

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

KEITH POWERS



*October 2018*

Dear Neighbor:

Last month, we launched [Participatory Budgeting](#) in the district. The program allows residents in my district to submit ideas on what they want to see in the neighborhood, with \$1 million to allocate toward community projects, and ultimately vote on the ones that will most improve the community. It has been terrific to see many of you at our Neighborhood Assemblies, as well as other community events, like getting an IDNYC or questions answered during an L train town hall. I encourage you to continue to [submit your ideas](#) on how to spend \$1 million in the district. From here, a panel of volunteers called delegates will review each submission and make recommendations to make these ideas a reality. Voting will take place in March. You will be hearing from my office throughout the process.

It has been rewarding to have a seat at the table at various events across the city, too. Last month, I was proud to cut the ribbon at a universal pre-K site in the district that will benefit 144 students across eight classrooms. I also hosted a roundtable about the tourism industry in New York City, and how the City can continue to support industries that bring people to Manhattan.

As always, please reach out to my office with any issues or assistance that you need.

See you in the neighborhood,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith".

Keith

## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

### **Universal Pre-K Seats on the East Side**

Over the past year, my office has been working to secure additional universal pre-K seats for the East Side. Last year, 736 families applied for pre-K seats on the Upper East Side, but the neighborhood only had 550 seats. So far this year, three new locations have been added on the Upper East Side, with over 400 new seats that guarantee high-quality education for our youngest learners.

I recently celebrated the opening of the newest universal pre-K site in my district on East 57<sup>th</sup> Street that serves 144 students in eight, wonderful classrooms. I am grateful for the partnerships of Council

Member Kallos, who has been leading these efforts for the Upper East Side, as well as Senator Liz Krueger, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, and Assemblymember Dan Quart. I thank the NYC School Construction Authority (SCA) and Department of Education (DOE) for their partnership, as well. We still have more work to do to ensure that every parent has access to a universal pre-K program close to home. If you have ideas for sites in your neighborhood, please reach out to my office.



*To celebrate the opening of a new universal pre-K site, partners in government and the City join Council Member Powers in a ribbon-cutting ceremony.*

### **New Polling Location in East Midtown**

Over the past year, the Board of Elections (BOE) has relocated various poll sites, impacting residents in my district. Some residents on East 43<sup>rd</sup> Street, for example, were informed that their polling place had moved from across the street to East 54<sup>th</sup> Street, over a half-mile away. Making matters worse, the elevators at the new polling place were out of service. At a time when New Yorkers are looking to exercise their right to vote, this is discouraging to and depresses voting.

My office has worked quickly to find a more centrally located poll site. I am pleased to share that those who voted at the 54th Street Recreation Center will now vote at the Vanderbilt Y on East 47<sup>th</sup> Street this November. I thank the Vanderbilt Y for being flexible and gracious in becoming a poll site. Residents who had to travel over more than 11 blocks to vote in the last few elections will now only have to travel four blocks. My office will work with the BOE to ensure area residents are made aware of this change.

I will also continue to work with the BOE to find more accessible and convenient polling locations throughout the district. You can look up where you will be voting on Tuesday, November 6, here: <https://nyc.pollsitelocator.com/search>

### **Participatory Budgeting in District 4**

Thank you to those of you who have been involved in our inaugural efforts for [Participatory Budgeting](#). This program allows you to create and vote on project ideas, from park upgrades to school improvements and transportation innovations that will positively affect your neighborhood.

My office has been out in the community collecting ideas, and I have enjoyed meeting many of you at our Neighborhood Assemblies. We will continue to collect ideas at various events across the district. Following idea collection, volunteers will help my office create proposals and ready ideas for the ballot.

*Get Involved*

- Submit an idea: <http://bit.ly/CouncilPB> Deadline for online submissions is October 5, 11:59 P.M.
- Contact with questions and to submit ideas: [Kpowers@council.nyc.gov](mailto:Kpowers@council.nyc.gov) | 212-818-0580
- Sign up to volunteer to be a delegate: <http://bit.ly/CouncilPBVolunteer>
- Read more on my website: <https://council.nyc.gov/keith-powers/participatory-budgeting/>



*Council Member Powers engages with constituents during a Neighborhood Assembly at Carnegie Hill Neighbors.*

### **Addressing Gridlock during the UN General Assembly**

During the week of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), September 24 - October 1, congestion in Midtown Manhattan and surrounding areas is in a constant gridlock. In response to the gridlock, several changes were made to traffic patterns, including bus routes and bike lanes:

- The 1st Avenue M15/M15-SBS bypassed all stops from 34th to 57th Streets, and Department of Transportation (DOT) closed the protected bike lane on 1st Avenue between 40th and 51st Street.
- The 2nd Avenue bike lane between 42nd and 57th Streets and the unprotected bike lane on 40th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenue were also closed.

