



**2017 City Council Candidate Questionnaire**

*Completed questionnaires will be public documents available on our website, so put your best foot forward. If we ultimately hold an endorsement vote in your race, your questionnaire will be circulated to our membership before the vote.*

Name	Carlos Menchaca
Council District number and neighborhoods represented	District 38 representing Red Hook, Sunset Park, South Slope, Windsor Terrace, Bay Ridge, and Borough Park
How long have you lived in the above district?	Since 2013
Preferred campaign contact information: name, email address, phone number	[REDACTED]
Why do you want to serve as a member of the NYC Council?	<p>My work in the New York City Council is not done. My leadership in District 38 has united our working families, our immigrant neighbors, our public housing residents, and our seniors to fight and win some very critical legislative and budget victories. From IDNYC, a bill I authored, to our unparalleled immigrant budget portfolio that includes detention legal defense, adult education and healthcare access, our work resisting the newest threats from Washington D.C. I want to continue empowering my community as Council Member as we continue to transform our relationship to government.</p>
What have you accomplished in public life that you are most proud of?	<p>Selecting one accomplishment among what I see as many is difficult. So let me describe just two: Superstorm Sandy Recovery and Participatory Budgeting.</p> <p>When I woke up the morning after Superstorm Sandy hit, I became aware of its considerable devastation. I briefed then City Council Speaker Christine Quinn on what I had learned, for whom I was working at the time. She asked me to be her liaison with the Red Hook community and I went into action. But instead of trying to direct relief efforts in any way, I wanted the community to direct me. I asked questions, listened, and, at their request, went into their homes to see what they were talking about. I learned quickly and that's when I emerged into what I called an "organizer/disaster relief person." I saw people taking things out of their basement, wet mattresses and wet couches and lining them up out on the sidewalk. Soon, debris was piling up on the street and some of it ended up in the middle of the street. The biggest issue I became aware of was the lack of coordination. I spent hours riding my bike around the neighborhood trying to connect people in need with social service organizations, medical resources, and volunteers. I was surprised that it took about two weeks for a full earnest involvement of the government. The trailers started showing up and you saw FEMA in a larger way but they were not very effective. This storm was more than government could have ever handled on its own. I was a government employee but, in the context of Sandy, was not acting like one. We were coordinating an army of over 4,000 people in the first two weeks, encouraging them to help with clean up and gather medical information for use by the popup medical clinic that developed. The people were hugely impactful and the way that they did their work was inspiring. There was a tremendous sense of community. The people were doing what I thought government should have been doing in the first place. It helped me formulate a perspective about what a real community is and how it works. I learned and was supportive of the fact that communities are able to respond to their own needs. What I saw in Red Hook were human beings under great hardship and stress doing the right thing. I believe I helped the community considerably, but it was the residents who prevailed. I am justifiably proud of that partnership and my role in it. I understood what they did and have made that understanding the basis of my work as a City Council Member. Community engagement is at the top of my list of public service goals.</p> <p>My involvement in Participatory Budgeting, the other thing of which I am most proud, is a consequence of my community engagement goal. 2017 is the fourth year that District 38 has participated in Participatory Budgeting, a democratic process in which community members in certain City Council districts directly decide how to spend part of their public budget. Each year, I have chosen to pledge about \$2M from discretionary funding, the largest amount of any</p>

