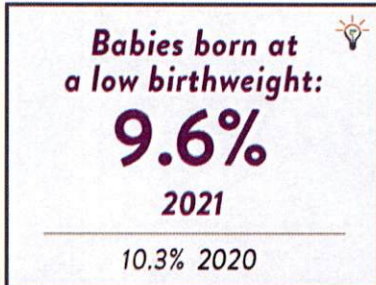
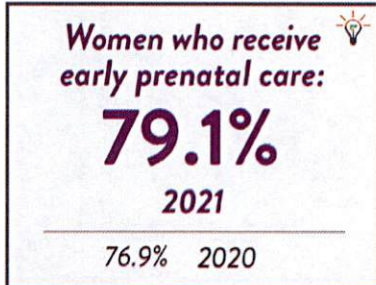
# Macon COUNTY

## 2023 NC DATA CARD

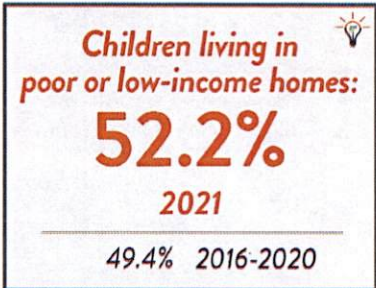
NORTH CAROLINA		MACON	
Child population:	2,257,006	Child population:	8145
Percent under age five:	21%	Percent under age six:	23%
Number of live births:	1,120,501	Number of live births:	311



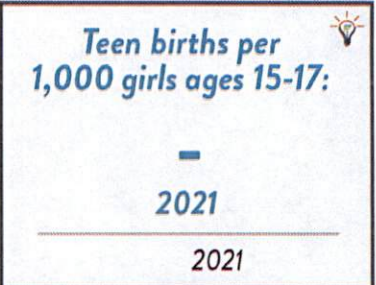
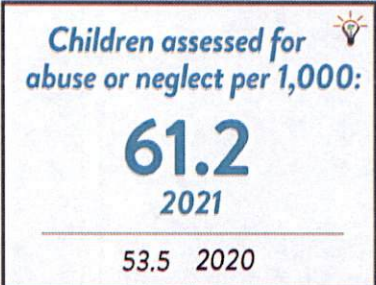
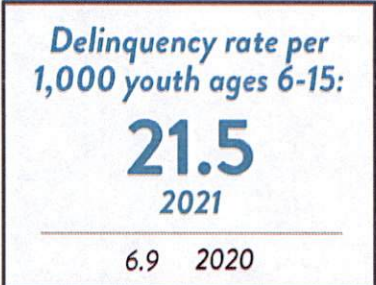
**A STRONG START**



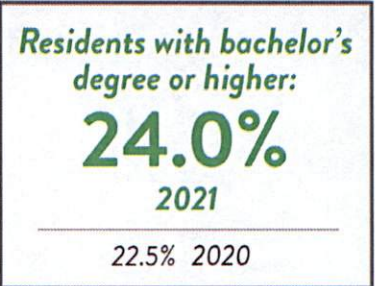
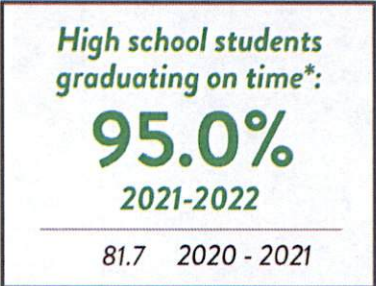
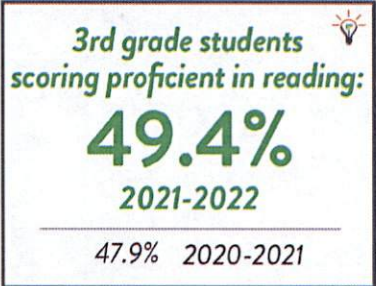

**FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY**



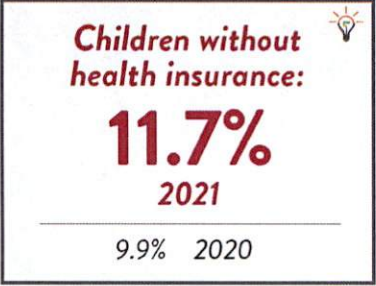

**NURTURING HOMES & COMMUNITIES**




**HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION**




**HEALTH & WELLNESS**



NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Measures of Success.  
Learn more at:  
[buildthefoundation.org/pathways](http://buildthefoundation.org/pathways)



\*Percentage is not reported if it is greater than 95% or less than 5%

For complete data notes and sources, visit [ncchild.org](http://ncchild.org)  
Contact Luna Homsy at [luna@ncchild.org](mailto:luna@ncchild.org) with any questions.



# Macon CONDADO

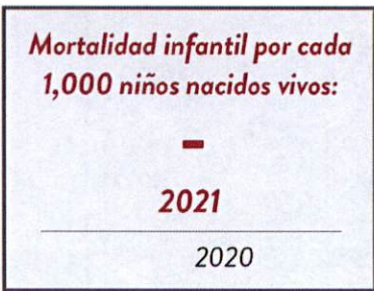
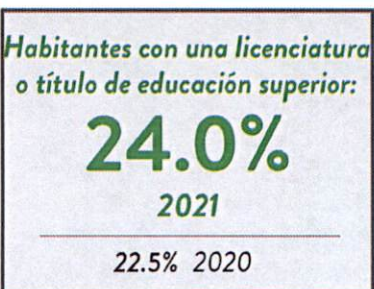
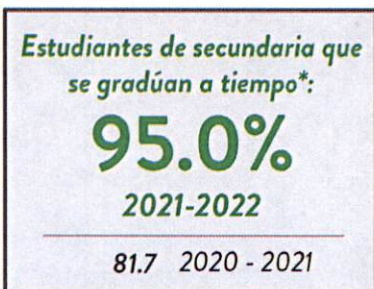
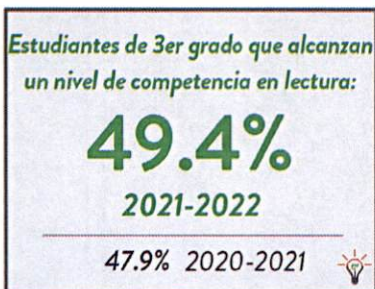
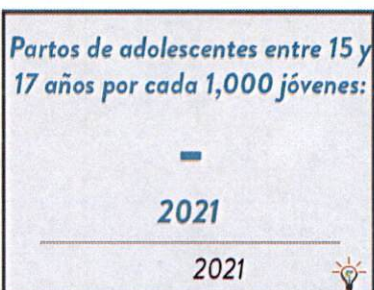
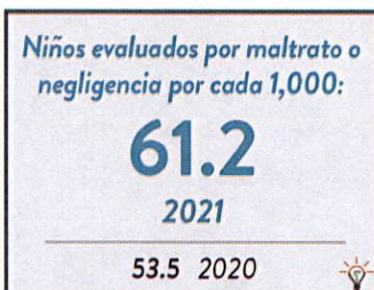
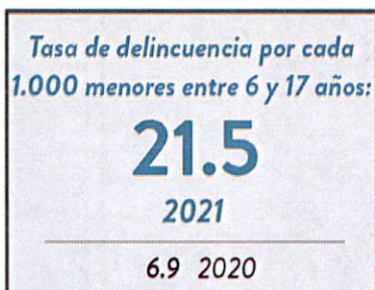
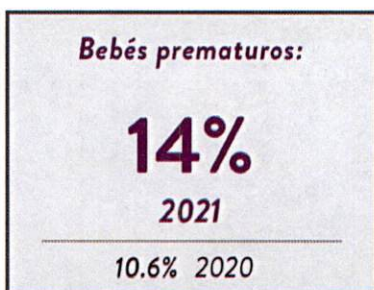
## 2023 NC TARJETA DE DATOS

