

NEW YORK POST

LONG AND SHORT OF GOTHAM

By DAVID SEIFMAN, CITY HALL BUREAU CHIEF

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March 12, 2009 --

You might want to pick up a few good paperbacks if you're planning to commute from East New York, since residents there endure the city's longest travel times, according to a study released yesterday that provides a statistics-rich glimpse into numerous aspects of city life.

The Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy at NYU reported that the mean travel time from the far-removed Brooklyn neighborhood was 63 minutes in 2007, the latest year for which data was available.

That won't surprise anyone living in the 46-building Starrett City complex.

The nearest subway is a half-hour hike away. Rush-hour express buses take more than an hour to reach Midtown - when they're on schedule.

Despite those hardships, 68.9 percent of East New York residents use public transit, up from 55.8 percent in 2000.

By contrast, the fortunate folks living in Stuyvesant Town or Turtle Bay on Manhattan's East Side have the fastest commute in town, a zippy 25 minutes. Citywide, the average was 39.8 minutes.

The annual study focused on housing trends, but it also looked at other facets of city life.

The neighborhood creating the most waste?

Bedford-Stuyvesant took that dubious honor: 3.1 pounds a day per resident after recycling. Enviro-conscious Park Slope, also in Brooklyn, made do with 2 pounds a day, the same as Stuy Town and Jackson Heights and Middle Village in Queens.

The Bronx, the poorest borough, had the highest rate of serious housing-code violations and the second-highest percentage of severely crowded rental households, a rate that has hovered around 4 percent since 2005.

Jackson Heights in Queens, an immigrant enclave, led the city with a 9.3 percent crowding rate.

The Bushwick section of Brooklyn, with an aging housing stock, registered the most serious housing-code violations of any single neighborhood, 193.2 per 1,000.

Midtown had the least, 13.2 per 1,000.

Brooklyn experienced the sharpest drop in households with children, slipping from 38.2 percent in 2000 to 34.4 percent in 2007.

With the real estate market now collapsing, the Furman Center examined trends here between 1974 and 2006 and concluded that prices escalated a lot more during boom times than they declined during the downturns.

Over the entire period, sales prices citywide grew by 250 percent.

There were wild fluctuations by neighborhood. The St. George and Stapleton sections of Staten Island went up 168 percent, while the Morrisania/Crotona area of The Bronx zoomed 670 percent.

Vicki Been, director of the Furman Center, cautioned that it would be dangerous to use those numbers as a guide to the current housing disaster.

"This is the first time in a very long time that we've had a nationwide free fall of housing prices that basically left no market untouched," she said. "Housing starts across the nation are already way below the bottom of the last two downturns. That's frightening."

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