	<p>district. In 2014, the first year, 2,909 ballots were cast and \$2,170,000 was awarded. In 2015, 6,299 ballots were cast and \$2,350,000 was distributed. In 2016, 6, ballots were cast awarding \$2,305,000. In each of these three years, District 38 was top in the city in votes cast and dollars awarded. The 2017 initiative has just ended. This time, 8,121 votes were counted. We have not yet learned where we stand among all districts but we are surely up there.</p>
<p>What are the greatest strengths and struggles of your council district?</p>	<p><b>The People:</b> There are many strengths and assets in my district. At the top of the list are the people of the district. The people in the 38th are racially, ethnically, economically, and culturally diverse. This diversity fosters a sense of collaboration and cooperation that has been especially visible in the wake of the recent presidential election. The people of my district exemplify values that make communities strong and vibrant. I have witnessed amazing acts of support and solidarity across the district, neighbors coming together to organize KYR events to disseminate real and actionable information to our families. We have also stood with brave immigrants raising their voices for equality and basic rights. In Red Hook the community's participation in the Sandy recovery efforts and the resiliency planning efforts serves as an example of how government can work in collaboration with the community to rebuild after a disaster. A sense of community and cooperation has consistently characterized life in the neighborhoods of CD 38.</p> <p><b>The local economy:</b> Another important asset of CD 38 is the local economic activity, small businesses in my district are an engine of economic development. Additionally, our working-industrial waterfront is a major asset to our local economic activity; indeed the waterfront is a major contributor to the regional economy as well. According to the New York State Comptroller, Sunset Park is on the rise, but there is still work to be done. Comptroller DiNapoli issued a report that provided an economic snapshot of Sunset Park. The report noted that "over the course of the years 2014 and 2015, employment in Sunset Park increased at an exceptional rate at 9.9 percent, faster than the citywide rate of 7.2 percent," Further, "Sunset Park also has the largest concentration of manufacturing jobs of any neighborhood in New York City with 4,900 such jobs making up 11 percent of all jobs in the area." My previous 3 1/2 years in office, 2014 to the present, have been good years for employment in the District.</p> <p><b>Anchor institutions:</b> CD 38 also counts on many other anchor institutions, such as two hospitals and a network of community-based organizations, and social services agencies. These institutions provide a range of services that support children and families across their lifespan and across multiple domains (e.g. health, educational, adult education and workforce development).</p> <p>In terms of challenges in my district:</p> <p><b>School Overcrowding:</b> currently the most pressing need in the district is the construction of additional schools to ease the overcrowding crisis in the district's schools.</p> <p><b>Housing:</b> we must fight to protect our current stock of affordable housing and create more units. We must also fight for federal dollars from HUD (especially in the current national political climate) to address the many issues in the Red Hook Houses.</p> <p><b>Immigration:</b> we must ensure that we stand with our immigrant brothers and sisters to create the best Sanctuary City and we must lead the country in this effort.</p> <p><b>Development:</b> we must continue to work with the community to stand against powerful interest who seek to develop our waterfront in an irresponsible manner. We must fight against any zoning change of the water-front, specifically changes that seek to make the waterfront residential.</p>
<p>Why do you want New Kings Democrats' endorsement?</p>	<p>I share many of the same progressive values and policy goals with the New Kings Democrats and was honored to receive your endorsement in 2013.</p>
<p>If elected, what will your top three legislative and budgetary priorities be while in office?</p>	<p>My three top priorities are Immigration, Economic Development, and Education.</p> <p><b>Immigration</b> including the following: Sanctuary City protections; immigrant workforce development and protections; deportations resistance; legal support; access to health care; and Criminal Justice/Police Reform as it relates to deportation.</p> <p><b>Economic Development</b> including the following: access to quality jobs; protecting the right to organize; EDC engagement/relationship; and making sure the community is involved in the</p>