### CAROLINA DEL NORTE

Población infantil: **2,257,006**  
 Porcentaje de niños  
 menores de seis años: **21%**  
 Número de niños  
 nacidos vivos: **1,120,501**

### MACON

Población infantil: **8145**  
 Porcentaje de niños  
 menores de seis años: **23%**  
 Número de niños  
 nacidos vivos: **311**



Criterios de éxito de NC Pathways para alcanzar un nivel de lectura correspondiente con su grado. Más información: [buildthefoundation.org/pathways](http://buildthefoundation.org/pathways)



\*El porcentaje no se reporta si es superior al 95% o inferior al 5%

Para consultar todos los datos y fuentes, visite [www.ncchild.org](http://www.ncchild.org).

Para cualquier pregunta, comuníquese con Luna Homs: [luna@ncchild.org](mailto:luna@ncchild.org)

**PRELIMINARY OPINION OF PROBABLE COST  
COUNTY RECREATION PARK  
MACON COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA  
AUGUST 2023**

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUAN.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
<b>PHASE 1A - PICKLEBALL &amp; TENNIS COURTS</b>					
1	Mobilization (3.0%)	1	LS	3%	\$ 42,600
2	Site Development	1	LS	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
3	Demolition of Ex. Park Features	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
4	6' Wide Concrete Sidewalks (550 LF)	367	SY	\$ 70	\$ 25,690
5	Other Concrete Areas	400	SY	\$ 70	\$ 28,000
6	New Pedestrian Bridge	1	AL	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000
7	Pickleball Courts (9)	9	EA	\$ 32,250	\$ 290,250
8	Tennis Courts (6)	6	EA	\$ 35,000	\$ 210,000
9	Pavilion with Restrooms	1	AL	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000
10	Stormwater and Erosion Control	1	LS	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
11	Utilities	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
	CONTINGENCY (10%)				\$ 137,894
	SURVEY, DESIGN, PERMITTING, CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES				\$ 206,841
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL</b>					<b>\$ 1,766,275</b>

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUAN.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
<b>PHASE 1B - OTHER RACQUET SPORTS AREA IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
1	Mobilization (3.0%)	1	LS	3%	\$ 26,601
2	Site Development	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
3	Asphalt Parking Areas	5,900	SY	\$ 120	\$ 708,000
4	6' Wide Concrete Sidewalks (400 LF)	267	SY	\$ 70	\$ 18,690
5	Small Shelter	1	EA	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
6	Site Amenities	1	LS	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
7	Landscaping	1	AL	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
8	Stormwater and Erosion Control	1	LS	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
	CONTINGENCY (10%)				\$ 88,669
	SURVEY, DESIGN, PERMITTING, CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES				\$ 133,004
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL</b>					<b>\$ 1,134,963</b>

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUAN.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
<b>PHASE 2 - PLAYGROUND/SPLASH PAD/AMPHITHEATER AREA</b>					
1	Mobilization (3.0%)	1	LS	3%	\$ 121,200
2	Site Development	1	LS	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
3	Demolition of Ex. Park Features	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
4	Asphalt Parking Areas	5,795	SY	\$ 120	\$ 695,400
5	6' Wide Concrete Sidewalks (518 LF)	345	SY	\$ 70	\$ 24,150
6	Other Concrete Areas	60	SY	\$ 70	\$ 4,200
7	Multipurpose Field	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
8	Small Shelters (2)	2	EA	\$ 60,000	\$ 120,000
9	Amphitheater	1	LS	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000
10	Restroom Addition to Ex. Picnic Shelter	1	LS	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000
11	Accessible Playground w/hill slides	1	LS	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000
12	Pour-in-place Rubber Playground Surfacing	23,258	SF	\$ 20	\$ 465,160
13	Covered Basketball Courts (95'X120')	1	LS	\$ 450,000	\$ 450,000
14	Splash Pad	1	LS	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000
15	Landscaping	1	AL	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
16	Stormwater and Erosion Control	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
17	Utilities	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
	CONTINGENCY (10%)				\$ 391,891
	SURVEY, DESIGN, PERMITTING, CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES				\$ 587,837
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL</b>					<b>\$ 5,019,838</b>