While it is vital that the UNGA occur with the proper safety precautions in place, it is also important that the needs of local residents are taken into account. Along with Assemblymember Dan Quart, Senator Liz Krueger, and Council Member Ben Kallos, I wrote a letter to the NYPD asking them to reconsider these detours during future UN General Assemblies.

### **Update: L Train Shutdown**

My office continues to remain engaged in the planning of the L train shutdown, scheduled for April 2019. Last month, I co-hosted a town hall with the MTA and Department of Transportation (DOT) and addressed concerns of my constituents surrounding quality-of-life interruptions from preliminary work to NYC Transit President Andy Byford and DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg. As a result of sharing these concerns, MTA has pledged to take the first steps in adjusting their commitments for the project:

- **Construction:** Many of my neighbors in Stuyvesant Town were concerned about the prospect of 24/7 construction. The MTA pledged that work above ground would not occur overnight, even during the shutdown.
- **Noise concerns:** In addition to placement of quieter equipment and sound blankets, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will be performing both regular and unannounced inspections to measure noise levels at the site.
- **Pollution:** MTA has created a dust control plan that includes tracking and measurement for safety. They have also pledged that any sort of hazardous materials will be removed without affecting the public.

Earlier in September, I sent a letter to NYC Transit President Byford detailing my and the community's frustrations with the above-mentioned construction and noise mitigation plans for the shutdown. Following a request from my office, President Byford has agreed to come tour the construction site on 14<sup>th</sup> Street to see the voiced concerns in person. I am hopeful the increased attention to the site will result in further progress.

More recently, the DOT also shared transportation mitigation plans along 20<sup>th</sup> Street for the shutdown, which upgrade bike lanes, bus ways, and pedestrian areas. The changes being made are meant to reduce anticipated congestion among these three travel streams. As a result, several parking spots in the area have been lost without notice. I have been in touch with DOT for clarity, as my office was not informed of these changes. I will keep the community informed of updates and have requested more proactive communication.

As we approach April, I will continue to pressure all appropriate agencies for final proposals to manage transportation and construction during the shutdown.



*Council Member Powers at the Grand Central Library to promote the IDNYC program.*



*Council Member Powers visits Asphalt Green during its Fourth Annual Senior Field Day.*

## CITY HALL

### **Protecting Our Open Spaces**

On Monday, September 17, I attended a hearing for the City Council Parks and Recreation Committee on Jointly-Operated Playgrounds (JOPs). Members of the community, as well as parks advocacy groups attended to learn more about the fate of JOPs in the city, which were originally created in partnership with the Department of Education in 1938. The current heightened interest in JOPs was spurred by the recent announcement regarding a city-approved development at the Marx Brothers Playground, just out of my district on East 96<sup>th</sup> Street. Through my questioning, I learned that playgrounds are not offered the same protections as parkland, primarily that they are not bound to the alienation process that other parkland is required by law to go through when making a decision to discontinue use, sell, or lease a park. I believe that our city's JOPs deserve protection, and my office will be looking into this issue further. I was joined by advocates from Friends of the Upper East Side, Municipal Arts Society, Carnegie Hill Neighbors, and many more groups that are deeply invested in protecting public spaces.

### **Charter Revision Commission: Land Use Reform**

Earlier this year, the City Council created an independent Charter Revision Commission to review the City Charter and ensure that we are meeting the needs of New York City residents in the 21st century. In late September, I testified at the Council's Manhattan hearing, specifically focused on land use. I know many of you care about the issue of overdevelopment in our neighborhoods. In certain areas of my district, overdevelopment has many impacts—whether in affordability, height and density, or impact on ground-level businesses. I encourage you to [submit your ideas](#) to the Commission if you would like to see changes in the way our City operates: <http://www.charter2019.nyc/contact>

### **Property Tax Commission**

In May, Mayor de Blasio and Council Speaker Johnson announced the formation of a new advisory commission to develop recommendations to reform New York City's property tax system to make it simpler, clearer, and fairer, while ensuring that there is no reduction in revenue used to fund essential City services. The last in-depth review of the system by a government-appointed commission was in

1993. The commission will solicit input from the public by holding at least 10 public hearings, the first of which are listed below:

- **Thursday, October 11, 2018, 6:30 P.M.**  
The Bronx  
Location TBD
- **Monday, October 15, 2018, 6:30 P.M.**  
Brooklyn  
Location TBD
- **Tuesday, October 23, 2018, 6:30 P.M.**  
Borough of Manhattan Community College Theater 2  
199 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

You can submit comments ahead of time at [PropTaxInfo@propertytaxcommission.nyc.gov](mailto:PropTaxInfo@propertytaxcommission.nyc.gov) or on [www.nyc.gov/PropertyTaxReform](http://www.nyc.gov/PropertyTaxReform).

