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DOB: Record Number of Building Permits for Residential Units Issued in 2015

By Jeanine Ramirez



Building permits in the city have skyrocketed in the past year, with Brooklyn leading the way. NY1's Jeanine Ramirez filed this report.

Fences erected, sidewalks closed, trucks clogging streets. In Brooklyn, Williamsburg residents are used to the sights and sounds of construction. "It's a little different when you have a baby and you're walking down the street and you're hoping there's not a jackhammer. But there seems to be at every block," one woman said.

"There's construction everywhere," one man said. "It kind of makes sense to me that the construction is matching our popularity."

It's not just Williamsburg. According to a report Monday by the New York Building Congress, the city authorized construction of more than 52,600 residential units in the year that ended June 30, a 156 percent increase from the previous year. "I think this 2015 is going to be a banner year in terms of the construction for residential units. The strong economy has construction in all aspects, residential and commercial and otherwise," says Department of Buildings Commissioner Rick Chandler.

The increase was most dramatic in Brooklyn, though, with more than 23,000 residential units authorized for construction in the past year, more than three times the number of units in the year before. "It's just a matter of time before every corner of Brooklyn is, goes under some degree of change and growth. What that time frame is I couldn't tell you. But it's a hot borough," says Laura Gallo of New York Building Congress.

The Building Congress says \$26 billion was spent on construction over the past year—mostly on residential units. This is the third consecutive year Brooklyn led the city in construction permits. After Brooklyn, Manhattan was a distant second in new residential units authorized in the past year; nearly 13,500. Queens was close behind with more than 12,300 units. Bronx and Staten Island lagged far behind.

The Building Congress says construction of 8,400 units of affordable housing began in the last year, up 80 percent over the previous year. Experts predict the building boom to continue. The Buildings Department says it's hiring hundreds of workers to keep up with the demand.