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Budget Update Budget Update Budget Update Budget Update

Costa
Council Member
22nd District, Queens

Sincerely,

I look forward to working with you as we move forward with these new projects and initiatives.

We've been busy working in City Hall to implement special programs that make government work for real people. With the leadership of Speaker Mark-Viverito, the City Council passed its first budget this June. I'm proud of how transparent and open the process has been. This budget will greatly benefit all New Yorkers and I am proud of all the new initiatives that have been included. I am also excited to update everyone on the funding we were able to secure for several special projects throughout this district. Please visit our website, **council.nyc.gov/Costa**, for more information.

**Dear Residents of the
22nd Council District,**

Budget News from Council Member
Costa Constantinides

2014-2015 Budget Update

Council Member **Costa Constantinides**

BEAUTIFYING OUR PARKS

Green spaces are an integral part of our community. Parks and playgrounds are places for children to run around and play with their friends, for residents to enjoy picnics on sunny days, and for people to play sports. Green spaces also benefit air quality, reduce pollutants, and generally improve our environment.

Community members have kept Astoria Heights Playground and Moser Bulova Park beautiful through neighborhood cleanups, painting, and landscaping. I am proud that we're able to help make these spaces even more beautiful through funding allocations.

Borough President Melinda Katz and I allocated \$1.6 million to Astoria Heights Playground for upgrades and redesigns that include relocating the adult fitness equipment, installing new benches, as well as repairing fencing and gates. I have also allocated almost \$1 million to Moser Bulova Park in Jackson Heights for upgrades that include removing the bocce court, upgrading play equipment and installing a new spray shower.

These upgrades and beautifications will make our parks even more fun for people of all ages and will make our district an enjoyable place for residents as well as visitors.



PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR THE 21 CENTURY

Children need to have many opportunities to interact with technology in order to compete in 21st Century economies. To help give our schoolchildren that opportunity, I have allocated almost \$1.5 million to all our schools for technology upgrades.

We are also proud to announce that the City Council Merit-based Scholarship, formerly known as the Peter Vallone Scholarship, will give \$600 to every student with a B average or higher to use towards tuition at a CUNY school. I am proud to help make a college degree further within the reach of all.

Summertime can be the best opportunity for children to relax while enriching their minds. The City Council has allocated funding to several summer programs for children

that combine exercise of the mind and body, including the Junior Tennis & Learning (JTL) and the Sports & Arts in School Foundation (SASF).

JTL brings the joys of tennis and education to underserved children through its afterschool and summer programs. The programs help change the lives of children through the sport of tennis, providing them with the necessary tools to excel on and off the tennis court. There are summer programs already in Astoria Heights Park/IS 10 and PS 122. Parents can visit www.nyjtl.org for information on how to register.

SASF operates after-school and summer programs that serve more than 27,000 students in over 150 public schools. These students typically live in low-income neighborhoods and attend academically struggling schools in grades K-12.

Council Member Costa Constantinides - Budget Update 2014-2015

KEEPING OUR STREETS SAFE

Keeping our streets safe has also been a top priority for me during this budget negotiation process. I was able to allocate \$200,000 for countdown clocks on 21st Street as part of the city's Vision Zero initiative. The new city budget will also allocate more funds to put 200 more police officers on the street to patrol neighborhoods and keep our residents safe.



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY CLEAN



We are proud to announce a new initiative created by the City Council to keep our city clean. Clean NYC will allocate funds to each council district for cleaner buildings, sidewalks, and streets. Using my discretionary funds, along with \$65,000 from this initiative, we are excited to expand our relationship with The Doe Fund in Astoria.

This fiscal year, the "Men in Blue" will continue to sweep the sidewalks on all our existing routes: 30th Avenue, Broadway, and 31st Street, and we'll be adding additional routes for the "Men in Blue" to keep even more of our streets clean for residents and visitors. We also allocated more than \$30,000 for graffiti removal services to keep the buildings in our communities clean.



IMPROVING OUR LIBRARY SYSTEM

Our libraries are the keystones of our educational system. They provide valuable services to the public regardless of age, economic status, or stage in life. As the Chair of the Council Sub-Committee on Libraries, I am proud to have three world-class library systems that serve our city.

I have allocated funding to further improve our district's library branches and to widen the reach of the Queens Library into an underserved part of the district. I have allocated \$200,000 for a self check-in book vestibule at the Astoria Branch and \$655,000 for upgrades at the Steinway Branch that include a new elevator, lighting, security upgrades, and new furniture. I also provided funding to the Astoria Branch for a mobile lending operation in Astoria Houses where residents can borrow iPads.



INVESTING IN HEALTHCARE

I am proud of the world-class healthcare system we have in Astoria. Mount Sinai Queens, which recently celebrated its fifteenth anniversary, is undergoing a special expansion project to add more advanced technologies and high quality facilities. I thank the City Council and Speaker Mark-Viverito for allocating \$2.1 million for a new PET Scan machine that will be part of the expansion project.



SUPPORTING SENIOR CITIZEN PROGRAMS

I am proud to have allocated over \$100,000 to support our local senior centers and to support nutrition and case management services for senior citizens. The city's budget also includes funds to keep all NYCHA Senior Centers open.

I have also allocated funds for a ramp at P.S. 2, making it accessible to senior citizens and others in wheelchairs. With the ramp, P.S. 2 can again become a polling place for elections after several years of reassigning voters to other further away polling locations.