

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
**PARTICIPATORY**  
BUDGETING

This year, I have once again set aside \$1 million in discretionary capital funding for residents to decide how to invest in public projects as part of Participatory Budgeting. From April 7th-15th, district residents 14 and over will be able to vote for which capital projects they like best and the winning projects will be funded.

Participatory Budgeting provides an opportunity for residents to be involved in the city budget cycle. Not only will residents vote for their favorite projects, but all the project proposals on the ballot were created by community volunteers. The ballot includes updates at public schools, park



renovations, street upgrades, and other improvements at public facilities. Visit [pbnyc.org](http://pbnyc.org) for more information about this year's ballot and see below for voting sites.

This fall, nearly 400 residents attended our neighborhood assemblies and idea collection sessions, where over 600 ideas were brainstormed. Volunteers broke up into groups and transformed the list of ideas into a ballot of fully-formed project proposals with details and costs. We hope to see you at one of the voting sites below!

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL • 250 BROADWAY • 30<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR • NY, NY 10007



**NEWS** FROM COUNCIL MEMBER **COSTA CONSTANTINIDES**  
SPRING 2018

**22nd Council District, Queens**  
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**PARTICIPATORY**  
BUDGETING

You can decide how to invest \$1 million of public funds into our community's parks, schools, streets, and more. Make your voice heard by voting on which projects should win funding! Visit [pbnyc.org](http://pbnyc.org) for ballot info.

**VOTING SITES:** Office of Councilman Constantinides, 31-09 Newtown Ave., Suite 209  
Monday April 9th – Friday April 13th, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 7TH**  
**Queens Library at Steinway,**  
21-45 31st St., 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

**Queens Library at Astoria,**  
14-01 Astoria Blvd., 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 8TH**  
**Bohemian Hall,** 29-19 24th Ave., 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
**Urban Upbound,** 4-25 Astoria Blvd., 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

**MONDAY, APRIL 9TH**  
**North Queensview Community Room 2,**  
33-64 21st St. (34th Ave entrance), 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 10TH**  
**Community Board 1,** 45-02 Ditmars Blvd, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11TH**  
**Bohemian Hall,** 29-19 24th Ave., 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 12TH**  
**Urban Upbound,** 4-25 Astoria Blvd., 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 13TH**  
**MAS Ibn Sina Center,**  
46-1 20th Ave., 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 14TH**  
**Queens Library at Steinway,**  
21-45 31st St., 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Queens Library at Astoria,**  
14-01 Astoria Blvd., 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 15TH**  
**Bohemian Hall,** 29-19 24th Ave., 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Urban Upbound,** 4-25 Astoria Blvd., 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
**North Queensview Community Room 2,**  
33-64 21st St. (34th Ave entrance), 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.



**NEWS** FROM COUNCIL MEMBER **COSTA CONSTANTINIDES**  
SPRING 2018

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

I'd like to update you on our recent work in City Hall and in our neighborhood. I am proud to announce that I have been re-appointed as Chair of the newly expanded Environmental Protection Committee and have been chosen to sit on four additional committees including the Land Use Committee. Through my position as Chair of this stronger committee, which now has jurisdiction over the Department of Environmental Protection as well as the Office of Recovery & Resiliency, we will make our city more sustainable and resilient by reducing reliance on fossil fuels as well as increasing use of renewable energy.

I am honored to have also been named a member of the Council's Budget Negotiating Team, where we will work to ensure that our city's budget provides adequate funding for programs and capital projects in all our neighborhoods. Thank you to Speaker Corey Johnson for this opportunity – I look forward to working with him and my Council colleagues on a productive legislative session.

Please visit our website, [council.NYC.gov/Costa](http://council.NYC.gov/Costa), for more information on these important issues.

Sincerely,

**Costa**

**CLEANING THE AIR WE BREATHE**



Decreasing pollution was our top priority this legislative session. Less pollution means that we breathe cleaner air and have less risk of respiratory illnesses like asthma. For decades, power plants have been notorious for emitting dangerous pollutants that threaten our environment and public health. That's why we fought for cleaner power generation in order to reduce these risks.

I'm proud to announce that our fight has been a success! My Council colleagues recently passed INT. 1465, sponsored by me and Council Member Ritchie Torres. It ends use of dirty fuel oil in power plants by 2025 at the latest - leading to fewer hazardous greenhouse gas emissions in our air. This policy will result in emissions reductions of up to 125,000 tons of carbon dioxide, 3,600 tons of sulfur dioxide, 1,000 tons of particulate matter, and 3,500 tons of nitrogen oxides. Power generation will be cleaner, more environmentally safe, and less polluting. Better air quality will bring benefits to public health including reduce risk of asthma and hospital visits.

**COMBATING ASTHMA**



In addition to reducing emissions in our air that cause asthma, we have been working to combat the effects of the illness. Over 80,000 children have asthma in New York City, and 7,000 children are hospitalized for it every year. Asthma-related illnesses are a leading cause of children missing school – children with severe asthma can miss up to 30 days of school in NYC. That's inexcusable.

