

# District 38


Council Member Carlos Menchaca

Manhattan

Queens



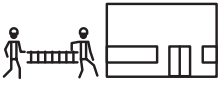
Red Hood Library  
Community Garden




Access to the Future:  
Technology for Local Schools  
(PS 15, PS 24, PS 503, and MS821)



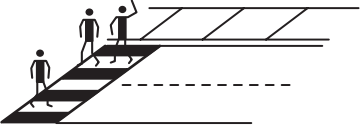
NYPD Surveillance  
Cameras in Sunset Park



Air Conditioning Wiring  
for PS 10 and PS 15



A Community Room at Sunset  
Park Library



Street Improvements and  
Resurfacing of Roads in CB7

Brooklyn

# District 38

## Council Member Carlos Menchaca

Council Member Carlos Menchaca's district includes the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Red Hook, Sunset Park, South Slope, and parts of Windsor Terrace, Borough Park, Bensonhurst and Bay Ridge. The majority of district residents are people of color, with 44% identifying as Hispanic or Latina/o, 35% as Asian, and 5% as Black or African-American. 19% of residents identify as White. More than half of residents (53%) were born outside the U.S., and nearly three-quarters (74%) report that their primary language is not English, with 33% listing Spanish and 41% indicating another language. Nearly two-thirds of people over age 25 in the district have formal education of a high school diploma or GED or less, with a quarter indicating that they have less than a 9th grade education. The majority of district residents (59%) report a household income below \$50,000 a year, with nearly one in five (19%) earning less than \$15,000 a year.

This was District 38's first time participating in PB. The process was initiated at the beginning of this PB cycle by then-Council Member Sara Gonzalez. When Council Member Menchaca won the Council seat in the 2013 elections, he continued the process. As a result of extensive outreach and engagement efforts, boosted by community-based organizations, the district had the highest voter turnout of any of the 10 participating districts. The district was successful in engaging immigrants, people of color, low-income people and non-English speakers. More than half of surveyed voters (57%) were born outside the U.S., and more than a third (36%) said that they were not U.S. citizens. Nearly two-thirds of the ballots in the district were cast in a language other than English. Most of the projects on the district's ballots were for schools and libraries, with others for parks and recreation, transportation and public safety.

*"It has been truly inspiring to watch the 38th District community engage in their inaugural year of participatory budgeting...My hope is that everyone feels welcomed as we open the doors to our city government budget. The goals are simple: empower people to craft and make decisions to spend public funds for community projects and advocate for more accountability, equity and inclusion throughout other functions of city government."<sup>81</sup>*

**(Council Member Carlos Menchaca)**

District 38 Overall Population:  
165,479

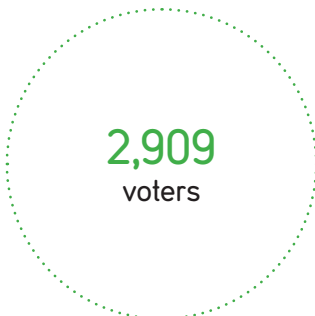
Number of PB Participants:  
3,236

Neighborhoods:  
Red Hook,  
Sunset Park,  
South Slope,  
and parts of  
Windsor Terrace,  
Borough Park,  
Bensonhurst and  
Bay Ridge

\* Note that the secondary data used throughout this section derives from several sources: the 2010 Decennial Census and the American Community Survey 2008-2012 five year estimates are used for demographic data of district residents, and data about 2013 local election voters comes from the Voter activation Network and Catalist. For more on these data sources, see the appendix of this report.

## Who Participated in District 38?

In District 38, PB engaged 3,236 people, including: 336 neighborhood assembly participants, 43 budget delegates, and 2,909 voters. Demographic information collected at key points during the process points towards several trends in participation, including the following:



### Race/Ethnicity

- The percentage of PB voters who identified as Asian was more than double the percentage of Asian voters in the 2013 local elections (23% of PB voters compared with 10% of voters in the 2013 election). Surveyed Asian participants were underrepresented when compared with district residents, as 35% of the voting-age district population identifies as Asian. However, there were challenges collecting Chinese-language surveys. 41% of ballots cast were in Chinese.
- A greater percentage of people who identified as Latino/a voted in PB as compared to the 2013 local elections (45% of PB voters compared with 34% of voters in local elections). This compares with 39% of voting-age district residents.
- People who identified as Black or African-American voted in PB at a rate similar to their representation in the district (6% of PB voters and 4% of voting-age district residents) and voters in the 2013 local elections (9%).