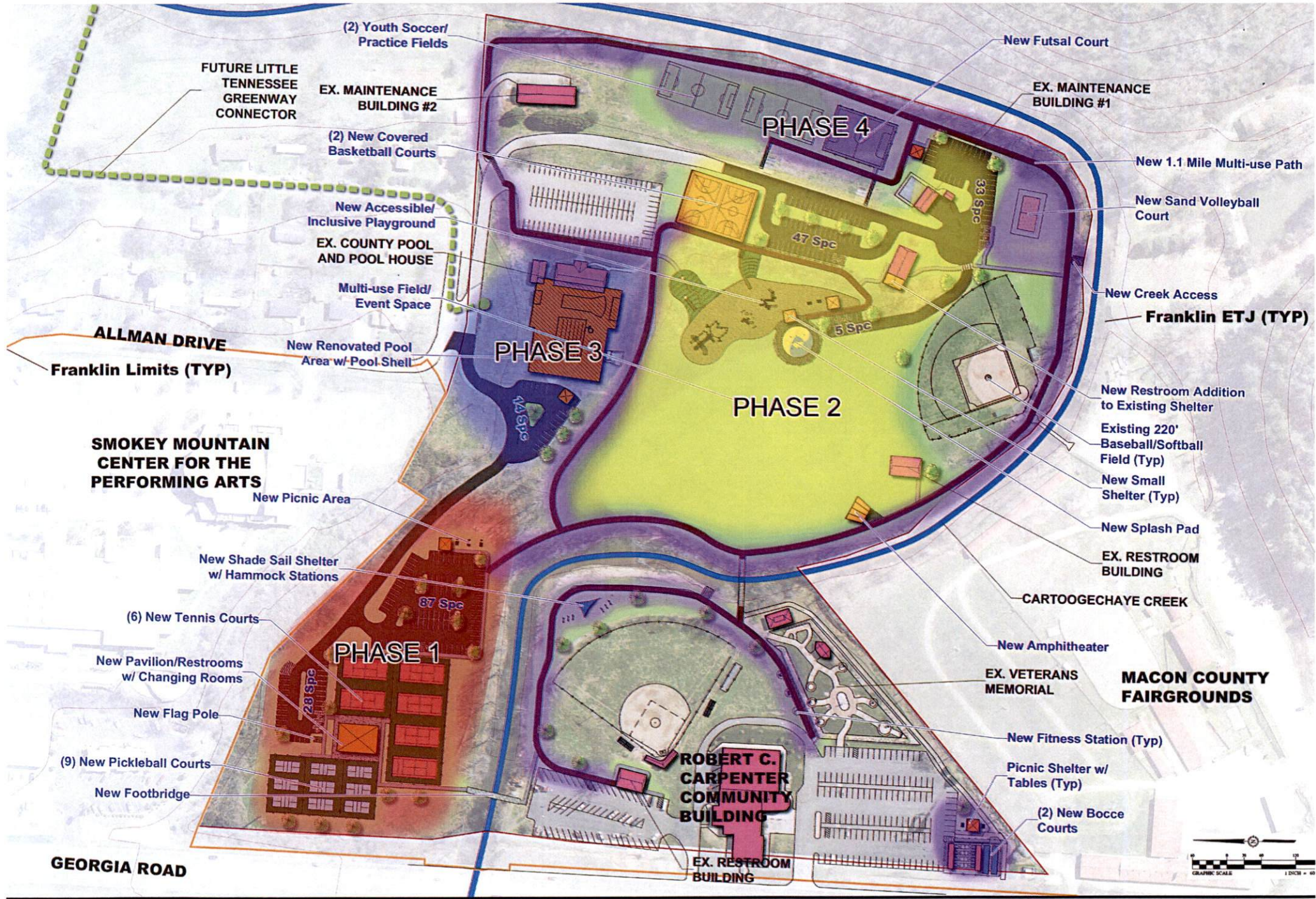
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUAN.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
<b>PHASE 3 - COVERED POOL AREA</b>					
1	Mobilization (3.0%)	1	LS	3%	\$ 109,439
2	Site Development	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
3	Asphalt Parking Improvements	1	AL	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
4	6' Wide Concrete Sidewalks (50 LF)	35	SY	\$ 70	\$ 2,450
5	Small Shelter	1	EA	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
6	Covered Pool w/Retracting Roof	1	AL	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 2,500,000
7	Pool enhancements	1	AL	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
8	Landscaping	1	AL	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
9	Stormwater and Erosion Control	1	LS	\$ 8,500	\$ 8,500
10	Utilities	1	LS	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
	CONTINGENCY (10%)				\$ 364,795
	SURVEY, DESIGN, PERMITTING, CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES				\$ 547,193
	<b>CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 4,669,376</b>

