



March 30, 2020

Dear Macon County Resident,

As the COVID-19 pandemic escalates throughout our state and nation, Macon County continues working diligently to mitigate the spread of the virus among our residents. Aside from adhering to increasingly stringent executive orders issued by Governor Roy Cooper, including business closures, pro-longed school closures and most recently a statewide “stay at home” order, Macon County is taking additional steps under our local state of emergency to protect our population and preserve the resources of an already limited health care system. Recent discussions with healthcare and emergency management officials at both the state and local level, have led us to believe it is not a question of “if”, but “when” a strain will be placed on our local healthcare system.

On March 17, 2020, at an emergency meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners, representatives of the HCA Hospital System informed county leadership that capacity of the healthcare system in Macon County includes 62 hospital beds and 7 ventilators. This information, combined with the fact that approximately 30% or 10,200 of our 34,000 permanent residents are over the age of 65, placing them in the “high” risk category for serious complications resulting from COVID-19 has led to great concern regarding local health care capacity from our elected officials as well as, our local public health and emergency management professionals. Furthermore, the realization that the population of Macon County more than doubles in the spring and summer months as tourists and second homeowners begin vacationing and/or coming to reside in their second homes creates additional concerns of more strain being placed on our local healthcare system.

In light of the aforementioned circumstances, Macon County is respectfully requesting all second homeowners to remain at their primary residence and allow their secondary/vacation Macon County residences to remain unoccupied until emergency declarations at both the state and local level concerning the COVID-19 pandemic have been lifted. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience or undue hardship that comes as a result this request. At the same time, we are in hopes that the transparency and concern which have accompanied this request will result in your understanding that it is founded solely in our desire to protect the health and safety of all Macon County residents. For up to date and accurate information related to the COVID-19 pandemic in Macon County, including the latest state and local emergency orders, please visit our website at www.maconnc.org.

Kindest Regards,

Jim Tate

Chairman, Macon County Board of Commissioners