

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

KEITH POWERS



September 2018

Dear Neighbor:

I hope you had an enjoyable summer. As the season winds down and school begins, I look forward to hearing about issues that matter to you. I am pleased to share that my office will offer [Participatory Budgeting](#). For the first time in Council District 4, residents in my district can 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. You can find full details below, [start submitting your ideas, and sign up to volunteer](#).

When I took office in January, I promised that preserving affordable housing would be a priority. Over the past several months, my office has played a leading role in an unprecedented affordable housing deal at Waterside Plaza. Announced in August, tenants in 325 units will see rent relief through a rent reduction, rent freeze, or reduced rent increases. Under the proposed deal, the units will be preserved as affordable housing for 75 years, through the year 2098. The preservation deal is groundbreaking and ensures that hundreds of tenants will be able to call Waterside Plaza home for the years to come. I thank all of my colleagues in government and partners in the City for their work on this, and look forward to continuing to preserve housing for all residents. You can read more about the deal in the [New York Times](#), and in my op-ed with Assemblymember Harvey Epstein in [Town & Village](#).

Lastly, I wanted to share a community story with a great outcome: a building in my district that had been without gas for upward of a year was also overcharged for steam costs. My office was able to step in to help the building restore gas after a 14-month outage and receive a \$108,351.35 refund for the error. While these over-charges are largely anomalies, I was glad my office was able to help. You can read the story in [West Side Spirit](#).

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

Keith

Keith

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

If You Had \$1 Million...Participatory Budgeting in District 4

Have a say in your neighborhood. My office is thrilled to join the City Council's next cycle of [Participatory Budgeting](#). This allows you – community members – to create and vote on project ideas, from park upgrades to school improvements and transportation innovations, that will positively impact your neighborhood. Projects will be voted on in spring 2019.

Get Involved

- Submit an idea: <http://bit.ly/CouncilPB>
- Sign up to volunteer to be a delegate: <http://bit.ly/CouncilPBVolunteer>
- Contact with questions: Kpowers@council.nyc.gov
- Read more on my website: <https://council.nyc.gov/keith-powers/participatory-budgeting/>
- Attend a Neighborhood Assembly to share your ideas. There will be other opportunities to submit ideas in-person throughout the month:

Monday, September 17, 2018, 12 P.M.
Senior Center at St Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue

Thursday, September 20, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
Carnegie Hill Neighbors, 1326 Madison Avenue

Monday, September 24, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
Carnegie Hall, 154 West 57th Street

Saturday, September 29, 2018, 1:00 P.M.
Podell Auditorium, Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital, 10 Nathan D. Perlman Place

Landmark Affordable Housing Deal for Waterside Plaza

In August, I was proud to announce a proposed affordable housing deal at Waterside Plaza to preserve 325 units through the year 2098. The deal comes with groundbreaking tenant protections and rent relief that will ensure existing tenants can remain in the community despite rising rents. The proposed agreement is contracted between Waterside Plaza and New York City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). The deal provides rent relief, including a rent reduction, rent freeze, or reduced rent increases. Following a unanimous vote from the Waterside Tenants Association, the proposed agreement has to be approved through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The City Planning Commission certified the plan on September 4.



Council Member Powers addresses the crowd during the Waterside Tenants Association (WTA) vote on affordable housing deal, with Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, Comptroller Scott Stringer, State Senator Brad Hoylman, and WTA President Janet Handal.

L-Train Construction and Quality of Life

As the City prepares for the L-train shutdown, my office is working to mitigate quality-of-life issues from construction. While I support and understand the necessity of the work being done now, I have

received numerous complaints from my constituents on noise and quality-of-life interruptions. It is critical that the New York City Transit Authority implement increased mitigation measures both as we approach the L-Train shutdown in April 2019 and during the repair work leading up to it. To address the situation, I wrote a letter to Andy Byford, President of the New York City Transit Authority, early this month voicing concerns from the community and requesting a meeting to discuss proposed construction mitigation solutions. My colleagues in government – Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Council Member Carlina Rivera, Borough President Gale Brewer, State Senator Brad Hoylman, and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein – joined me on the letter.