### Language and Country of Birth

- People who listed Spanish as their primary language were represented among PB voters at a percentage consistent with district residents (34% of voters and 33% of the voting-age district population).
- 64% of ballots were cast in a language other than English (24% in Spanish and 41% in Chinese). This compares with 74% of voting-age people in the district population who have a primary language other than English. Among surveyed voters, a greater percentage listed English as their primary language (51%), primarily due to challenges collecting Chinese-language surveys.

**23% of PB voters identified as Asian.**

Compared to 10% of voters in the 2013 election.

- 16% of surveyed voters listed Chinese as their primary language. 41% of ballots cast were Chinese.
- A majority of PB voters were born outside the U.S. (57%). This compares with 65% of voting-age district residents.



### Gender

- Women made up the majority of participants in PB (62% of assembly participants and 70% of voters).
- Women made up a greater percent of PB voters than voters in the 2013 local elections (70% of PB voters compared with 55% of voters in the 2013 elections).



### Income

- A third (33%) of PB voters reported an annual household income less than \$15,000. This compares with 19% of households in the district.
- 65% of PB voters reported an annual household income less than \$50,000. This compares with 59% of the voting-age district population.



### Age

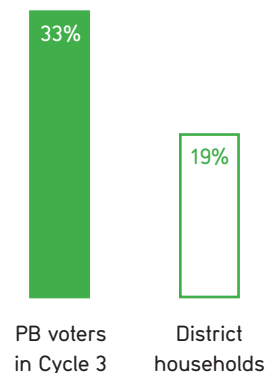
- A greater percentage of people between the ages of 18 and 24 voted in PB than in the 2013 local elections (9% of PB voters were between 18 and 24, compared with 3% of 2013 election voters). This compares with 13% of PB-eligible\* district residents.
- Older voters were underrepresented in the PB process. 6% of surveyed PB voters were 65 years and older, compared with 23% of voters in the 2013 election and 11% of PB-eligible district residents.

**45% of PB voters identified as Latino/a.**

Compared to 34% of voters in local elections and 39% of voting-age district residents.

**64% of ballots were cast in a language other than English.**

Voters reporting household incomes under \$15,000



\* Note that for comparisons of age, the Census data used was for district residents ages 15 and above. This is the closest approximation of PB-eligible residents that is available.



## Education

- People with higher levels of education were overrepresented among PB votes as compared to the overall district population. 35% of PB voters over the age of 25 had a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 23% of the overall district population.

Children are busy at an arts and crafts table at the Project Expo in District 38.



# What were the civic engagement patterns of PB participants in District 38?

## Previous Engagement with PB

- 86% of surveyed voters had not participated in this cycle of PB other than by voting.

## Voting Patterns and Barriers

- More than a third (36%) of PB voters reported that they were not registered to vote in regular elections because they were not US citizens.
- 65% of neighborhood assembly participants and 57% of PB voters were registered to vote.
- Among PB voters who were registered to vote in regular elections, 23% were unlikely voters (reporting that they never, rarely or sometimes vote).

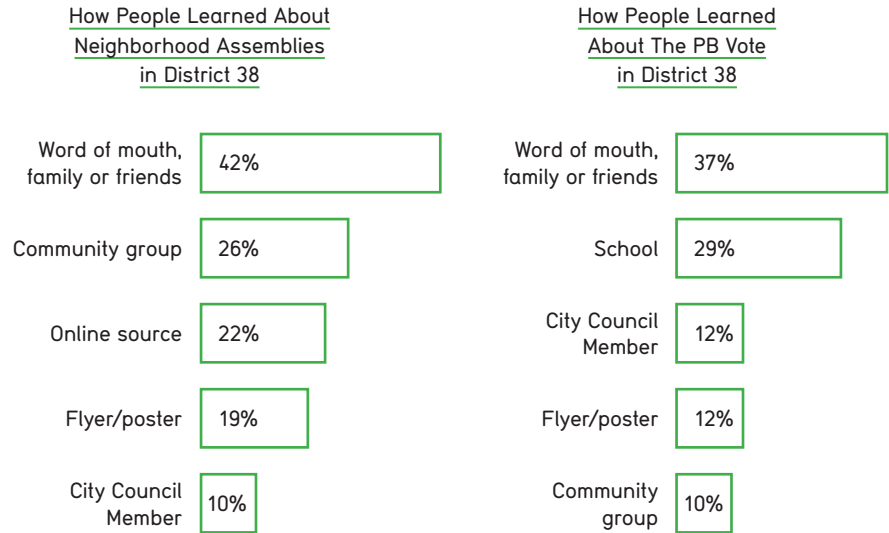
More than a third (36%) of PB voters reported that they were not US citizens.

