



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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COUNCIL RESPONDS TO MAYOR'S PRELIMINARY BUDGET *Applauds Tax Relief, Base-lining of Critical Programs*

CITY HALL – January 25, 2007 - City Council Speaker Christine Quinn and Council Member David Weprin, Chair of the Council's Finance Committee, expressed optimism about the City's financial well-being and growth as a whole. She also welcomed the administration's tax relief measures, including tax breaks the Council has long promoted for small business, and to help working parents pay for child care. Additionally, Speaker Quinn was supportive of the proposed increases for the Administration for Children's Services, Parks, the Department of Youth and Community Development, and the agreement with the administration to baseline funding for cultural, parks and family day care services, in a significant step toward ending the budget dance.

Speaker Quinn said, "My colleagues in the Council and I will continue to examine the specifics of the Mayor's budget, agency by agency, as thoroughly and comprehensively as possible throughout the coming months and look for ways to improve on this preliminary proposal. By conducting full oversight of what the Mayor has presented today, we will be able to achieve the strongest, most responsible budget possible. We will also continue to push for a Rainy Day Trust Fund, to guard against potential financial uncertainty in the future."

Finance Committee Chairman **David Weprin**, said, "From the across-the-board property tax cuts, to the elimination of the sales tax on clothes, to the reduction in small business taxes, the Council and the Mayor are taking steps in the right direction to reward New Yorkers for the unmatched prosperity our city now enjoys. The additional \$500 million being dedicated for the healthcare trust fund will also guarantee that we are not only continuing the current success of our city, but ensuring a prosperous future for all of our residents."

Council Member **Bill deBlasio**, Chair of the Council's Committee on General Welfare, stated, "I am proud that the budget announced today includes significant increases for the Administration for Children's Services. It is crucial that agencies like ACS get the funding they deserve. I look forward to working with the Administration to ensure other important initiatives which keep this City thriving are properly funded."

"Out-of-School Time programs help keep our kids off the streets, and on a path to future success," said Council Member **Lew Fidler**, Chair of the Council's Committee on Youth Services. "The City Council has been a major advocate for expanding these programs, and I applaud the Mayor's decision to expand the OST budget by nearly thirty million dollars this

year. This additional funding will provide thousands more young people with a safe, positive environment both after school and during their breaks.”

“I am encouraged by the Mayor’s decision to baseline selected park funding. It sends an important message to all New Yorkers that parks and their maintenance is a quality of life issue. It is my hope that we see a distribution of these baseline funds to parks based upon need,” said Council Member **Helen Foster**, Chair of the Council’s Committee on Parks and Recreation.

Throughout the past year, the Speaker has convened a budget negotiating team each month. The group has engaged in long-term planning, strengthening efforts to more thoroughly evaluate and plan funding and to provide New Yorkers with the most thoughtful budget possible. In the coming months, the Council will review each agency’s specific budget and carry out budget negotiations with the Administration. The City Council and Administration are required to reach a final, consensus budget in June.

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