

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

KEITH POWERS



April 2019

Dear Neighbor:

Thank you for a terrific Participatory Budgeting Vote Week to kick off the month. This year, I enlisted residents' help with how to spend \$1 million in our communities, with projects that range from improving school infrastructure to planting more trees. My staff and I collected thousands of votes from residents in the district while visiting senior centers, gyms, libraries, and schools. I look forward to sharing the winning projects with you in the coming days.

April also marks Earth Day, an important reminder of the impact we have on Earth's limited resources. At a local, national, and global level, the impact of climate change has become a growing concern. New York City is still recovering from the effects of Superstorm Sandy. We need to be ready for and protected from the next major weather event. The City is continuing to share plans with regard to the East Side Coastal Resiliency Project, which will protect parts of the East Side of Manhattan most vulnerable to a storm surge, from Montgomery Street to East 25th Street. Please find a detailed update below, as the project is expected to begin in spring 2020.

I have heard from several residents regarding congestion pricing following its passage in the State Legislature. This is a positive step to manage the city's over-trafficked streets and to fund the public transportation system. I understand that there are several questions regarding the program's implementation and its exemptions. As details are confirmed, I am supportive of creating rules in this process that address those people who live in the zone. You can read on for details.

Please remember that my office is a resource for you, and I encourage you to call or email me at any time, at 212-818-0580 and kpowers@council.nyc.gov.

Regards,

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

Keith

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Update: L Train Project

Starting on April 27, L train service will be dramatically altered on nights and weekends to facilitate construction as part of the renewed L train project. Train traffic in both Manhattan and Brooklyn will be curtailed on weeknights beginning at 8 P.M. and on every weekend for 15 months. The MTA and Department of Transportation (DOT) are working toward launching M14A-SBS and M14D-SBS service. After more than a year of advocating for reduced hours in disruptive construction, the MTA agreed to end construction at 7 P.M. each night rather than at 11 P.M. along 14th Street between 1st Avenue and Avenue B. You can find more information on the L train project at new.mta.info/l-project.

East Midtown Investments in Public Transit

On March 25, the MTA announced that JPMorgan would be contributing to transit upgrades at Grand Central Terminal as part of their proposal for a new headquarters in East Midtown. For the past year, I have been in discussion with JPMorgan as they have worked on plans at 270 Park Avenue. During this process, I have asked them to consider transit upgrades and other public benefits as a commitment to the East Midtown Rezoning. Last month, with support from Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and the local community board, we were able to successfully push for additional public space at the site. This announcement further illustrates JPMorgan's investment in Midtown as part of the East Midtown Rezoning.



Council Member Powers talks to Girl Scout Troop 3362 about civic engagement and how to get involved in their communities.

East Side Coastal Resiliency Project

The City will begin the public land use review process (ULURP) for the East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) Project on April 22. The proposal includes building a series of flood protections for my district, centering on a seawall, which will extend up from 14th Street near Murphy Brothers Playground, across Stuyvesant Cove, and end in Asser Levy Playground. The construction of the ESCR will bring essential protections from storms and flooding to Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village. It also necessitates

the temporary closure of the aforementioned parks during construction. I am working with the ESCR Project team to ensure that the park closures will be staggered and implemented in an efficient manner. An additional infrastructure proposal in the plan calls for more construction on 20th Street and Avenue C, which I have asked the project team to reconsider due to issues caused by the recent L train redesign. I am hopeful that we will be able to resolve these issues as we move forward in the design process.

Lenox Hill Hospital Renovation

Last month, Lenox Hill Hospital revealed plans for a large-scale renovation and expansion of its facilities on the Upper East Side. Currently, the hospital occupies an entire city block, between Park and Lexington Avenues, from 76th to 77th Street. The plan includes the construction of two towers: a 516-foot hospital room building on Lexington Avenue and a 490-foot, 200-unit residential building on Park Avenue. Within the new facilities, Lenox Hill Hospital will quadruple the size of its emergency room, design private rooms for patients, add technology to its operating rooms, and more. As this plan progresses, it is important to me that there is strong public participation and that the concerns of those who live near the hospital are addressed through the land-use process.



Council Member Powers joins colleagues at the St. Patrick's Day Parade on 5th Avenue.

Neighborhood Improvements at Tudor City

For the past year, my office has responded to concerns from several Tudor City residents about the condition of the stairs at East 42nd Street and Tudor City Place. I have been working with the Department of Transportation and the Parks Department to address damaged stairs and the adjacent non-functional lights. The Department of Transportation recently began repairing the stones on the staircase, and my office is continuing to work with City agencies to fix the light issue. The stairs also lead to the Tudor Grove Playground. In response to concerns about the need for repairs at both this and the Mary O'Connor Playground, I allocated \$500,000 for their renovation in last year's budget. The Parks Department is undergoing preliminary design for both playgrounds.



Council Member Powers joins Council Member Kallos to celebrate the retirement of Detective Chris Helms from the 19th Precinct.

Congestion Pricing to Come to New York City

On April 1, congestion pricing passed the budget in the State Legislature. Although the City Council did not have a vote in this plan, I am carefully paying attention to the implementation of the plan. The legislation that was approved in Albany contains language that authorizes congestion pricing and creates a commission to determine specific details of the plan. The following is included in the plan:

- A congestion pricing zone south of 60th Street in Manhattan with E-ZPass technology used as a mechanism for tolling;
- Cars and trucks traveling on the West Side Highway, FDR Drive, and Battery Park Underpass are exempt from the toll unless they enter the congestion pricing zone;
- Exemptions for residents making less than \$60,000 who live inside the zone.

From here, a six-member panel will work to determine pricing and future details. I will work with my colleagues in State government to ensure that our community is treated fairly. I would encourage you to bring your comments to your State representatives, as well.

