



HOME BUILDERS
ASSOCIATION
OF ST. LOUIS &
EASTERN MISSOURI

EST. 1934

10104
OLD OLIVE
STREET ROAD
ST. LOUIS,
MISSOURI
63141-5908

P: 314-994-7700
F: 314-432-7185

WWW.STLHBA.COM

The Honorable Lyda Krewson, Mayor
City of St. Louis
1200 Market Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

March 21, 2020

Dear Mayor Krewson:

On behalf of the Home Builders Association of St. Louis and Eastern Missouri (HBA) and the National Association of Home Builders of the United States (NAHB), we write to urge you to consider additional policy proposals to support the housing sector of the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The HBA's members stand with you during these uncertain times and look to your leadership to help steer the community through uncharted waters. We appreciate the commitment being made to housing via continued issuance of building permits and code enforcement inspections, and the recognition that new home construction sites are more easily modified to be compliant with social distancing recommendations.

As a trade association made up of over 625 companies representing all facets of the home building industry and employing over 40,000 citizens in our region, we appreciate the opportunity to offer our recommendations for best practices as you consider what is the right course for the city and our region as a whole.

In order to help stabilize the housing sector in the near term, we ask you to designate construction, including home construction, as an "Essential Infrastructure Business" in the City of St. Louis and to designate critical trades and hardware and supply stores as "Essential Businesses and Operations".

As cities and states issue declarations and public health orders as a result of the crisis, many are considering what should be included as essential services and businesses. States such as New York, Nevada, and our neighboring state of Illinois have determined that construction is an essential business, as residents must have access to professionals who build and maintain essential services including: building, plumbing, electrical, HVAC systems, waster, wastewater treatment plants, and power generation.

Based on reports that a stay at home order is forthcoming in the City of St. Louis, we respectfully request that language included in Gov. Pritzker's executive order regarding essential infrastructure and businesses be incorporated into your order as well. In particular, we've highlighted the following portions of the order:

- Section 1.9 Essential Infrastructure. This part of the order states that *"Essential Infrastructure includes, but is not limited to: food production, distribution, and sale; construction (including, but not limited to, construction required in response to this public health emergency, hospital construction, construction of long-term care facilities, public works construction, and housing construction); building management and maintenance; ..."*
- Section 1.12.g Hardware and supply stores
- Section 1.12.h Critical trades
- Section 1.12.n Supplies for Essential Businesses and Operations
- Section 1.12.r Professional services
- Section 1.12.t Manufacture, distribution, and supply chain for critical products and industries

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We also encourage you to consider that government functions related to the building and development process, such as inspections, permitting, and plan review services can be modified to protect the public health in order to continue operating. Homebuilding (including remodeling and repair) is highly regulated and therefore requires support from the locality where it occurs. For example, for in-person inspections, inspectors could make arrangements with the owner or general contractor to safeguard their health by ensuring that proper social distancing techniques are followed, including an option that no one will be on site during an inspection. Alternatives to in-person inspections would be video conferencing, time-stamped photos, and/or other documentation. In addition, certain localities allow third-party engineers to sign off on inspections. It may be necessary for home builders to request this option in the event local governments close their building departments during the pandemic.

With the health and safety of the public, our employees, and government officials in mind, our industry continues to adhere to public health guidelines set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

According to OSHA, "Lower exposure risk (caution) jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2 nor frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers." (Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19, p.20)

A large majority, if not all, of land development and residential construction job tasks fall within OSHA's Lower Exposure Risk jobs. Working on a new unfinished home site occurs primarily outdoors and does not involve going onto a location occupied by residents or a public location, and there is minimal (if any) physical or transactional contact with customers compared to other customer/client relationships.

Housing is currently 14.6% of Gross Domestic Product and a major engine of the economy. Keeping the men and women of the building industry employed during this time must be a priority. If construction is disrupted, it creates a flow-down effect leading to dire negative economic repercussions for an already-burdened economy.

In conclusion, we again respectfully request that you designate construction as an essential business, so that individuals may continue to perform work necessary to the operations and maintenance of "Essential Infrastructure." We appreciate your continued leadership and the work of your staff and those who are spending every waking hour keeping us safe.

Sincerely,

Bill Wannstedt
2020 President

Celeste Rueter
Executive Vice President

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The Honorable Sam Page, County Executive
St. Louis County Government
41 S. Central
St. Louis, Missouri 63105

March 21, 2020

Dear County Executive Page:

On behalf of the Home Builders Association of St. Louis and Eastern Missouri (HBA) and the National Association of Home Builders of the United States (NAHB), we write to urge you to consider additional policy proposals to support the housing sector of the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The HBA's members understand that these are uncertain times and look to your leadership to help steer the community through uncharted waters. We appreciate the commitment being made to housing via continued issuance of building permits and code enforcement inspections, and the recognition that new home construction sites are more easily modified to be compliant with social distancing recommendations.

