



Published in the

# WALL STREET JOURNAL

## New York City Council Seeks More Spending in Fiscal 2016

Council want to add \$406.9 million to mayor's proposed \$77 billion budget

By Mara Gay

April 14, 2015

The New York City Council wants to add more than \$400 million to Mayor Bill de Blasio's proposed \$77 billion budget, looking to set aside additional money for police, public housing and immigrant services.

"We're going to truly invest in communities and neighborhoods across New York City from the ground up," City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito said Tuesday.

The council proposal seeks to add \$406.9 million to the mayor's preliminary spending plan for fiscal 2016, which starts July 1.

Among council desires not included in the mayor's budget: \$68.7 million for 1,000 more police officers; nearly \$19 million for immigrant services; and \$17.3 million for a year-round youth employment program.

The budget must be approved by the mayor and council by June 30.

Separately, the council is proposing a number of tax initiatives. The city's Earned Income Tax Credit for low-income taxpayers with children would be doubled; a property-tax rebate would be given to households with incomes below \$100,000; and the child-care credit would be expanded. All that adds up to \$222 million in tax breaks.

The speaker and her aides said the tax breaks and higher spending would be offset by increased revenue projections and lower debt costs.

They said additional revenue could result from a proposed pied-à-terre tax on properties valued at more than \$5 million that aren't primary residences. That proposal would require approval from Albany.

Ms. Mark-Viverito also proposed adding \$3.5 billion to the city's 10-year \$67.7 billion capital budget over the next five years.

Changes to the budget process itself were also on Ms. Mark-Viverito's mind. She said the mayor should offer more details sooner so city lawmakers can more thoroughly vet the administration's proposals, particularly its plan to build 80,000 new units of low and moderate-income housing over the next decade.

A spokeswoman for Mr. de Blasio said the administration would "look forward to working with the council throughout the budget process" and said further details of the mayor's plan would be released in May.



Published in the

# WALL STREET JOURNAL

Maria Doulis, director of city studies at the Citizens Budget Commission, called the proposed council spending “substantial,” and said it was somewhat at odds with the council’s stated goals of addressing long-term liabilities and building up budget reserves.