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUAN.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
<b>PHASE 4 - REMAINING DAY-USE AREAS</b>					
1	Mobilization (3.0%)	1	LS	3%	\$ 39,100
2	Site Development	1	LS	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
3	10' Wide Asphalt Paved Trail (5,649 LF)	6,277	SY	\$ 115	\$ 721,855
4	6' Wide Concrete Sidewalks (55 LF)	40	SY	\$ 70	\$ 2,800
5	Small Shelters (2)	2	EA	\$ 60,000	\$ 120,000
6	Shade Sail	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
7	Hammock Stations (6)	6	EA	\$ 1,200	\$ 7,200
8	Futsal Court	1	EA	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
9	Youth Soccer Fields (2)	1	LS	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
10	Relocated Sand Volleyball Court	1	LS	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
11	Fitness Stations (3)	3	EA	\$ 6,500	\$ 19,500
12	Bocce Courts (2)	2	EA	\$ 15,000	\$ 30,000
13	Flag Pole	1	LS	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500
14	Site Amenities	1	LS	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
15	Landscaping	1	AL	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
16	Stormwater and Erosion Control	1	LS	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000
17	Utilities	1	LS	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
	CONTINGENCY (10%)				\$ 126,386
	SURVEY, DESIGN, PERMITTING, CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES				\$ 189,578
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL</b>					<b>\$ 1,618,919</b>

<b>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS</b>	<b>\$ 14,209,370</b>
----------------------------	----------------------

Notes:

1. All costs shown are in current dollars.
2. The Engineer maintains no control of labor costs, materials, equipment or services furnished by others, the Contractor(s)' methods for determining prices, or competitive or market conditions. The opinions herein for project and construction costs represent the Engineer's best judgment, and are based on experience and qualifications as a Professional Engineer who possesses familiarity with the construction industry. The Engineer does not guarantee the accuracy of the cost opinions which may vary from bids or actual project and construction costs.



# MACON COUNTY RECREATION PARK MASTER PLAN

MACON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

2023





## RESOLUTION DECLARING SEPTEMBER 2023 AS “PREPAREDNESS MONTH” IN MACON COUNTY

**WHEREAS**, National Preparedness Month is an observance each September to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time; and

**WHEREAS**, Counties throughout North Carolina have been affected by a variety of emergencies, including mudslides, wildfires, flooding, earthquakes, and the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, the peak period of hurricane season is historically mid-August through October, and September 10 marks the peak of hurricane season; and

