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2018-2019 BUDGET UPDATE
Council Member Costa Constantinides

Dear resident,



I'd like to update you on the work we've done in City Hall to pass a balanced budget for the Fiscal Year 2019. I was honored to serve this year on the Council's Budget Negotiating Team and can say we passed a fiscally responsible budget that prepares for any road bumps in the future. Thank you to Speaker Corey Johnson for including me in this process.

investment they deserve. This year's budget also ensures our city is more resilient, greener, and more sustainable for the 21st century. There is still much work ahead of us, but we continue to make many forward-looking investments for our neighborhoods. I look forward to working with you as we keep going through this process. Please visit our website (Council.nyc.gov/Costa) for more information.

Costa Constantinides
Council Member
22nd District, Queens

My office has secured more funding for District 22 so our public schools, healthcare facilities, and neighborhoods get the

IMPROVING ACCESS TO SCIENCE EDUCATION IN OUR DISTRICT'S SCHOOLS



Our district will see an expansion of our Science 2050 Learning initiative, with more schools getting state-of-the-art science, technology, engineering, and mathematics facilities. My ongoing effort in this field will provide six schools with new hydroponic laboratories under this budget. Students at Long Island City High School, P.S. 171, P.S. 85, P.S. 17, Q300, and the Young Women's Leadership School will get hands-on learning experiences about biology, nutrition, agriculture, and technology with the plant life and other equipment these labs provide. I.S. 141 will also receive a new STEM lab in this budget.

Upgrading school technology is a constant need, which is why I secured more than \$800,000 so District 22 principals can get new SMART Boards, laptops, tablets, and other means they see fit. Through a partnership with the Trust for Public Land and Borough President Melinda Katz, we have locked in almost \$1 million to reimagine the playground at P.S. 84 into one that is meaningful and safe. As a proud Astoria native who grew up playing in this yard, I am thankful for their support in making this a constructive area for future generations.

Our children deserve modern spaces and programs to adequately become the leaders of tomorrow. The Council has increased funding to the Cultural After School Adventures Initiative and Fair Student Funding programs, which foster growth inside and outside the classroom. More than \$1 million was also allocated in this year's budget for a pilot program to provide students with halal and kosher foods, because no child should choose between a meal and religious beliefs.

FIGHTING TO CLEAN OUR WATERWAYS



As chair of the Environmental Protection Committee, I fought to secure over \$108 million more this fiscal year to clean our waterways and repair broken sewage systems. Whenever New York City is hit by more than half an inch of rain, the overburdened system is forced to dump raw sewage and excess stormwater. Doing so, however, forces hazardous materials into the waterways that surround our homes, parks, and other public uses. This additional funding will help increase sewage capacity citywide and enhance infrastructure. Dangerous bacteria and pollutants have no place in New York City's ecosystem.

Budget News from Council Member
Costa Constantinides

Council Member Costa Constantinides - BUDGET UPDATE 2018-2019

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

All District 22 residents ages 14 and older will again be able to suggest this September how to spend \$1 million for local capital projects. The Participatory Budgeting process allows me to set this money aside every fiscal year to give residents a say in what they'd like to see for their neighborhoods. You can get involved by attending one of our scheduled Neighborhood Assemblies to brainstorm ideas, helping to craft a ballot, and then voting for your preferred project!

Last year, we approved four projects that repaired our roads, improved

conditions at the Astoria Houses' community center, funded a STEM lab, and a renovated the children's area at the Astoria Library.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSEMBLIES: ALL START AT 7 P.M.

SEPT. 19 — Astoria Houses Community Center,
4-05 Astoria Boulevard

SEPT. 24 — Bohemian Hall, 29-19 24th Avenue

SEPT. 27 — North Queensview Community Room 2,
33-64 21st Street (Side Entrance)



SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

Now, perhaps more than ever, we must back our immigrant communities in their quest to realize the American dream. This is why I have secured more than \$700,000 for the Ansob Center for Refugees and Immigrants. Funding will help this Astoria staple provide English language and citizenship classes to new residents.

The CUNY Citizenship Now Program also received a \$500,000 boost citywide, which gives each Council office the ability to provide constituents with an immigration attorney. Such legal advice has helped scores of District 22 residents, and I look forward to seeing this initiative grow. If you would like to make an appointment for advice, please call my office at 718-274-4500.

ENSURING THE HALLET'S COVE PENINSULA THRIVES



Continued investment on the Hallet's Cove Peninsula was important going into this year's budget negotiations. New allocations in this fiscal year bring the City's investment to this long-neglected region to \$25 million over the last five years, giving current and future residents the services they deserve.

An additional \$3.25 million was secured for the Astoria Library with the help of Speaker Johnson. Total investment to spruce up this key community center now stands at over \$7 million. Once renovations at the library are done, this facility will have new elevators, be ADA-compliant, have a new children's reading area, and feature multiple other technological upgrades.

This year's budget also builds upon upgrades to sections of the Astoria Houses on Hallet's Cove. New lighting will be installed at the community center thanks to a \$150,000 allocation, and another \$100,000 has been set aside for additional security cameras.

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE FOR WESTERN QUEENS

Queens residents shouldn't have to leave the borough simply to get quality medical treatment. The Queens Delegation and I firmly believe in that, which is why we successfully fought to include \$450,000 in the budget for new equipment at Mt. Sinai Queens hospital.

Investing in this vital facility is important, and the Council has secured more than \$7.5 million over the last five years to give its constituents world-class healthcare.



IMPROVING OUR TRANSIT SYSTEM AND MAKING IT ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

The City Council fought to include the Fair Fares pilot program in this budget — giving New Yorkers below the federal poverty line access to half-priced MetroCards. The \$106 million budgeted for this initiative is a message to the less fortunate among us that they will no longer be forced to beg someone to swipe them onto a subway.

You may also have been impacted by the eight-month renovation of the 30th Avenue station for the N and W trains, which finally reopened in late June. This year's budget includes a one-time contribution of \$418 million for signal work and other infrastructure under the MTA's Subway Action Plan, so the trains will actually run through the station.

KEEPING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS CLEAN AND GREEN

Keeping our neighborhoods clean and environmentally friendly has been a top priority of mine since taking office. So I'm happy to say this budget expands the Greener NYC initiative, which will bring \$70,000 to District 22 for sustainability projects, green job training and environmental education. Additional funds have been allocated to install solar panels on P.S. 171 and other schools. Not only will this reduce our dependence on dirty fossil fuels, but it will also provide students with a first-hand lesson on how renewable energy impacts their daily lives.

Our lives are impacted by the environment around us, and clean sidewalks and buildings can go a long way in improving that. This budget includes \$250,000 from my discretionary funds as well as money from the expanded NYC Cleanup program to make sure graffiti is removed promptly and our sidewalks are kept clean. This is the third straight year NYC Cleanup has been expanded, and I look forward to seeing all the more good the initiative can do.

