



Report: Queens Is The City's Most Rent-Burdened Borough

By Emma Whitford

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Thanks to waterfront developments and luxury condos in the northwest quadrant of Queens—which includes neighborhoods that real-estate agents like to talk about, like Astoria and Long Island City—median rents in portions of the borough have, for some time now, been leaping to the point of headline-worthiness. The monthly Douglas Elliman Report helps fuel this headline fire, since its "Queens" analysis only documents rents in the development-happy northwest. Hence, *You're Now Priced Out Of Queens* and *Report: Queens Rent More Obscene Than Brooklyn*.

A new report out this month from the [Citizens Budget Commission](#) [PDF] puts the rental circumstances for all Queens residents—not just the "Gold Coast" transplants—into stark relief. Using US Census Bureau data from 2014, the CBC compared rent cost to household income in each surveyed household across the five boroughs, determining what percentage of New York households are rent burdened, or spend more than 30% of their combined income on rent. In Queens, the most burdened borough in the city, that comes to 48% of all residents.

Rents in northwest Queens are not, of course, spiking in a vacuum. Housing experts have long argued that luxury developments negatively impact the affordability of the neighborhoods that surround them. Hence, Queens 2015—where the median rental price for a 3-bedroom in northwest Queens is \$4,216, and 93,000 hopeful souls filled out applications for two towers-worth of "affordable" apartments in Hunter's Point South.

According to the CBC's findings, one out of every four Queens residents is severely rent-burdened, or spends at least half of their household income on rent. These residents also qualify as "low-income" by the study's standards—earning \$29,400 to \$46,999 for a single-person household, or \$33,600 to \$53,699 for a two person household. Elderly singles and single parents make up a big chunk of this demographic.

Queens outstrips the other four boroughs in rent burden, though not by huge margins—21% of the Bronx is severely rent-burdened, compared to 20% in Brooklyn, 16% in Manhattan, and 15% in Staten Island. CBC's Rahul Jain told the Post that this might have to do with the fact that there is less public housing in Queens than in Brooklyn or the Bronx—NYCHA tenants are capped at paying 30% of their income on rent.

Here's the comparison breakdown with the other four boroughs, showing that the entire city is in bad shape when it comes to truly affordable housing.

