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A collection of 1,750 scanned historical reports and archived publications is now available to the public on HUDUser.gov.



Since its creation as a HUD office in 1973, the Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) has sponsored and disseminated groundbreaking research. Among PD&R's first tasks was marshaling the work of economists to analyze existing housing subsidy programs, designing evaluation processes for new programs, and developing the Annual Housing Survey — an effort to collect data on demographics, income, tenure, rent and mortgage payments, utility costs, and housing conditions from a sample of housing units and occupants. PD&R has continued to pursue a mix of housing studies, technology research, program evaluations, surveys, demonstrations, and other types of research, amassing a substantial archive of reports and documents with ongoing relevance. In addition to this trove of research, PD&R serves as the custodian of housing documents that predate PD&R and even HUD itself.

Now PD&R reports that initially were available only in print as well as the historic documents are available through the [Historical and Archived Reports](#) database at HUDUser.gov, providing the public with access to original reports and research. The collection includes 1,750 scanned historical reports and archived publications that address a range of topics and originate from a similarly eclectic body of sources, from long-defunct international conferences to still-extant local government divisions. HUD librarian Eric Erickson described the document preservation efforts in a July 2020 *PD&R Edge* [article](#).

The oldest records in the archive date back to 1910: a copy of [How to Know Architecture: The Human Elements in the Evolution of Styles](#) by Frank E. Wallis and "[The Housing Awakening](#)," a collection of essays about slums in the United States from the National Housing Association. Records from the 1920s include papers of the then-biennial



An overview of historical reports on HUD User

International Housing and Town Planning Congress. And beginning with the “First Annual Report of the Federal Housing Administration” in 1935, the archives contain each subsequent Federal Housing Administration (FHA) annual report through FHA’s merger with HUD in the 1960s.

The collection offers records of interest not only to academics and researchers in the fields of architecture, planning, demography, and other topics of scholarly inquiry but also to laypeople seeking insight into the lives of the people of the past. For example, in the 1951 publication [*Housing Preferences of Farm Families in The Northeast*](#), Cornell University researcher James E. Montgomery provides detailed insight into the typical characteristics of farmhouses in this region at that time and the extent to which their occupants found them satisfactory or wanting. In the 1960 research report [*National Housing Policies Since World War II: a Comparison of Sweden, West Germany, United Kingdom, and the United States*](#), Paul F. Wendt offers a European perspective on mid-century housing policy, which may be useful to policy-minded users today.

Many of the documents in the archive are entries in serial publications. Some, such as HUD’s [four-volume guide](#) for participants in the 1970 Operation Breakthrough home construction technology demonstration project, have been preserved in the archive in their entirety. Others, such as the late-1930s series of more than [50 technical digests](#) by the National Bureau of Standards in the U.S. Department of Commerce, are only partially present, with a small number of missing installments.

PD&R invites readers to explore the wealth of documents in the archives for insight into how housing conditions and policies have changed over time and how lessons from the past can inform policies today.

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