

April 8, 2026

Montgomery County Council

100 Maryland Avenue

Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Support for Bethesda Cares – FY Operating Budget

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez and Members of the County Council,

I am writing as a member of the Bethesda Cares Board of Directors to respectfully urge continued and increased investment in Bethesda Cares as part of Montgomery County's operating budget for homelessness services.

As homelessness has risen significantly in recent years, our community has relied on a coordinated network of providers working together through the Continuum of Care. Within this system, Bethesda Cares has consistently demonstrated strong outcomes through a housing-focused, solutions-based approach that prioritizes permanent housing over expensive and less effective temporary responses.

In 2025, Bethesda Cares helped 60 individuals move from the streets and shelters into permanent housing...a record year for the organization. Even more importantly, 98% of those individuals remain stably housed. Additionally, our programs at Bethesda Cares impacted over 1100 individuals and families across Montgomery County. These outcomes reflect not only access to permanent housing resources, but the effectiveness of skilled staff who guide individuals through the leasing process, building trust, and provide ongoing support to ensure long-term success.

Bethesda Cares' work extends beyond direct service delivery. The organization has played a key role in strengthening the broader homeless response system in Montgomery County. Through leadership in coordinated entry, landlord engagement, and housing navigation strategies, Bethesda Cares has strengthened system-wide performance and increased access to federal housing resources that bring tens of millions of dollars into our region, including our successful advocacy in partnership with the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs to secure over \$30 million in VASH permanent housing subsidy assistance for homeless and at-risk veterans.

County investments in Bethesda Cares support high-performing programs including street outreach, supportive housing, and eviction prevention. These programs are designed to reduce the use of costly emergency services and help individuals stabilize quickly in permanent housing. This approach reflects a thoughtful use of public resources...prioritizing solutions that are both effective and efficient. When people are able

to live as our neighbors in the community...they can thrive! ..and it's good for the community as a whole.

Importantly, Bethesda Cares works in partnership with other nonprofit providers across the county. Each organization contributes to a shared mission, and together the system is stronger. Continued investment in organizations that demonstrate strong outcomes helps ensure the entire system can respond effectively to growing need.

At its core, Bethesda Cares is focused on doing the smart thing the right way...combining professional expertise, strong partnerships, and a clear focus on permanent housing to deliver meaningful results for our community.

I respectfully ask the Council to continue supporting Bethesda Cares at a level that reflects both the growing demand for services and the proven impact of its work.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to addressing homelessness in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martha', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Martha Marmo-Fernandes

Board Member, Bethesda Cares & resident of Montgomery County

David Sowell

[REDACTED]  
Bethesda, MD 20815  
[REDACTED]

Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

**April 9, 2026**

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez and Members of the County Council,

**Re: Support for Bethesda Cares in the FY27 Operating Budget**

As a Board member of Bethesda Cares, I urge the Council to continue and, if possible, increase funding for Bethesda Cares in the FY27 operating budget for homelessness services.

I support Bethesda Cares because it focuses on what works in addressing homelessness and what is most cost-effective for taxpayers: helping people move into permanent housing and stay there.

As homelessness has risen sharply in recent years, with Montgomery County homelessness reportedly up 160 percent since 2022, the County has depended on a coordinated network of service providers working through the Continuum of Care. [Bethesda Cares has consistently delivered strong results](#) by focusing on permanent housing solutions rather than more costly and less effective temporary measures.

In 2025, Bethesda Cares helped 60 individuals transition from homelessness to permanent housing, setting a new record for the organization. Notably, 98 percent remain stably housed. The organization also supported more than 1,100 individuals and families across Montgomery County. These results reflect both access to housing resources and the expertise of staff who build trust, guide clients through the leasing process, and provide ongoing support for long-term stability.

Bethesda Cares goes beyond direct service delivery. The organization helps strengthen Montgomery County's response to homelessness through leadership in coordinated entry, landlord engagement, and housing navigation. It also expands access to federal housing resources and, working in partnership with the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs, has secured more than \$30 million in VASH permanent housing subsidies for homeless and at-risk veterans.

County investment in Bethesda Cares supports street outreach, supportive housing, and eviction prevention. These efforts are proven to reduce the use of costly emergency services and enable quicker

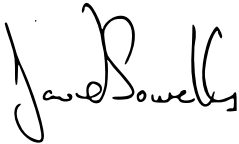
transitions to stable, permanent housing. This approach uses public funds efficiently and helps people regain stability.