**WHEREAS**, Frank Williams, the Immediate Past president of the North Carolina County Commissioners Association (NCACC) recently completed his term as President of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners, which was focused on the *100 Counties Prepared* initiative; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous County Commissioners local government leaders completed the inaugural *100 Counties Prepared* training, which focused on training county commissioners on how to effectively lead during emergencies, compiling resources to assist commissioners during emergency situations, and helping commissioners establish relationships with key emergency management partners; and

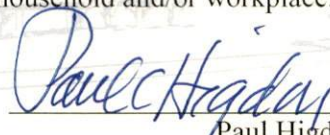
**WHEREAS**, the 2023 theme of National Preparedness Month is “Preparing For Older Adults”; and

**WHEREAS**, Macon County is the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) highest percentage (29.2%) of adults over the age of 65 in North Carolina; and,


**WHEREAS**; the Macon County Board of Commissioners desires that every household, property owner, and business in Macon County be prepared for potential emergencies.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Commissioners of Macon County hereby declares September 2023 as Preparedness Month in Macon County and encourages all citizens to provide for and assist with “Preparing for Older Adults” by developing an emergency plan, building an emergency kit, and communicating their emergency plan to all members of their household and/or workplace.

Adopted this the 12th day of September, 2023.

  
Paul Higdon, Chairman  
Macon County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

  
Derek Roland  
Clerk to the Board





**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MACON**

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR ELECTRONIC LISTING AND EXTENDING THE TIME FOR FILING ELECTRONIC LISTINGS OF PERSONAL PROPERTY FOR PROPERTY TAX PURPOSES**

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute § 105-310.1 authorizes Counties to permit electronic listing of personal property, and

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute § 105-307 permits the Board of County Commissioners to extend the deadline for filing electronic listings of personal property under G.S. § 105-304 up to June 1, and

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute 105-311(b) authorizes electronic signature of personal property listings which are submitted electronically,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** as follows:

Section 1. The Macon County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes personal property listings to be submitted and signed electronically.

Section 2. The following procedures will apply to electronic tax filings:

1. Facsimiles and emailed forms will not be accepted as electronic listings.
2. Electronic listings must be submitted online. In order to file electronically, the taxpayer must use an electronic listing application approved by the County.
3. To request an extension to electronically file personal property listings after January 31, the taxpayer must file an online request for extension of time during the month of January and must provide an Account ID provided by the County and associated with the location for which the extension is requested.
4. Once an extension of time has been granted by the assessor the electronic filing must be received by the Macon County Assessor no later than April 15 or next business day if the fifteenth is on a weekend in order to avoid late list penalties.

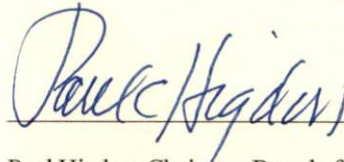
Section 3. This resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the Macon County Board of Commissioners and notice of the procedure and any general extension of time pursuant to G.S. § 105-307(b) for electronic filing of personal property listings shall be published as required by G.S. § 105-296(c).

Section 4. This resolution is effective for all tax years after its adoption and at such time as the Assessor has the ability to implement a system for electronic listing.

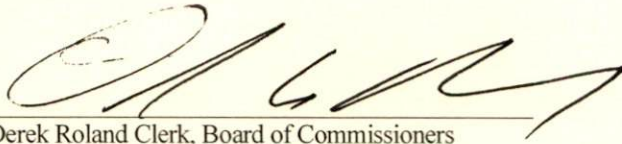
Section 5. This resolution hereby delegates its authority to provide for electronic listing of personal property to the Macon County Assessor.

Section 6. That the County Manager, County Attorney, and Assessor to take all actions necessary to accomplish the purposes of this resolution.

Adopted this the 12<sup>th</sup> day of September 2023

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Higdon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Paul Higdon, Chairman Board of Commissioners

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Derek Roland". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Derek Roland Clerk, Board of Commissioners