We introduced a legislative package to require that all public schools

have nebulizers available for students and that the Department of Health create annual reports on the prevalence of asthma and hospitalizations aggregated by demographic group. With nebulizers available to all public school students, they can receive treatment while in school rather than going home or to a hospital. Data and knowledge about the prevalence of asthma will help families be aware of asthma risk so children can get screened early if necessary.



EXPANDING AND GREENING  
OUR PUBLIC TRANSIT



As we work to reduce pollution, we are also making our city greener through our public transit options. This summer, our citywide NYC Ferry system expanded to Astoria. It has brought a vital transit option for residents of the Hallets peninsula and western Astoria while using our city’s greatest resource - our waterways. After years of advocacy for this expansion, we are excited that ridership has tripled citywide and that Astoria ridership has exceeded expectations!

As use of the ferry system has grown exponentially, we are working to innovate the type of energy we use to fuel the boats. I am proud that my Council colleagues unanimously passed my bill INT. 54 to encourage use of renewable fuel in city ferries. The legislation requires a two-year study of the feasibility of using alternative fuel or fuel technologies, including biodiesel, renewable diesel, hybrid electric, or fuel-cell electric. These types of renewable fuel options produce fewer emissions and air pollution than standard petroleum diesel fuel, which emits greenhouse gases that contribute climate change. Once the study is completed, the city will implement the use of renewable fuels if feasible and practicable.

BUILDING 21ST-CENTURY SCIENCE LEARNING SPACES



and technology updates, as part of my Science 2050 budget initiative. Students at PS 70, PS 84, and IS 126 will soon have these labs in their schools. Stay tuned for information on other schools as our budget process moves along.

REMOVING KIDS FROM SCHOOL  
TRAILERS AND OPENING SCHOOLYARDS

For several decades, students at the PS 151 and PS 2 buildings have had to learn inside school trailers and have less space to play in their schoolyards because of trailers. This was why I fought so hard to get kids out of these units, which were built to temporarily house students due to overcrowding but have become permanent fixtures. Borough President Melinda Katz and I repeatedly heard from constituents, parents, educators, and students about the poor conditions of some of these units and their occupancy of valuable yard space. We made their removal a key priority and worked collaboratively with the School Construction Authority and school officials over the past few years to accomplish this goal.

I’m proud that due to our efforts, trailers have been removed from PS 151 and will be removed from PS 2 soon. Students who had once been learning inside the trailers at the PS 151 schoolyard have a permanent indoor learning environment. An addition will be built at PS 2 to accommodate the removal of the modular unit there. All children deserve to learn indoors and have adequate yard space for recreation. I’m excited that we were able to accomplish these goals together.



MAKING PROPERTY TAX MANAGEMENT EASIER



For too long, our city’s homeowners have had to contend with a cumbersome Department of Finance website that is unsecured, not individualized, and not updated frequently. That’s why I introduced a bill that will make managing property taxes easier, creating greater transparency between the DOF and property owners. The bill would create a secure online portal for homeowners and other property owners to pay their taxes, apply for exemptions, directly submit questions to the DOF, and view their records.

Homeowners deserve a 21st-Century method of viewing information pertinent to their property. This legislation would make the process more individualized, transparent, secure, and quick. If property owners can more efficiently interact with the DOF and view property information, properties will be better managed, and everybody will win.

INVESTING IN OUR SENIORS

As always, we have made programming for senior citizens a top priority. This past budget cycle, we made allocations for Little Orchestra and Astoria Performing Arts Center as part of the Council’s Su CASA initiative. These organizations have been administering interactive programming for seniors that provides exercise for the mind and the body.

We invested funding in senior centers including HANAC Douris Center, HANAC Archbishop Iakovos Center, and the senior center at NYCHA Astoria Houses as part of the Council’s Save Our Seniors initiative. We also worked with the Parks Department to make the Astoria Pool more accessible to seniors by installing a new sturdy ladder for entering and leaving the pool. Swimming regularly is a low-impact method of exercising that helps all New Yorkers stay healthy.

We worked to ensure that seniors have access to necessary healthcare through our investment in Self-Help for Women with Breast or Ovarian Cancer.



IMPROVING OUR PARKS



We have been hard at work improving our parks, playgrounds, and greenspaces across the district. Western Queens families now have a world-class playground for children. After a year-long renovation project as part of the Community Parks Initiative, Van Alst Playground now has a new multipurpose space for sports, new play equipment, renovated handball courts, and an upgraded spray shower. The project also features green infrastructure improvements and lighting updates to bring environmental and safety benefits for the entire neighborhood.

Jackson Heights families will also soon have a brand-new park to bring their children to play in and enjoy the outdoors. I am proud to have allocated over \$1.3 million in funding for this renovation, which will help the park better serve families. The renovation project is currently underway. There will soon be two new sets of play equipment, swings, adult fitness elements, plantings, drinking fountains, and spray showers. The drainage system will be completely redone and new pavement will be laid, eliminating any trip hazards.