

October 8, 2024

Karen Utz
WNY Regional Director
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Re: Village of Sherman LOS - NY Forward Grant Application

Subj: 124 E Main Street, **We Rock the Spectrum - Sherman**

Dear Ms. Utz,

I, Heather Gorée, and my husband Kevin, are the owners and managing members of Agapé Mas, LLC. Opening 'We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman' kid's gym is our dream coming true! We are very excited to support the Village of Sherman's application to the NY Forward Program for a \$4.5 million grant.

Among the revitalizing projects, we are honored to be considered the anchor project. We see the 124 E Main Street location in Sherman near I-86 and adjacent to Chautauqua Rails to Trails as an opportunity to reach many children and families in the region. The 23,000 SF of space with its high ceilings from the original 1929 Sherman Theatre, allows us to kick off the We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman sensory gym with expansion of our services in providing an inclusive place for all children of all abilities while providing meaningful support to the greater family. The unique sensory gym consists of specially designed and research-based equipment for children with disabilities, neurodiverse, as well as neurotypical kids, providing all children with a safe, nurturing, and fun environment, offering an array of rich, vital learning experiences through play.

The billion-dollar market of children's play and activity continues to grow exponentially. There is a great need for physical, emotional, and social supported activities for children in our underserved rural communities. With the success of 'We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman' will come growth and success for Sherman in its stimulation of the local economy by attracting people to the downtown in patronizing the restaurants, retail opportunities, and amenities. The connection to the adjacent trail brings additional possibilities, including the Autism Nature Trail extending the sensory experience to the outdoors.

We are amid the closing phase of purchasing the building, have engaged engineers, contractors, and architects to examine the building and prepare design plans, and have received the approval of the franchise for this site. A NY Forward award would see our plans fully realized much faster, providing more creativity and quality to the capital and operational budget decisions providing exponentially more for our kids and their families!

Awarding NY Forward funding to the Village of Sherman would expedite this anchor project, reinvigorating the old theater, benefiting Sherman and the surrounding communities, all while stimulating the local economy. Should you require additional information regarding this key project, please feel free to contact me on my cell or via email.

Thank you for your commitment to the betterment of children, families, and rural communities such as ours.

Sincerely,



Heather Gorée
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