## Working with Others in the Community

- 75% of PB voters reported that they had never worked with others in their community to solve community problems.

## How did people hear about participatory budgeting in District 38?

People in District 38 were most likely to hear about neighborhood assemblies and the PB vote through their social networks (families, friends and word of mouth). Community groups played a major role as well, particularly during the assembly phase. Online sources informed more people about the Assemblies than the vote. People also found out about PB through the Council Member, flyers and posters. Many PB voters also found out about the process through schools.\*



\* Note that school was not an answer option on the neighborhood assembly survey.

Council Member Menchaca casts his ballot at a PB vote site in Red Hook.

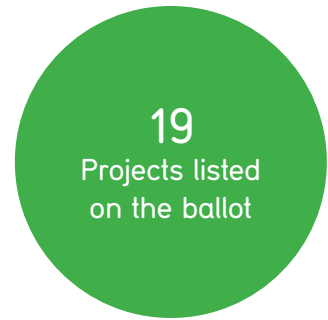


# What were the priorities of District 38 PB voters, what projects made it to the ballot, and what won the vote?

In September and October of 2013, District 38 held neighborhood assemblies that allowed community residents and stakeholders to propose projects to improve their neighborhoods.

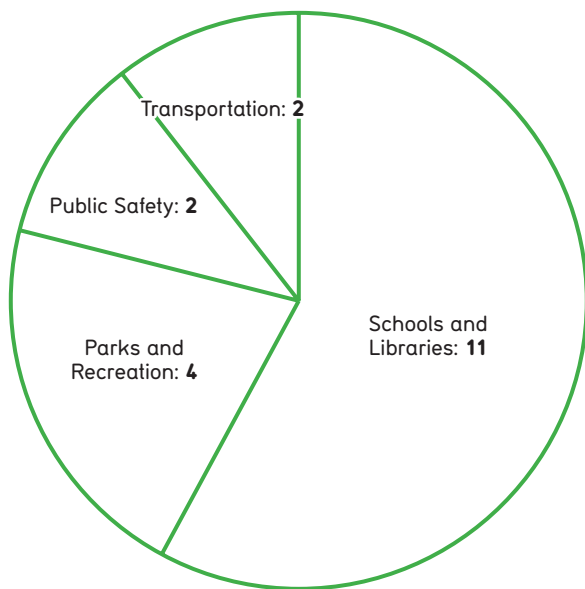
Following the neighborhood assemblies, participants volunteered to be budget delegates and formed committees to develop specific projects from the ideas proposed at the neighborhood assemblies. This work resulted in the District 31 PB ballot.

The following table shows the categories of projects that ended up on the ballot in District 38.



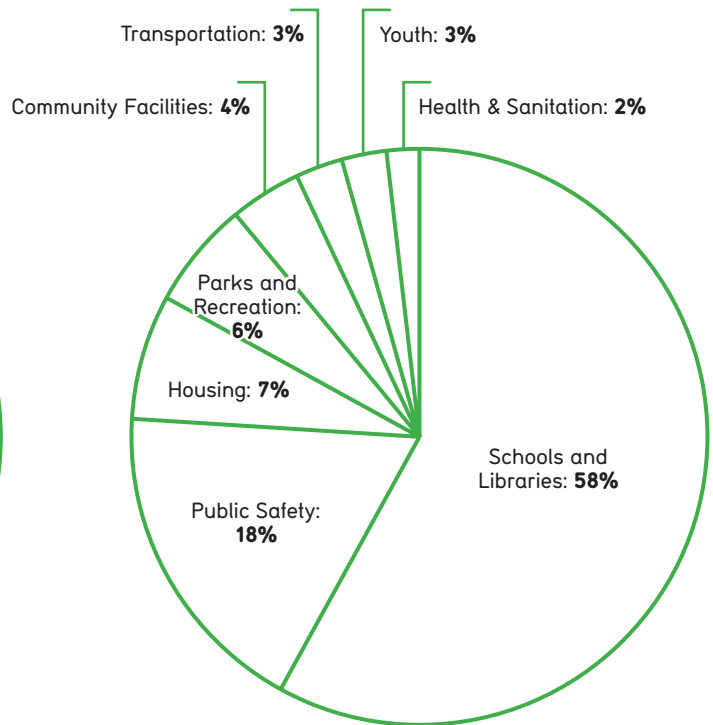
## Projects on District 38 Ballot

Total Number: 19  
Average Cost: \$438,497



## Which category of project that they voted for was most important to District 38 PB voters?

(N=608)







### A Winning Project from District 38

Red Hook Library Community Garden  
\$85,000  
486 out of 2,909 votes

Funds allocated through this project will go to revitalizing the Redhook Library Community Garden, bringing it to life as a functioning and vibrant community space. “[The garden] is a big part of the community,” says budget delegate Sheryl Braxton.<sup>82</sup> “It brings people together, it’s also education for us, and on top of that, we can count of something that’s there, that can be utilized in the community.”