New Ferry Stop at Stuyvesant Cove

I was pleased to join the Mayor on the inaugural ride of the NYC Ferry System's recently added stop at Stuyvesant Cove, near 20th Street and the East River. As the City approaches the L-train shutdown, transportation alternatives for those in impacted areas are extremely valuable. I am thrilled that the new ferry stop at Stuyvesant Cove creates more travel options for my constituents. The Stuyvesant Cove stop is included in the new Lower East Side ferry route, which goes between Long Island City and Wall Street. The other stops on the route include East 34th Street and Corlears Hook on the Lower East Side. An additional ferry route was recently opened connecting our district to the Bronx. The Soundview route will provide service between Wall Street and Soundview in the Bronx with stops at East 34th Street in our district and at East 90th Street on the Upper East Side. You can see the full routes and schedules here: <https://www.ferry.nyc/routes-and-schedules/>

Preventing Overdevelopment: Closing Loopholes in Zoning

I recently signed on to a joint letter with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Council Speaker Corey Johnson to Department of City Planning Chair Marisa Lago, advocating for the agency to address and put an end to the exploitation of loopholes by developers. This letter, supported by the entire Manhattan delegation of the City Council, outlined some of the loopholes developers use to build out-of-context towers using illogical interpretations of zoning law. Some of these loopholes have led to excessive allotment of mechanical space, dramatic floor-to-floor heights, and the corruption of the traditional definition of a zoning lot. The proliferation of these megatowers has done nothing to increase our city's affordable housing stock, but decreased the predictability of how new development will affect the character of our neighborhoods. I am committed to pursuing a solution to this issue and will continue to work with community stakeholders and advocacy groups to make sure all voices are heard.



Council Member Powers spends time with residents at the Stein Senior Center this summer.



Council Member Powers joins Mayor de Blasio for the maiden voyage of the new ferry line off Stuyvesant Cove.

CITY HALL

Speed Cameras at New York City Schools

Restoring speed cameras is a victory for our City. As students return to the classroom, safety outside schools is just as vital as safety within. I advocated for the State Senate to return to session this summer to pass legislation for speed cameras, which failed to pass last legislative session. When the State was inactive on this legislation that has the potential to save the lives of young New Yorkers, the City thought outside the box and got this done. The legislation reinstates 140 speed cameras, which will be expanded across the City and protect millions of children. I thank Speaker Johnson, Mayor de Blasio, and Governor Cuomo for making this happen, as well as several of my colleagues in State government who supported their reinstatement.



Council Member Powers advocates for speed cameras during a press conference at Bellevue Hospital.

Campaign Finance Reform and New Legislation

There is a geographic gap in campaign fundraising throughout our city. Based on findings in my office's newly released report, [50 Ways to Leave Your Borough: A Campaign Finance Reform Proposal](#), one

candidate in the 2013 Public Advocate race received 2,590 contributions from Manhattan, but only 11 from Staten Island. And in the 2005 Public Advocate election, one candidate received 1,303 contributions from Manhattan, but only 22 from Staten Island, and 34 from the Bronx. This summer, I introduced legislation that would require candidates running for citywide office--mayor, public advocate, or comptroller--to obtain at least 50 contributions from residents in each borough in order to qualify for public funding for their campaign. Council Members Joe Borelli and Fernando Cabrera are co-sponsors of the legislation, and represent Staten Island and the Bronx respectively, boroughs that have historically experienced an imbalance in contributions received. You can read the findings here: <http://bit.ly/50WaysLeaveBorough>.

Criminal Justice

City Announces Design of Borough-Based Jails

In August, the City announced design plans for the five facilities that will ultimately replace Rikers Island. Modern, community-based jails will be safer, more rehabilitative, and built on the needs of those staying and working there. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Council, the Mayor, and advocacy groups to ensure these plans are executed responsibly, safely, and with community feedback in mind. The facilities will be constructed over the next 9 years, and I will share updates as they arise.

Ending Charges for Phone Calls at City Jails

As Chair of the Criminal Justice Committee, I was proud to push through first-of-its-kind legislation to eliminate fees for phone calls from City jails, marking a significant achievement for criminal justice advocacy, as well as incarcerated individuals and their families.

Hearing on Sexual Harassment in City Jails

On September 6, I led a joint hearing to examine sexual abuse and harassment at City jails. Sexual abuse and harassment allegations increased by 40 percent from 2016 to 2017, based on recent reports from the Department of Correction. Together with Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Chair of the Committee on Women, and Council Member Rory Lancman, Chair of the Committee on the Justice System, we cross-examined the Department of Correction and Board of Correction to evaluate practices in place to prioritize safety, and to prevent and manage these occurrences.

IN THE NEWS

New York Post, September 6

[City jails facing massive backlog of sex abuse claims](#)

The city jail system has a backlog of 1,081 allegations of sexual abuse and harassment of inmates that have not been fully investigated — including 21 cases dating back to 2015, officials said Thursday.

