



October 2, 2012

Dear Fellow East Siders:

Tonight, the Public Works Department will present information about the proposed \$40 million infrastructure bond. The meeting will take place at the **Nathan Bishop Middle School at 7:00 p.m.** From my discussions with the City's engineers, I have learned that two major, controllable causes of the sorry state of our City's roads are a lack of basic preventive maintenance (such as filling cracks) and shoddy patching by utilities. The City and the utilities reached an agreement about this work, which is subject to regulation by the Public Utilities Commission. I will be pressing the administration to add resources in the next budget both to conduct the basic maintenance and to be more vigilant in having the utilities meet the standards of the agreement.

Tomorrow night (Wednesday, October 3), at 5:45 p.m. at City Hall, the School Department will review the United Providence program. The program operates Providence schools designated for intervention (Carl G. Lauro Elementary School, Gilbert Stuart Middle School and Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School) through a collaboration of management and labor. This is an unprecedented approach, and I look forward to learning the progress the program is making in addressing some of our schools' most pressing needs.

Last night, the administration presented its assessment of last year's fiscal performance to the Ways and Means Committee. While we made substantial progress towards closing the \$110 million deficit the Mayor identified in March, 2011, there is still a large amount of unfinished business, as the City finished the year with a budget deficit of \$19.6 million, which would have been even larger had the City not contributed approximately \$5 million less to the pension fund than the "annual required contribution" indicated by the actuaries. The presentation raises two issues. First, the City will have to manage its cash even more carefully, as there are no reserves to pay off this debt. Second, we began last night to review the reasons for the deficit (including overruns for police and fire, as well as a higher medical claim history for all City departments) and determine whether they affect the projections for the current year's budget.

With everyone's focus turning to the November election, I would like to ask your help in considering, supporting Question 18 on the ballot, which would approve a set of redistricting reforms to the Providence City Charter. You can read an essay making the case for reform by clicking here: [Case for Reform](#). With a Presidential and Congressional election leading the ballot, and 17 other ballot questions ahead of it, voters will have to work hard to review this issue. With a last name like Zurier, I am used to asking people to take the time to read an entire list before making a decision, but I need your help on this issue. Please take the time to study Question 18, and please talk with your friends about it, as the requested reforms will help improve the quality of democracy in our City. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Samuel D. Zurier'.