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Budget Update Budget Update Budget Update Budget Update Budget Update

Council Member COSTA CONSTANTINIDES

22nd District, Queens

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PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE

Children are our future and we must ensure they have the tools they need to improve our communities. That's why we allocated over \$1.5 million to public schools again this year to improve learning spaces.

As part of our initiative to improve science learning spaces in our public schools, we invested \$160,000 each at PS 84 and IS 126 for new hydroponic science labs. Plants and equipment will be installed in classrooms that use water and other mediums for plant growth. These labs provide hands-on education to students in many subjects including biology, agriculture, technology, and nutrition. I also secured funding from Borough President Katz for a new science lab at PS 300 and a new film studio at The Young Women's Leadership School.

Technology has long been integrated into our school's curriculum whether for science, reading, or math. As new technologies are always emerging, existing computers may become unusable. That's why we invested almost \$900,000 in technology upgrades at all public schools once again this year. Schools can upgrade their computers, laptops, SMART Boards,

or other pieces of technology. I thank Borough President Katz for also providing additional funding for technology at our public schools.

The City Council this year expanded our successful digital inclusion initiative. Many families throughout our city do not have adequate access to computers or the internet. This initiative connects schools with digital programming that exposes students to computer-based learning and research. The expansion of the initiative means we will allocate funding to three digital inclusion programs throughout our district.



Budget News from Council Member Costa Constantinides

2017-2018 BUDGET UPDATE Council Member Costa Constantinides

Dear Residents of the 22nd District.

I'd like to update you on the work we've been doing in City Hall as we implement our balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2018. We secured and allocated funding for public spaces across our district including schools, hospitals, and parks. This budget also includes funding to keep our neighborhood sustainable, clean, and safe. I look forward to working with you as these projects continue. Please visit our website Council.nyc.gov/Costa for more information.

Thanks.

Costa Constantinides Council Member 22th District, Queens

MAKING ASTORIA GREENER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE

As we continue our work in the City Council to make our city greener and more sustainable, we've made combating climate change a priority throughout our discretionary budget. In order to help us meet our goal of reducing emissions 80% by 2050 citywide, I allocated funding to encourage use of renewable energy at public spaces in our district. Queens Borough President Melinda Katz and I together allocated a total of \$1.1 million for solar panels at PS 122. As part of Participatory Budgeting and with our partner Assemblymember Aravella Simotas, we designated a total of \$300,000 for installing solar panels at the Queens Library Steinway branch. The Steinway branch and PS 122 will be the first library and public school in Astoria with solar panels. These investments will decrease emissions and teach children about the importance of

combating climate change at the same time. Long-term projects like these improve our environment and help form sustainable habits for our future.



IMPROVING HEALTHCARE OUTCOMES FOR WESTERN QUEENS

I am proud to have secured funding for a new acute stroke center at Mount Sinai Queens. a stroke. I appreciate the The \$1.8 million investment will be used for stroke patients Delegation for providing this so that Western Queens residents will no longer have to wait for an ambulance to take them to a hospital in Manhattan to receive timesensitive care. The healthcare that one receives during the period immediately following a stroke is especially vital to a patient's future and access to a stroke center in Western Queens will help

improve health outcomes for individuals who experience partnership of the Queens much-needed funding.



This year the Council expanded our successful Greener NYC initiative to \$3 million citywide. The initiative invests in environmental education, community service, and green-job training. These programs contribute to the improvement and conservation of our city's air, land, energy, open space and other vital resources.



Council Member Costa Constantinides - BUDGET UPDATE 2017-2018

HELPING OUR MOST VULNERABLE

This budget includes funding for our most vulnerable New Yorkers including families-inneed, veterans, and immigrant families. These citywide investments include a \$18.4 million expansion of the Emergency



Food Assistance Programs, an expansion of the Domestic Violence prevention initiative, over \$20 million in funding for the Veterans Tax Exemption, \$10 million for the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project, and continued funding for the Immigrant Healthcare Initiative. I have also allocated funding to Planned Parenthood and the Center for Family Representation.

TRANSFORMING OUR LIBRARIES

Libraries serve all our communities regardless of age, income, or status by providing a safe space for reading, research, and skill-building. It's important that all our library branches have the resources they need to provide these services.