Daily News, September 6

Op-Ed: [Legacy admissions and basic fairness: The wrong way to boost students' college admissions chances](#)

This time of year, college students throughout the country set foot on campus and begin a journey toward a higher degree, a career and economic opportunity.

Patch, August 29

[Lower East Side Ferry Launches As De Blasio Considers New Lines](#)

The Lower East Side NYC Ferry route launched Wednesday — the last of six ferry lines sailing New Yorkers across the city's waterways.

Town & Village, August 16

Op-Ed: [Blueprint for affordable housing](#)

As rents continue to climb, the City is working to create, preserve, and secure affordable housing for New Yorkers. Last week, we announced a breakthrough.

West Side Spirit, August 14

[Mind the Meter](#)

Residents of a midtown condo building recently found themselves on the receiving end of a deposit any New Yorker would welcome: a six-digit refund from Con Edison. A hyperactive steam meter at Gallery House, a 183-unit building at West 55th Street and Sixth Avenue, led the utility to overcharge residents by more than \$108,000 over a roughly two-and-a-half-month period.

New York Times, August 8

[A Rare Break for Renters: 325 Units at Waterside Plaza Could Become Affordable](#)

Residents used to pay well below market rates at Waterside Plaza, raising families and growing old in a middle-class Manhattan community of four residential towers on the East River. But rents soared and scores of tenants moved out after the development aged out of the state's Mitchell-Lama program two decades ago. The surrounding Manhattan neighborhood changed, and today only about 28 percent of the apartments are still occupied by longtime residents.

Our Town, August 7

[Meeting of the Minds: A CEO and an elected leader on NYC's growing technology industry](#)

You might not know Fog Creek Software, but your coder friends probably do. The Manhattan-based tech company made its name developing products used and loved by computer programmers. Past Fog Creek hits include the project management program Trello and the website Stack Overflow, a question-and-answer and employment forum for developers with 50 million monthly users — “slightly more popular than the Washington Post,” CEO Anil Dash points out.

SAVE THE DATES

Broadway Week New York City 2018: <https://www.nycgo.com/broadway-week>
September 3-16, 2018, various times, Theatre District and other locations

Community Board 8 Full Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 12, 2018, 6:30 P.M., New York Blood Center at 310 East 67th Street

Community Board 6 Full Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 12, 2018, 7:00 P.M., Podell Auditorium at the Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital
Special Agenda Item: Vote on Waterside Plaza deal

Primary Elections

Thursday, September 13, 2018, 6:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M., Across New York City

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

Community Board 5 Full Board Meeting

Thursday, September 13, 2018, 6:00 P.M., Xavier High School, 30 West 16th Street

Muslim Volunteers for New York Concert: Yasser Tejeda and Palotre

Friday, September 14, 2018, 4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M., Ruppert Park, 1741 East, 2nd Avenue

Autism Speaks Walk

Sunday, September 16, 2018, 8:30 A.M., Pier 17 of South Street Seaport

Council Member Keith Powers: Participatory Budgeting Neighborhood Assembly

Monday, September 17, 2018, 12:00 P.M.

Senior Center at St Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue

Council Member Keith Powers: Participatory Budgeting Neighborhood Assembly
Thursday, September 20, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
Carnegie Hill Neighbors, 1326 Madison Avenue

Council Member Keith Powers: IDNYC Enrollment
Saturday, September 22, 2018, 10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M., Grand Central Library, 135 East 46th Street

Museum Day: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/museumday/museum-day-2018/>
Saturday, September 22, 2018, all day, various museums across the country

SAFE (Solvents, Automotive, Flammables, and Electronics) Disposal Event
Sunday, September 23, 2018, 10:00 A.M.- 4:00 P.M., North Plaza of Union Square

Council Member Keith Powers: Participatory Budgeting Neighborhood Assembly
Monday, September 24, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
Carnegie Hall, 154 West 57th Street

Council Member Keith Powers: Participatory Budgeting Neighborhood Assembly
Saturday, September 29, 2018, 1:00 P.M.
Podell Auditorium, Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital, 10 Nathan D. Perlman Place

7th Annual Into The Light Walk for Epilepsy Awareness
Sunday, September 30, 2018, 9:00 A.M., Pier 25 at Hudson River Park

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.
Location TBA

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, Naumburg Bandshell at Central Park 72nd Street

Community Board 8 Full Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 17, 2018, 6:30 P.M.
Location TBA

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

Pumpkin Patch Fall Festival
Sunday, October 28, 2018, 1:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M., Stuyvesant Town

New York Public Library Money and Finance Programs: nypl.org/moneymatters
Various dates and time, Midtown Manhattan and across New York City