### **Creating a City-wide Tourism Plan**

Along with Council Members Paul Vallone and Jimmy Van Bramer, I led a roundtable on tourism to gather local industry stakeholders and agencies to put together a comprehensive plan for tourism. In the past 20 years, the number of tourists visiting New York City has nearly doubled, from 33 million tourists annually to over 62 million today. The tourism and hospitality sector employs over 290,000 people across New York City, or around 1 out of 11 workers across the five boroughs, and generates more than \$4 billion in revenue for the City annually. Given this growth and potential—but also the challenges such growth poses with congestion and overburdened infrastructure—it is important to me that we have a more comprehensive plan for land use.



*During a tourism roundtable, Council Member Powers fielded and asked questions about the future of the industry for New York City.*

### **Criminal Justice Issues**

**Voting Rights:** As Chair of the Criminal Justice Committee, I held a joint hearing with the Committee on Governmental Operations on October 3 to address voting rights for those in the criminal justice system. Voting is a fundamental right and we must make every effort to ensure all voices in the community are heard, including those of currently and formerly incarcerated individuals. The Mayor's office has been working with advocacy groups to register individuals on

Rikers Island in preparation for the upcoming election. The Criminal Justice and Governmental Operations Committees heard three bills that would require the Department of Correction, Department of Probation, and citywide agencies to educate and facilitate voter registration for these individuals. I look forward to encouraging voter participation for all New Yorkers.

**Raise the Age Resolution:** A week ago, I attended a Juvenile Justice Committee hearing on the implementation of Raise the Age, a policy passed by the State in 2017 to raise the age of criminal responsibility for juveniles and move young people aged 16-17 off of Rikers Island. At the hearing, the committee unanimously passed my resolution calling upon the Governor to coordinate a review of cases involving juveniles convicted of a crime at the age of 16 or 17 before Raise the Age went into effect. Those who are currently incarcerated or sentenced in criminal court deserve to have their cases reviewed to ensure their sentences are equitable and just. I look forward to making more strides in the area of criminal justice reform.

**Better Wages for Detainees:** Detained individuals working at Rikers Island—the vast majority of whom have not been sentenced—make anywhere from 0.17 cents to one dollar per hour, doing tasks from working in the kitchen to digging graves on the City-owned burial ground on Hart Island. Following a national prison wage strike in September, I wrote a letter signed by all 22 members of the Council’s Progressive Caucus asking the Department of Correction to increase wages for incarcerated individuals working in New York City jails to make their pay more commensurate with their work. Implementing higher wages is not only the equitable thing to do, but it also allows individuals to pay back fees and save for successful reentry back into their community so we can lower recidivism.

## IN THE NEWS

*Town & Village*, September 21

### [L train neighbors worried about noise, dust and diesel](#)

“That is in addition to everything else that we’ve talked about, which is making sure that people will be able to get to work every single day and get around the city,” Powers said. “I would ask again that we have a real plan to address long-term construction area around 14th Street, that we have a dust mitigation and noise plan. We can still do better in addressing these issues.”

1010Wins, September 19

### [City cracks down on bike rentals making a mess in Midtown](#)

Bike sharing is great -- until you trip on one of the bikes while you're trying to walk on the sidewalk. With that and other complaints in mind, a Manhattan city councilman is taking action.

*Patch*, September 18

### [New Pre-K Facility Adds 144 Seats To East Side District](#)

Elected officials gathered Tuesday to celebrate the opening of a new universal pre-K center that will add 144 seats to Manhattan's east side.

*Daily News*, September 12

### [City lawmakers urge boost in pay for inmates who earn as little as 17 cents an hour](#)

The city Correction Department should pay detainees more than the 17 cents to a dollar an hour for labor behind bars, the City Council's Progressive Caucus said.

