



## Montgomery County

### **Budget FY23**

### **Montgomery County Council Testimony on the Fiscal Year 23 Operating Budget**

### **Rebuilding Together Montgomery County**

### **Maury Peterson, Executive Director**

Good evening. I am Maury Peterson, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Montgomery County. As you may know, RTMC's mission is to provide free critical home repairs and accessibility modifications to the county's most vulnerable homeowners, including seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, struggling families with children, and marginalized community members. This year we are celebrating our 32nd Anniversary and to date we have helped 2,600 low-income homeowners and galvanized more than 50,000 community volunteers in our "neighbor-helping-neighbor" approach.

I am proud to live in Montgomery County where it is clear that this County Council is comprised of strong and aggressive leaders in advancing affordable housing.

I am here to thank you for Montgomery County's long-term financial support of Rebuilding Together Montgomery County. As you know, our organization is the premiere local nonprofit 100% devoted to the preservation of existing affordable housing. We do not construct new homes but instead help the average, rarely recognized, low-income homeowner who is in desperate need of critical repairs to allow them to remain safe and healthy at home and to stay in our community. For example, we recently helped an 89-year-old veteran who had water pouring into his home every time it rained. We are grateful to provide this veteran with a new roof and foundation waterproofing to help him remain safely in his own home. Our aim is to serve our neighbors in need.

In addition to assisting individual income-qualified homeowners, we are focused on forging partnerships to help nonprofits in the community. Together we can do so much! We have recently joined forces to provide critical repairs for Interfaith Works, Stepping Stones Shelter, and Housing Unlimited.

The pandemic has hit RTMC hard. While the need for our services has never been greater, our costs for materials have risen dramatically and we have had to rely on more paid contractors. We are grateful for the support provided by the county which has allowed us to provide critical repairs to a record 178 low-income homeowners in need last fiscal year and we are on pace to serve an additional 150 vulnerable families by June 30, 2022.

To address the backlog of vulnerable homeowners in desperate need of help, we respectfully request two things:

- 1) Keep the County Executive's proposed 6% increase to nonprofit county contracts in the budget.
- 2) Allocate and release American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for affordable housing. Specifically, RTMC is a member of the Montgomery Housing Alliance (MHA) and we have

submitted a specific proposal to the County Executive and County Council Members outlining how MHA member organizations could use these additional funds to serve more low-income homeowners in the county.

Montgomery County is such a great county and a wonderful place to call home. Rebuilding Together Montgomery County is proud to be part of its affordable housing team and we thank you in advance for your consideration to keep the 6% contract increase and to allocate and release ARPA funds for affordable housing. Thank you.

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