CITY HALL

FY2020 Budget Process

Last month, the City Council held budget hearings with City agencies to prepare for the FY2020 budget. During this budget process, I am working with my colleagues in the Council to negotiate a fair and balanced budget with the Mayor that reflects the needs of New Yorkers and our communities. In response to the Mayor's budget, the City Council is calling for greater transparency and to fill the gaps in critical services like public education and food security. Throughout the process, I will continue to push for the Council and Mayor to save money, appropriately prepare for the future, and reduce spending in the budget. You can read more information at: <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/>.



Council Member Powers at the Yorkville Library as a poll site for Participatory Budgeting.

New Laws: Protecting New Yorkers from Lead

Last month, the City Council passed a package of bills to expand lead testing and safety standards across the City, which will primarily benefit children. The bills will bring New York City in line with federal standards on lead testing, expand requirements for sites where children are at high risk of exposure, and increase outreach efforts on the part of the Department of Health to raise awareness of lead poisoning prevention. It is important to me that we continue to expand protections for New Yorkers to ensure that all children growing up here are safe and healthy.

Criminal Justice Update: Rikers Island Land Use Process and Bail Reform

In March, the City's public land use review process (ULURP) for new borough-based facilities to replace Rikers Island began. In my role as Chair of the Criminal Justice Committee, I will be working to ensure that through the land use process we fully commit to not only closing Rikers, but also transforming our entire criminal justice system. At the City level, that means expanding our commitments to diversionary programs, creating real culture change in the new facilities, and establishing stronger reentry services for people leaving City jails.

On April 9, the City Council passed my legislation to eliminate fees associated with paying bail by credit card in New York City. The bill removes the 2.49% non-refundable fee charged on credit card bail payments made online, and the 8% fee charged on credit card payments made in-person. Fees on bail create unnecessary financial hardship on those in the justice system and their families, simply because they do not have cash on-hand. By eliminating the fees associated with paying bail, we eliminate an unnecessary financial hardship that has for so long been associated with the justice system.

IN THE NEWS

March 26, [JPMorgan Agrees to Fund Transit Upgrades Near Its New Manhattan Headquarters](#), *Bloomberg*

JPMorgan Chase & Co. agreed to contribute to transit improvements near its expanding midtown Manhattan headquarters after city officials called on the company to shoulder more of the costs of its growth.

March 19, ["Condo on stilts" paused](#), *Our Town*

As the city prepares to tighten restrictions on developers' use of mechanical voids — large, empty spaces within buildings that primarily serve to inflate the height, views and market value of the floors above — a planned Upper East Side tower frequently cited by critics as among the most egregious examples of the practice is in limbo as the Department of Buildings evaluates void-related objections concerning the project.

March 17, [Local officials, interfaith leaders speak out against attacks on religious communities](#), *Pix11*

Local officials and religious leaders came together across city Sunday afternoon to speak out against recent attacks on religious communities.

March 12, [New York City Looks to Eliminate Hidden Bail Fees](#), *The Appeal*

New York City may soon take an important step toward reducing the burden placed on people entangled in the criminal legal system.

SAVE THE DATES

Events with Council Member Powers

Mobile District Office Hours

Sit down with representatives from my office to talk about the issues in the district you care about, and work toward solutions. This is a great opportunity to meet in-person with our constituent services team and get to know my office a bit better.

All mobile district office hours will be held from 12:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.

Yorkville Library, 222 East 79th Street

Thursday, April 18, 2019

Stuyvesant Town Community Center, 449 East 14th Street

Thursday, April 25, 2019

Thursday, May 30, 2019

Family Law Legal Clinic with the Urban Justice Center's Domestic Violence Project

Make an appointment for individual and confidential legal consultations on:

- Child and Spousal Support
- Custody and Visitation
- Orders of Protection
- Issues regarding consumer debt and identify theft
- Assistance completing Crime Victims Compensation applications
- Options for victims of crime

- Assistance for victims of financial abuse
- Information about domestic violence

Office of Council Member Keith Powers
211 East 43rd Street, Suite 1205
Friday, April 26, 11:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M.

RSVP to kpowers@council.nyc.gov.

Community Events

CB6 Full Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 7:00 P.M.
433 1st Avenue (NYU School of Dentistry), Room 210

CB5 Full Board Meeting
Thursday, April 11, 2019, 6:00 P.M.
Xavier High School, 30 West 16th St. | 2nd Floor Library

CB8 Full Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 17, 2019, 6:30 P.M.
Manhattan Park Theatre Club, 8 River Road, Roosevelt Island

Escape Velocity for Veterans: Embracing Change, Surviving Transition
Monday, April 29, 2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Combat Veteran and Entrepreneur Guest Speaker: Jason Cahill
To Register: yu.edu/carecafeevents

Woodstock Senior Center Events
Every Saturday at 1:30pm: Town Hall Theater Group
April 13 at 12:00pm: Springtime Celebration
April 27 at 12:00pm: April Showers Party
April 30 at 1:00pm: Magic Show

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

Manhattan VA Hospital Military Mondays Free Legal Clinic
First Monday of Each Month (except holidays) 1:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.
423 East 23rd Street | 1st Floor Atrium

Did you know you can qualify for free tax prep? AARP and Ariva provide tax services to those in need:
AARP Tax Aide
58th Street Branch Library
127 East 58th Street, 2nd Floor
Open January 30 through April 13
Wednesdays 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.; Saturdays 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Open to all taxpayers, with special attention to those 60 and older

Ariva
Mexican Consulate
27 East 39th Street
Open January 25 through April 12
Fridays 8:30 A.M.-4:00 P.M.
Appointment only: call (212) 217-6424
For all filers: Income below \$55,000. Individuals without dependents: \$30,000, Families with dependents: \$55,000