## SAVE THE DATES

### Events Hosted by Council Member Powers

**Council Member Keith Powers: Medicare Open Enrollment Presentation**

Friday, October 5, 2018, Stein Senior Center, 204 E 23rd St, 2nd Floor, 11:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

RSVP: [KPowers@council.nyc.gov](mailto:KPowers@council.nyc.gov) | 212-818-0580

**Council Member Keith Powers: Medicare Open Enrollment Presentation**

Tuesday, October 23, 2018, DOROT, 11 East 89th Street, 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

RSVP: [KPowers@council.nyc.gov](mailto:KPowers@council.nyc.gov) | 212-818-0580

**Council Member Keith Powers: Housing Resources Fair with Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)**

Thursday, October 25, 2018, Saint Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue, 6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

RSVP: [KPowers@council.nyc.gov](mailto:KPowers@council.nyc.gov) | 212-818-0580

### Community Events

**Film Screening: 100 Women Architects in the Studio of Frank Lloyd Wright (2009)** at the Guggenheim, 1071 5th Avenue  
October 6, 2018, 3:00 P.M., 4:00 P.M., and 6:00 P.M.

October 7, 2018, 3:00 P.M. and 4:00 P.M.

**Community Board 5 Full Board Meeting**

Thursday, October 11, 2018, 6:00 P.M., Xavier High School, 30 West 16th Street

**Community Board 6 Full Board Meeting**

Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 7:00 P.M., NYU School of Dentistry, 433 1st Avenue

**15th Annual Walk with Us to Cure Lupus**

Saturday, October 13, 2018, 8:00 A.M., Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum

**Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk**

Sunday, October 14, 2018, 7:30 A.M., Central Park 72nd Street Bandshell

**NYC DOE High School Admissions Fairs**

Saturday, October 13, and Sunday, October 14, 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M., MLK Campus, 122 Amsterdam Avenue

**Social Justice and Equal Rights Action Event by St. Bart's Youth**

Sunday, October 14, 2018, 10:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M., St. Bartholomew's, 325 Park Avenue

**Council Member Keith Powers: Confronting Prison Reform, A Panel Discussion**

Monday, October 15, 2018, Regis High School, 55 East 84th Street, 6:30 P.M.

RSVP: [events@regis.org](mailto:events@regis.org) | 212-288-1142

**Community Board 8 Full Board Meeting**

Wednesday, October 17, 2018, 6:30 P.M., New York Blood Center Auditorium, 310 East 67<sup>th</sup> Street

**Escape East Gallery Event at the Japan Society**



Friday, October 19, 2018, 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M., 333 East 47th Street

28th Annual Tompkins Square Halloween Dog Parade

Saturday, October 20, 2018, 12:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M., Tompkins Square Park

2018 Walk to End Alzheimer's

Saturday, October 27, 2018, 8:30 A.M., Pier 17 of South Street Seaport

Stuytown Halloween Spooktacular

Saturday, October 27, 2018, 2:00 P.M.- 5:00 P.M., Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village

Sutton Place Cleanup at Clara Coffey Park

Saturday, October 27, 2018, 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M., 54th Street and Sutton Place

Pumpkin Patch Fall Festival

Sunday, October 28, 2018, 1:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M., Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village

Frankenreads at The Morgan Library

Wednesday, October 31, 2018, 3:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M., 225 Madison Avenue

"First Fridays" Free Admission at The Frick Collection

Friday, November 2, 2018, 6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M., 1 East 70th Street

Tudor City Greens Fall Planting Day

Saturday, November 3, 2018, 9:00 A.M. - 10:00 A.M., Tudor City Greens, 38 Tudor City Place

Election Day

Tuesday, November 6, 2018, 6:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M., Across New York City

Find your poll site: <https://nyc.pollsitelocator.com/search>

Flu Vaccines for Adults at Mount Sinai, Co-Sponsored with State Senator Liz Krueger

Thursday, November 8, 2018 10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M., Lenox Hill Neighborhood House Senior Center at St. Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue

RSVP: [gresham@nysenate.gov](mailto:gresham@nysenate.gov) 212-490-9535

NYC Health + Hospitals

Health Insurance 101 Workshop

Thursday, November 15, 2018, 3:00 PM - 6:30 PM, NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan, 6th Floor Auditorium  
1901 1st Avenue, New York

Register by November 8t at: <https://metropolitanhealth101.eventbrite.com> or call 212-788-3450

New York Public Library Money and Finance Programs: [nypl.org/moneymatters](http://nypl.org/moneymatters)

Various dates and time, Midtown Manhattan and across New York City

Military Mondays Free Legal Clinic, First Monday of Each Month (except holidays)

1:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. Manhattan VA Hospital, 1st Floor Atrium | 423 E 23rd Street