
MAIN STREET BUDGET TESTIMONY 4/19/2022

My name is Sharon Cichy and I am the Chief Strategy Officer for [Main Street](#) in Rockville. Thank you for your tireless work and for recognizing the significant contributions nonprofits make. I'm here to share how Main Street's work supports the county's priorities and to request additional opportunities for new nonprofits to access county grants, which we have not received to date.

Long before covid, adults with disabilities felt the pain of isolation and lack of opportunity. Today, fewer than 1 in 4 adults with disabilities live independently and most lack meaningful engagement in their communities. Main Street offers a solution, and a model for others to replicate locally and nationwide.

Main Street is the first-of-its-kind apartment complex and community center.

- We provide inclusive, affordable housing to 150 residents and community engagement to 240 members with and without disabilities.
- We have collaborated with over 100 local partners to offer 20 social, educational and wellness programs each week.
- Our Soulfull Café offers an inviting gathering space for the public and employment for people of all abilities.

And ... our research and evaluation efforts have yielded concrete data demonstrating that [we are improving quality of life](#) for our residents, members and their families.

Local leaders, businesses and nonprofits alike look to Main Street - we have provided [training to partners on best practices](#) for inclusion. We are also a model for groups around the country looking to develop affordable, inclusive housing and communities.

We are making the county a more equitable place for adults of all abilities, and we believe that we should have an opportunity to apply for county grants. While the proposed FY2023 budget offers limited categories for new nonprofits, it is unclear that Main Street could fit into these categories. Please build additional opportunities for new nonprofits to access county funds. And please create an advisory role for nonprofits in the operations of the Office of Grants Management.

Main Street is making a difference and we have data to prove it. But we could do so much more with county support. Thank you for all you do and for your attention to the needs of new nonprofits like ours.

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Building Inclusive Communities!
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Main Street is paving the way for more inclusive communities!
Please join us for our [Grand Reopening of the Soulfull Café and our Spring Fest](#) on May14th!
Ask me about our [Membership Opportunities](#).



For more helpful Cybersecurity Resources, visit: <https://www.cisa.gov/be-cyber-smart>