I am proud to have secured \$3 million in funding for the Queens Library Astoria branch. The funding will go towards making the entire building ADA accessible, improvements to the children's room, and other upgrades. Thank you to Speaker Mark-Viverito for providing the largest allocation that this branch has received in decades.

We also allocated \$675,000 as part of Participatory Budgeting towards an accessible entrance at the Astoria branch, solar panels on the roof of the Steinway branch, and computer technology upgrades at both branches.



AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

While schools are closed for the evenings and for the summer, it's important for students to keep their minds active. This year the City Council worked to expand our Cultural After-School Adventure (CASA) initiative by \$2.4 million citywide. We will allocate funding to 13 CASA programs throughout our district. CASA programs expose students to performing arts and culture, such as music and theater, and students then perform for their classmates. We look forward to working with Astoria Performing Arts Center, CUNY Creative Arts Team, Little Orchestra Society, and other providers to bring arts and cultural programming to our schools.



We also allocated funding for summer activities for children including Junior Tennis and Learning, which combines exercise of the mind and body. There are summer programs in Astoria Heights Playground/I.S. 10 and P.S. 122. Parents can visit nyjtl.org for information on in-person registration.

SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS

I am proud to have designated funding to support our local senior centers and Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) programs. We provided



budget allocations to HANAC, Catholic Charities, Queensview, and other providers for the vital services they provide to seniors. The Council has continued our successful Support Our Seniors and Su-CASA initiatives that provide our seniors access to music, theater, dancing, and other creative arts. This year's budget also includes \$6.5 million toward increasing homecare services, \$1.2 million to extend the Weekend Meals Program, \$1.2 million to improve case management services, and additional baselined funding for all senior centers citywide.

IMPROVING HALLETS PENINSULA



At the Western end of Astoria, Hallets Peninsula has been in need of investment for decades. I am proud to have secured funding for safety improvements, playgrounds, and recreational spaces on the peninsula.

► We secured \$3 million in funding for improvements at Hallets Cove Playground to upgrade the empty asphalt blacktop into a multi-purpose ballfield. Thank you to Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for this investment.

► Whitey Ford Field will also be upgraded with \$2 million in funding. We secured a \$1.5 million allocation from Borough President Katz and I allocated \$500,000 for these improvements.

► We allocated \$1 million towards upgrading lighting at the NYCHA Astoria Houses parking lot and installing new closed-circuit TV cameras inside the stairwells. These upgrades will improve visibility and increase safety for all Astoria Houses residents.

► We also allocated additional funding for the Astoria Houses Basketball Court, an investment now totaling \$600,000.

INVESTING IN OUR PARKS

Improving our parks help improve entire neighborhoods. During the previous budget cycle, I was proud to secure almost \$3 million in funding towards updates at Charybdis Playground within Astoria Park. In addition to these discretionary allocations, I am excited that Astoria Park is included in the Mayor's Anchor Park program and received a \$30 million investment for large-scale upgrades. Following several public input workshops, the track-and-field area is in the design stage and the Parks Department is planning proposals for other areas throughout the park. We will keep everyone informed as we move this community-driven process forward.



KEEPING ASTORIA CLEAN

Continuing to keep our neighborhood clean has also been a priority for me this fiscal year. For the third year in a row, the Council has expanded our successful NYC Cleanup initiative by \$2.4 million citywide. We will again allocate over \$250,000 for sidewalk cleaning and graffiti removal services using funding from this initiative and from my discretionary budget.

Workers will continue to sweep sidewalks and empty litter baskets on major thoroughfares throughout Astoria including 30th Avenue, Steinway Street, Hoyt Avenue North, Ditmars Boulevard, and Shore Boulevard. We continued to invest in graffiti cleanup throughout the district - if you see graffiti, contact our office at (718) 274-4500 so that we can have it removed. Thank you to the Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless and the Queens Economic Development Corporation for once again providing muchneeded these services.



We also allocated \$60,000 for new tree plantings throughout the district as part of Participatory Budgeting this year. The Parks Department will determine the locations of the new plantings.

Following our investments during previous budget cycles, families will soon be able to enjoy improvements at Astoria Heights Playground, Sean's Place Playground, Hoyt Playground, Van Alst Playground, and Triborough Playground C.