As a trade association made up of over 625 companies representing all facets of the home building industry and employing over 40,000 citizens in our region, we appreciate the opportunity to offer our recommendations for best practices as you consider what is the right course for the county and our region as a whole.

In order to help stabilize the housing sector in the near term, we ask you to designate construction, including home construction, as an "Essential Infrastructure Business" in St. Louis County and to designate critical trades and hardware and supply stores as "Essential Businesses and Operations".

As cities and states issue declarations and public health orders as a result of the crisis, many are considering what should be included as essential services and businesses. States such as New York, Nevada, and our neighboring state of Illinois have determined that construction is an essential business, as residents must have access to professionals who build and maintain essential services including: building, plumbing, electrical, HVAC systems, water, wastewater treatment plants, and power generation.

Based on reports that a stay at home order is forthcoming in St. Louis County, we respectfully request that language included in Gov. Pritzker's executive order regarding essential infrastructure and businesses be incorporated into your order as well. In particular, we've highlighted the following portions of the order:

- Section 1.9 Essential Infrastructure. This part of the order states that *"Essential Infrastructure includes, but is not limited to: food production, distribution, and sale; construction (including, but not limited to, construction required in response to this public health emergency, hospital construction, construction of long-term care facilities, public works construction, and housing construction); building management and maintenance; ..."*
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A large majority, if not all, of land development and residential construction job tasks fall within OSHA's Lower Exposure Risk jobs. Working on a new unfinished home site occurs primarily outdoors and does not involve going onto a location occupied by residents or a public location, and there is minimal (if any) physical or transactional contact with customers compared to other customer/client relationships.

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In conclusion, we again respectfully request that you designate construction as an essential business, so that individuals may continue to perform work necessary to the operations and maintenance of "Essential Infrastructure." We appreciate your continued leadership and the work of your staff and those who are spending every waking hour keeping us safe.

Sincerely,

Bill Wannstedt
2020 President

Celeste Rueter
Executive Vice President

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The Honorable Steve Ehlmann, County Executive
St. Charles County Government
100 N. Third Street
St. Charles, Missouri 63301

March 21, 2020

Dear County Executive Ehlmann:

On behalf of the Home Builders Association of St. Louis and Eastern Missouri (HBA) and the National Association of Home Builders of the United States (NAHB), we write to urge you to consider additional policy proposals to support the housing sector of the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The HBA's members stand with you during these uncertain times and look to your leadership to help steer the community through uncharted waters. We appreciate the commitment being made to housing via continued issuance of building permits and code enforcement inspections, and the recognition that new home construction sites are more easily modified to be compliant with social distancing recommendations.

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In order to help stabilize the housing sector in the near term, we ask you to designate construction, including home construction, as an "Essential Infrastructure Business" in St. Charles County and to designate critical trades and hardware and supply stores as "Essential Businesses and Operations".

As cities and states issue declarations and public health orders as a result of the crisis, many are considering what should be included as essential services and businesses. States such as New York, Nevada, and our neighboring state of Illinois have determined that construction is an essential business, as residents must have access to professionals who build and maintain essential services including: building, plumbing, electrical, HVAC systems, water, wastewater treatment plants, and power generation.

Based on reports that a stay at home order is forthcoming in St. Charles County, we respectfully request that language included in Gov. Pritzker's executive order regarding essential infrastructure and businesses be incorporated into your order as well. In particular, we've highlighted the following portions of the order:

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Bill Wannstedt
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The Honorable Dennis Gannon, County Executive
Jefferson County Government
P.O. Box 100
Hillsboro, Missouri 63050

March 21, 2020

Dear County Executive Gannon:

On behalf of the Home Builders Association of St. Louis and Eastern Missouri (HBA) and the National Association of Home Builders of the United States (NAHB), we write to urge you to consider additional policy proposals to support the housing sector of the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The HBA's members stand with you during these uncertain times and look to your leadership to help steer the community through uncharted waters. We appreciate the commitment being made to housing via continued issuance of building permits and code enforcement inspections, and the recognition that new home construction sites are more easily modified to be compliant with social distancing recommendations.

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In order to help stabilize the housing sector in the near term, we ask you to designate construction, including home construction, as an "Essential Infrastructure Business" in Jefferson County and to designate critical trades and hardware and supply stores as "Essential Businesses and Operations".

As cities and states issue declarations and public health orders as a result of the crisis, many are considering what should be included as essential services and businesses. States such as New York, Nevada, and our neighboring state of Illinois have determined that construction is an essential business, as residents must have access to professionals who build and maintain essential services including: building, plumbing, electrical, HVAC systems, water, wastewater treatment plants, and power generation.

Based on reports that a stay at home order may be forthcoming in Jefferson County, we respectfully request that language included in Gov. Pritzker's executive order regarding essential infrastructure and businesses be incorporated into your order as well. In particular, we've highlighted the following portions of the order:

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Bill Wannstedt
2020 President

Celeste Rueter
Executive Vice President

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