



Carlos Menchaca
New York City Council Member- District 38

Dear Neighbors,

Today, I am announcing my support for the 737 4th Avenue rezoning proposal.

The proposal is not perfect. It will not, for instance, build 100% affordable units, which I believe we need to build in our City.

But it does represent the clearest example yet of the only thing that will break and reverse the cycle of displacement and gentrification plaguing our City: community-driven and accountable development.

Seven years ago, when I was first elected to the City Council, I promised that I would use my power to enact the community's will. And I have upheld that promise. From the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal, to the BQX, to Industry City, I have opposed developments that lacked any means for community control, enforcement, or accountability.

This project is different. From the beginning, the Community Board, which is the most democratic and participatory forum we have in the neighborhood, took control of this rezoning. It invited the developer to follow the community's lead, held multiple hearings open to all to decide whether or how to support the project, and democratically voted to approve the project with conditions.

Over time and critical engagement, the developer agreed to meet

all the Board's conditions, then codified them in a binding contract known as a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA).

When the Sunset Park community was considering the Industry City rezoning proposal, I outlined a similar framework that required a community-led process and enforcement mechanism. I opposed Industry City because none of those things happened. The Community Board was also divided on the proposal, meaning there was no clear mandate from the community.

I understand why the Community Board approved this project. The CBA requires the developer to build 33 permanently affordable housing units; reserve a third of its commercial space for local businesses; hire majority local or union workers for all construction and permanent jobs; create 150 bike stations of which a third will be reserved for delivery workers; and grants the MTA a free easement to build an ADA-accessible elevator to the 25th Street R Station.

These requirements also apply regardless of who owns the land. That means the developer cannot turn around, sell this property, and undo these commitments.

If the Community Board had approved the project with no debate, no enforcement, or no accountability mechanism, I would have opposed this project.

Having spent my entire Council tenure supporting the Board to become more inclusive, empowering voices that for years were excluded, and using City Council funding I allocated to aid a body of dedicated volunteers become experts on the City's complex land use system, I know that the Board has the tools and acumen

to make informed decisions and that those decisions are made by the most representative and inclusive institution this community has.

I see this rezoning as the best example yet of what development must become in terms of community control and accountability. I know others will disagree. That is why I am calling on the Community Board to join me and our local elected officials to host a discussion this year on what equitable development means for this community and we can start by reviewing this project I am approving today.

We need to discuss this openly and democratically. Only then will we chart a community-driven path.

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carlos A." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carlos Menchaca
Council Member
District 38