Bethesda Cares collaborates with other nonprofit providers across the county, each fulfilling a distinct role. The system is most effective when the County continues to invest in organizations that deliver measurable results and demonstrate accountability at a time of growing need.

Bethesda Cares combines professional expertise, strong partnerships, and a clear focus on permanent housing to deliver meaningful and cost-effective results for Montgomery County. I urge the Council to fund Bethesda Cares at a level that reflects both growing need and the organization's proven effectiveness.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to addressing homelessness in our community.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Sowell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

**David Sowell**

Board Member, Bethesda Cares

April 8, 2026

Montgomery County Council

100 Maryland Avenue

Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Support for Bethesda Cares – FY Operating Budget

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez and Members of the County Council,

I am writing as a member of the Bethesda Cares Board of Directors to respectfully urge continued and increased investment in Bethesda Cares as part of Montgomery County's operating budget for homelessness services.

As homelessness has risen significantly in recent years, our community has relied on a coordinated network of providers working together through the Continuum of Care. Within this system, Bethesda Cares has consistently demonstrated strong outcomes through a housing-focused, solutions-based approach that prioritizes permanent housing over expensive and less effective temporary responses.

In 2025, Bethesda Cares helped 60 individuals move from the streets and shelters into permanent housing...a record year for the organization. Even more importantly, 98% of those individuals remain stably housed. Additionally, our programs at Bethesda Cares impacted over 1100 individuals and families across Montgomery County. These outcomes reflect not only access to permanent housing resources, but the effectiveness of skilled staff who guide individuals through the leasing process, building trust, and provide ongoing support to ensure long-term success.

Bethesda Cares' work extends beyond direct service delivery. The organization has played a key role in strengthening the broader homeless response system in Montgomery County. Through leadership in coordinated entry, landlord engagement, and housing navigation strategies, Bethesda Cares has strengthened system-wide performance and increased access to federal housing resources that bring tens of millions of dollars into our region, including our successful advocacy in partnership with the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs to secure over \$30 million in VASH permanent housing subsidy assistance for homeless and at-risk veterans.

County investments in Bethesda Cares support high-performing programs including street outreach, supportive housing, and eviction prevention. These programs are designed to reduce the use of costly emergency services and help individuals stabilize quickly in permanent housing. This approach reflects a thoughtful use of public

resources...prioritizing solutions that are both effective and efficient. When people are able to live as our neighbors in the community...they can thrive! ..and it's good for the community as a whole.

Importantly, Bethesda Cares works in partnership with other nonprofit providers across the county. Each organization contributes to a shared mission, and together the system is stronger. Continued investment in organizations that demonstrate strong outcomes helps ensure the entire system can respond effectively to growing need.

At its core, Bethesda Cares is focused on doing the smart thing the right way...combining professional expertise, strong partnerships, and a clear focus on permanent housing to deliver meaningful results for our community.

I respectfully ask the Council to continue supporting Bethesda Cares at a level that reflects both the growing demand for services and the proven impact of its work.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to addressing homelessness in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

Shannon Glynn Thomas

Board Member, Bethesda Cares

April 12, 2026

Montgomery County Council

100 Maryland Avenue

Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Support for Bethesda Cares – FY Operating Budget

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez and Members of the County Council,

As the President of the Bethesda Cares Board of Directors to respectfully urge continued and increased investment in Bethesda Cares as part of Montgomery County's operating budget for homelessness services.

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I respectfully ask the Council to continue supporting Bethesda Cares at a level that reflects both the growing demand for services and the proven impact of its work.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to addressing homelessness in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David L. King". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "K".

David L, King

President, Bethesda Cares Board of Directors

April 12, 2026

Montgomery County Council

100 Maryland Avenue

Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Support for Bethesda Cares – FY Operating Budget

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez and Members of the County Council,

I am writing as a student at Winston Churchill High School and a Student Project Leader for Bethesda Cares to respectfully urge continued and increased investment in Bethesda Cares as part of Montgomery County's operating budget for homelessness services.

As homelessness has risen significantly in recent years, our community has relied on a coordinated network of providers working together through the Continuum of Care. Within this system, Bethesda Cares has consistently demonstrated strong outcomes through a housing-focused, solutions-based approach that prioritizes permanent housing over expensive and less effective temporary responses.

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I respectfully ask the Council to continue supporting Bethesda Cares at a level that reflects both the growing demand for services and the proven impact of its work.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to addressing homelessness in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dylan King', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Dylan King

Student Project Leader, Bethesda Cares