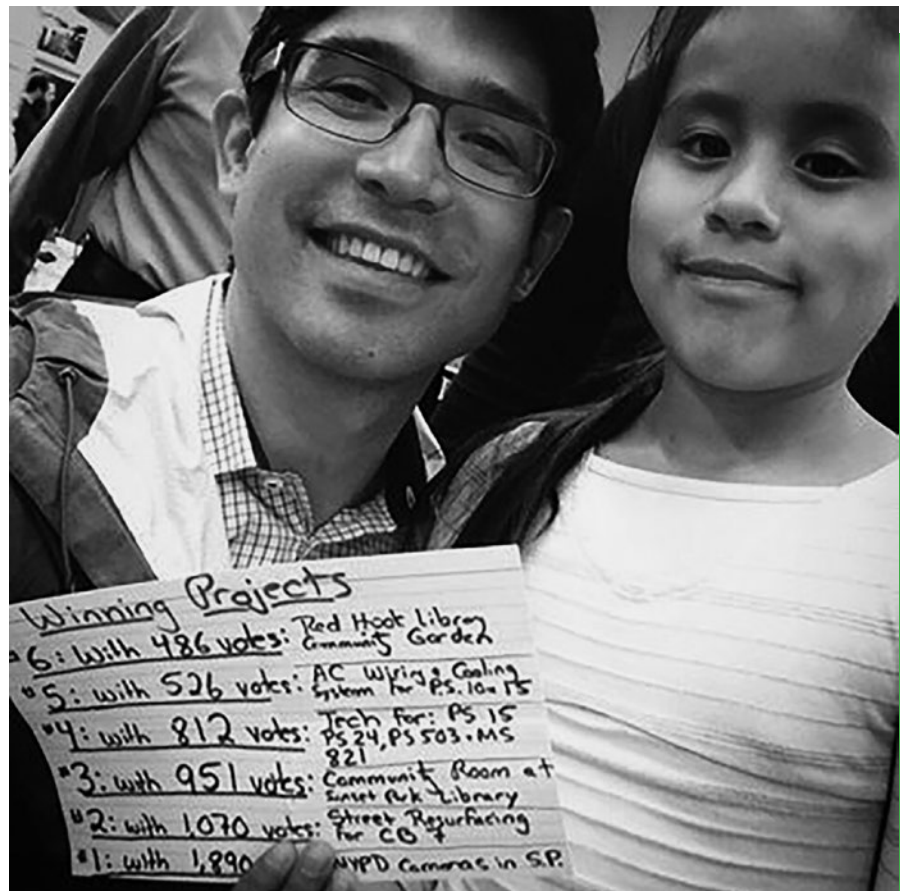
Sandra Sutton, Director of the Red Hook branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, looks forward to the garden renovations. “It’s a beautiful garden,” she says, “it’s just waiting for children, and adults, and people to come in and use it.”<sup>83</sup> “I’m really anxious to get kids in here,” Braxton says, “to get programs going, to get people interested in doing things, to have it open all day...I just want to see it utilized, I really would like to see that happen.”

## Winning Projects

### 6 Winning Projects: District 38

2,909 voters cast a ballot for up to five projects in District 38. The following table shows the projects that were selected.

Project	# of Voters	% of Voters	Cost
NYPD Surveillance Cameras in Sunset Park	1890	65%	\$600,000
Street Improvements and Resurfacing of Roads in CB7	1070	37%	\$350,000
A Community Room at Sunset Park Library	951	33%	\$60,000
Access to the Future: Technology for Local Schools	812	28%	\$675,000
Air Conditioning Wiring for PS 10 and PS 15	526	18%	\$400,000
Red Hook Library Community Garden	486	17%	\$85,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$2,170,000</b>



Council Member Menchaca and a young district resident display winning projects in District 38.

## Lessons Learned/ Summary from District 38

Dedicated outreach and engagement efforts, frequently in conjunction with community based organizations, led to District 38—in its first cycle of PB—mobilizing the greatest number of PB voters of all the participating districts. The district saw a change in political leadership during the process, which begun under then-Council Member Sara Gonzalez and was continued by Council Member Menchaca, who maintained the commitment to dedicate \$2 million to the process.

