

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

KEITH POWERS



Dear Neighbor:

On June 19, the New York City Council passed the 2019-20 budget for the City of New York. The budget includes many of the priorities the Council pushed for in order to improve the lives of all New Yorkers, including a commitment to work toward pay parity for day care providers and fair funding for parks. I was proud to play a strong role in ensuring that the priorities of our community were met during the budget process.

The budget comes at a time when the economy is doing well and the City's fiscal health is strong. Nevertheless, it is important that we plan ahead for both the unexpected and anticipated financial constraints. I urged my colleagues successfully to put \$250 million into our reserves and to commit to funds for the 2020 Census, to ensure that we receive the federal funding owed to New York.

With our new budget comes historic investments in parks and libraries. During negotiations, I heard from hundreds of constituents who asked us to prioritize our public spaces that serve both our community and the city as a whole:

- **Enhancing Library Funding:** This historic investment – our biggest investment in libraries to date – includes \$33 million for libraries. The Council ensured there were no reductions to libraries and has enhanced funding to support the three library systems so that they can continue to maintain, grow, and offer the programs and services they have long provided. Libraries have an essential presence in every neighborhood of New York, providing indispensable services in a safe and reliable space to youth, seniors, and immigrants, among other New Yorkers. Early literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages classes, and video visitation for incarcerated individuals are just some of the numerous agency partnerships and department collaborations the systems offer each year.
- **Fair Funding for Parks:** A historic investment in our parks that includes urban park rangers, parks enforcement patrol officers, and forestry management. This includes \$43 million in the City's parks that will fund 50 new Urban Park Rangers, 80 Parks Enforcement Patrol officers, 150 maintenance workers and gardeners, forestry management, and the Green Thumb program.

The budget also makes other important investments in our communities:

- **Picking Up More Trash** (\$8.6 million): This allocation is for extra sanitation services including for extra litter baskets throughout the five boroughs. This is more than double the amount allocated last year.
 - I am also pleased to announce additional basket truck pickups and mechanical broom sweeping across the district through funding from the NYC Clean Up Initiative, as well as funding for local flexible support on trash maintenance.

- **Providing Senior Meals** (\$10 million): The City's Department for the Aging's budget will baseline \$10 million, growing to \$15 million in Fiscal 2021 for home-delivered meals and kitchen staff.
- **Increasing Social Workers in Schools:** Funding for 285 school social workers, which includes 85 social workers funded by reallocating ThriveNYC resources and 100 social workers for Bridging the Gap to support students in shelters.

This year was the first my constituents were able to have a say in how the budget is spent through Participatory Budgeting. The winning projects include:

- New Districtwide Tree Planting and Tree Guards: \$150,000
- New Bathrooms at Wagner Middle School (M.S. 167): \$200,000
- Districtwide Countdown Clocks at Bus Stops: \$200,000
- Districtwide Technology Upgrades for Libraries: \$250,000
- Technology Upgrades for Schools Across Council District 4: \$120,000

In addition, the Council will be adding and restoring cultural after-school programs throughout the city, giving more students in my district a chance for activities after school and during the summer months.

You can read more about the FY 2020 budget and priorities on the Council's website:
<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/fy2020/>

With a new budget, New York can get to work and grow our investments in community and city programs, which will improve every neighborhood and most certainly the lives of residents in my district.



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