	<p>consideration of the BQX.</p> <p><b>Education</b> including the following: adult/family literacy; accessibility to education for all; school overcrowding; over-policing in schools.</p>
What is one thing you would do while in office to make New York City government more transparent, accountable, or inclusive?	I am the Prime Sponsor of a bill to have the Mayor's Management Report, now available only in English, translated into the six most prevalent foreign languages spoken in the City (Int 1332-2016). The Mayor's Management Report details the goals and accomplishments of the government. In addition, I am the Co-Prime sponsor of a bill requiring government meetings to have simultaneous translations (Int 1097-2016). In addition, I have co-sponsored many similar bills including the translation of voting materials so people know who they want to represent them. Transparency, accountability, and inclusion require people to know what's going on. I pledge to continue my efforts in this area.
In what ways would you like to expand voting access, and how can you do this as a member of the NYC Council?	I am in favor of extending voting rights to all those who lawfully reside in our city regardless of their citizen status. I have seen the zeal with which such individuals approached our Participatory Budgeting process. It is enfranchising and empowering and I want everyone to be able to participate in all municipal elections. I support early voting and immediate registration of registered voters who move into New York City. I am currently having a bill drafted to require automatic voter registration of all those who go to a New York City Government office unless they opt out.
What criminal justice reforms would you like to see the Council implement?	<p>The criminal justice area most in need of reform relates to the protection of individuals involved with the criminal justice system. This includes improper police conduct, broken window policing, cooperation with ICE, interrogation processes, and other discriminatory and abusive practices. I have cosponsored 51 bills covering the spectrum of these issues, 45 Introductions and 6 Resolutions. I was the Co-prime sponsor of the following 6 and more are on the way.</p> <p>Int 0182-2014 - requiring law enforcement officers to identify themselves to the public</p> <p>Int 0486-2014 - in relation to persons not to be detained by the department of correction (Enacted)</p> <p>Int 0487-2014 in relation to persons not to be detained by the police department. (Enacted)</p> <p>Int 0541-2014 requiring law enforcement officers to provide notice and obtain proof of consent to search individuals</p> <p>Res 1230-2016 - Resolution declaring support for Muslim communities, affirming the religious pluralism of the United States, and urging all residents to stand together for peace and understanding (Adopted)</p> <p>Res 1321-2016 - Resolution affirming that despite president-elect Donald Trump's senseless threats, New York City will remain a Sanctuary City for immigrant residents (Adopted)</p> <p>Of the 51 bills, 30 have been enacted or adopted by the City Council. That means that there are 20 more bills that need to be passed and more to be introduced and passed.</p>
Do you support the Right to Know Act?	I am a Co-Prime Sponsor of the Right to Know Act.
Will you be participating in the NYC Matching Funds program?	Yes
NKD supports holding a New York State Constitutional Convention. Do you? Why or why not?	I do not support holding a NYS Constitutional Convention. The constitution can be changed without this process today, if we can hold our elected officials accountable who are representing us.
What is your vision for the Brooklyn Democratic Party?	My vision of a Brooklyn Democratic Party is one that can break away from the old school style of politics by considering many of the reforms NKD has previously presented. This will allow us all to build a party with new membership from every neighborhood, create transparent procedures, and ensure that reforms continue to empower every day Brooklynites.
What funds have you raised for this campaign? What are the major sources of your campaign funds?	\$62,971, 100% raised from individual donations (mostly from small donations) and unions. I have made the decision to not take any funding from special interest groups.
What endorsements have you received from publications, electeds, community leaders, or political organizations?	The NYS Laborers' PAC (NYSLPAC), the Mason Tenders' District Council PAC (MTDCPAC), 32BJ, RWDSU
Of the other people who hold the office you're running for, who do you admire most and why?	I admire Melissa Mark-Viverito, as a council member and now Speaker, she continues to lift up immigrants, LGBTQ, and women New Yorkers in everything she does: legislation, budget initiatives, and general advocacy. She is an inspiration to young girls and women who are thinking of running for office one day.

What are some of the ways you think New York City residents can best participate in civic life?	As I have indicated, I believe in full community engagement. I demonstrated that focus in my work in Red Hook during Superstorm Sandy and by our efforts that made us the leading District in the Participatory Budgeting Initiative. I support extending voting rights to all those who lawfully reside in our city regardless of their citizen status, early voting, automatic voter registration, and immediate registration of registered voters who move into New York City. Participation requires understanding of the issues and that is why I created legislation to have the Mayor's Management Report translated into six other languages and helped to create legislation requiring the proceedings of government meetings to be simultaneously translated.
What is one fun fact about you?	I love science fiction films and books and if I was not running for Council, I would be figuring out the next big space mission as an astronaut.

I have reviewed this questionnaire and agree that the responses set forth in this document are accurate:

Candidate Signature:  Date: 4/18/17

***You must sign this questionnaire! When complete, please e-mail your signed and scanned questionnaire to [politics@newkingsdemocrats.com](mailto:politics@newkingsdemocrats.com) and [info@newkingsdemocrats.com](mailto:info@newkingsdemocrats.com)***