The district was successful in engaging many traditionally disenfranchised communities, including low-income people (a third of PB voters reported an annual household income less than \$25,000), people of color, immigrants (the majority of participants were born outside the U.S.), non-citizens (more than a third of PB voters reported they were not U.S. citizens), and non-English speakers (nearly two-thirds of ballots were cast in a language other than English). The district established some best practices to be drawn on in future cycles, including: setting up vote sites in public locations with high foot traffic, partnering with community based organizations, providing translated materials, having interpretation at meetings, and ensuring that vote sites staffed by people who spoke a language other than English. Council Member Menchaca dedicated nearly \$2.2 million to the six winning projects in the district.



Community members in District 38 learn about the PB process at a neighborhood assembly.

## District 38 Demographics

		<u>Census Data</u>	<u>Neighborhood Assemblies</u>	<u>Difference Neighborhood Assemblies Years 2 &amp; 3</u>	<u>Budget Delegates</u>	<u>PB Voters</u>	<u>Diff. PB Voters Years 2 &amp; 3</u>	<u>Voters in 2013 Local Elections</u>	<u>Difference between PB &amp; 2013 Voters</u>
		Age 18+	N=267		N=28	N=681			
<u>Gender</u>	Female	50%	62%	—	71%	70%	—	55%	+15%
NA: N=253	Male	50%	38%	—	29%	30%	—	45%	-15%
BD: N=28	Other	N/A	0%	—	0%	0%	—	N/A	N/A
Voters: N=650									
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>	Asian	35%	15%	—	7%	23%	—	10%	+13%
NA: N=247	Black	4%	28%	—	33%	6%	—	9%	-3%
BD: N=27	Latino/a	39%	40%	—	26%	45%	—	34%	+11%
Voters: N=607	White	20%	20%	—	33%	25%	—	43%	-18%
	Other	1%	5%	—	0%	3%	—	1%	+2%
<u>Highest Level of Education</u>	Some H.S. or less	41%	16%	—	4%	25%	—	N/A	N/A
NA: N=149	H.S. Diploma/GED	22%	17%	—	22%	22%	—	N/A	N/A
BD: N=27	Some College	10%	10%	—	4%	6%	—	N/A	N/A
Voters: N=537	Associate's Degree	4%	8%	—	4%	6%	—	N/A	N/A
	Bachelor's Degree	15%	22%	—	30%	18%	—	N/A	N/A
	Graduate Degree	8%	27%	—	37%	17%	—	N/A	N/A
<u>Household Income</u>	Less than \$10,000	11%	21%	—	4%	17%	—	0%	+17%
NA: N=182	\$10,000-\$14,999	8%	10%	—	4%	16%	—	4%	+12%
BD: N=25	\$15,000-\$24,999	14%	8%	—	8%	15%	—	6%	+9%
Voters: N=529	\$25,000-\$34,999	12%	12%	—	12%	8%	—	22%	-14%
	\$35,000-\$49,999	14%	10%	—	32%	9%	—	38%	-29%
	\$50,000-\$74,999	17%	13%	—	16%	12%	—	26%	-14%
	\$75,000-\$99,999	9%	9%	—	12%	7%	—	3%	+4%
	\$100,000-\$149,000	10%	7%	—	4%	9%	—	2%	+7%
	\$150,000 or more	6%	9%	—	8%	7%	—	0%	+7%
<u>Age</u>	15 to 17 years	4%	11%	—	0%	2%	—	N/A	N/A
NA: N=245	18 to 19 years	3%	10%	—	0%	2%	—	3%	+6%
BD: N=28	20 to 24 years	10%	7%	—	4%	7%	—		
Voters: N=649	25 to 34 years	25%	11%	—	36%	26%	—	16%	+10%
	35 to 44 years	19%	21%	—	21%	33%	—		
	45 to 54 years	16%	14%	—	18%	16%	—	57%	+0%
	55 to 64 years	12%	14%	—	14%	8%	—		
	65+ years	11%	5%	—	7%	6%	—	23%	-17%
<u>Language</u>	English	26%	70%	—	89%	51%	—	N/A	N/A
NA: N=257	Spanish	33%	19%	—	14%	34%	—	N/A	N/A
BD: N=28	Other	41%	18%	—	0%	18%	—	N/A	N/A
Voters: N=632									
<u>Country of Birth</u>	United States	35%	68%	—	82%	44%	—	N/A	N/A
NA: N=238	Puerto Rico	6%	3%	—	0%	2%	—	N/A	N/A
BD: N=27	Other	59%	29%	—	19%	55%	—	N/A	N/A
Voters: N=630									