



Office of Policy Development
and Research

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development



Creating Communities of Opportunity

Research Priorities

1994

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Michael A. Stegman, Assistant Secretary

The Research Mission: Secretary Henry G. Cisneros has articulated a clear mission for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to help create cohesive, economically healthy communities—communities of opportunity—throughout America. To accomplish this mission, HUD is reinventing the way it does business.

In this context, the Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) is reinventing the way HUD research is conducted. PD&R is responsible for providing advice and information to the Secretary to further his policy agenda; for maintaining current information to monitor housing needs, housing market conditions, and the operation of existing programs; and for conducting research on priority housing and community-development issues.

Our primary research mission is to provide reliable and objective data and analysis to inform policy decisions—today and in the future. We are focusing on providing definitive answers to questions about what programs work and how they can be made to work better, through quick-turnaround studies and conferences as well as through long-term evaluations that systematically measure outcomes over an extended period. In addition, we are committed to investing in the development of reliable databases describing housing market conditions and needs, as well as documenting how HUD programs work, how much they cost, and who they serve.

In all aspects of our research agenda, we plan to take full advantage of the wealth of intellectual resources outside HUD by forming active partnerships with researchers, practitioners, advocates, industry groups, and foundations. Moreover, we are committed to involving a greater diversity of perspectives, methods, and researchers into HUD research.

This outline of research priorities summarizes the issues we expect to explore in 1994 and 1995. We welcome your insights about how these priorities can best be addressed, and provide information on opportunities for participation in HUD research.

The Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research is Michael A. Stegman. PD&R consists of three subsidiary offices, all of which conduct research: Research, Evaluation, and Monitoring (Deputy Assistant Secretary Margery A. Turner); Policy Development (Deputy Assistant Secretary Maureen A. Kennedy); and Economic Affairs (Deputy Assistant Secretary Frederick J. Eggers).

PD&R Research Priorities: Our research priorities have been explicitly developed to support and advance the Department's six policy priorities:

Reduce the Number of Homeless Americans

During the 1980s, the tragedy of homelessness received growing attention from researchers as well as policymakers. There is now a substantial body of research, much of it funded by HUD, from which we have learned important lessons about the diversity of the homeless population and the depth and complexity of conditions causing their homelessness. Research interest in this area will focus on "continuum of care" initiatives:

- ◆ Effectiveness of services in helping families and individuals achieve permanent housing solutions.
- ◆ Characteristics and needs of the homeless.
- ◆ Homeless prevention initiatives—costs and effectiveness.
- ◆ Tailoring service and shelter solutions to differing needs among segments of the homeless population.

Make Public Housing a Source of Pride to Communities

A number of public housing projects suffer from physical and financial problems and a small percentage are severely distressed. The Department is committed to transforming the most severely distressed public housing developments, and redeveloping and replacing deteriorated units. Research should play an important supporting role:

- ◆ Costs of performing public housing management functions.
- ◆ Adequacy and incentives of public housing funding systems.
- ◆ Comprehensive interventions for distressed public housing projects Urban Revitalization Demonstration (URD).
- ◆ Impacts of occupancy and rent rules on public housing residents and management.
- ◆ Crime prevention and drug elimination strategies for public housing and surrounding neighborhoods.

Expand Housing Opportunities for Low- and Moderate-Income People

Although public housing plays a critical role in meeting the housing needs of low-income Americans, the vast majority of households are and will continue to be served by the private sector. The Department is committed to expanding both opportunities for homeownership and the availability of affordable rental housing. Research is essential to explore:

- ◆ Cost-saving technologies for housing production, rehab, and maintenance.
- ◆ Impacts of environmental protection on housing markets and housing affordability.
- ◆ Role of Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in single-family and multifamily housing markets.
- ◆ Role of housing finance and secondary market institutions in expanding the supply of affordable housing.
- ◆ Characteristics and occupancy of housing developed with low-income housing tax credits.
- ◆ Preservation of the existing stock of affordable, FHA-insured, and federally subsidized rental housing.
- ◆ Housing market conditions and trends.
- ◆ Feasibility and characteristics of mixed-income housing.
- ◆ Technologies and construction methods that foster housing that is both accessible and affordable for disabled persons.

Open Housing Markets to Minorities

One of the most daunting problems we face as a society is the persistence of housing market discrimination and residential segregation. The exclusion of poor and minority households in predominantly poor and minority neighborhoods perpetuates inequality and prejudice and erodes our common social and economic welfare. HUD is committed to vigorous enforcement of fair housing laws, affirmative marketing of housing opportunities, and open access to communities throughout our metropolitan regions, and will promote these objectives in all of its program activities. Research should contribute to the Department's initiatives in this area:

- ◆ Design and evaluation of the Moving to Opportunity (MTO) Demonstration.
- ◆ Analysis and evaluation of the new Moving to Independence (MTI) Program.
- ◆ Analysis of housing market discrimination by lenders, appraisers, insurers, and other housing market intermediaries.
- ◆ Analysis of discrimination and segregation in assisted housing programs.
- ◆ Impacts of housing discrimination on minority search, location, and housing choice.
- ◆ Metropolitan planning for fair and affordable housing.
- ◆ Expanding residential mobility and choice through zoning and land use regulations.
- ◆ Title VI and Title VIII enforcement.

Empower Communities

Poor and minority households should have the opportunity to move away from distressed neighborhoods if they choose to do so. But those who want to stay should have the opportunity to rebuild and reinvigorate their communities. Empowerment Zones will be a primary tool for central-city economic revitalization, but even in communities not selected as Empowerment Zones, the Department will foster and support community-based initiatives for economic development, social service delivery, and housing renovation. PD&R expects to document and evaluate these local initiatives and to contribute to the dissemination of information about effective community development models:

- ◆ Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities.
- ◆ Alternative models of community organizing and community building.
- ◆ Effectiveness of family self-sufficiency and empowerment initiatives in public and assisted housing.
- ◆ Job creation and job training in low-income neighborhoods.
- ◆ Local strategies for economic growth.
- ◆ Dynamics of urban economic opportunity.
- ◆ Rural economic development strategies.
- ◆ Housing and mortgage financing needs in underserved areas.

Bring Excellence to HUD's Management

To achieve any of its ambitious policy objectives, HUD must become more efficient and cost effective. At every level, staff must be held accountable for achieving outcomes, not just for adhering to proper procedures. Moreover, HUD (like agencies throughout the Federal Government) must become more customer oriented. PD&R is taking the lead in helping the Department define customer service standards and methods for measuring both customer service quality and program performance:

- ◆ Pilot studies of customer service quality.
- ◆ Surveys of HUD customers and customer satisfaction.
- ◆ Data collection, data verification, outcomes monitoring.
- ◆ Development of performance assessment tools.

Participating in HUD Research: Research sponsored by the Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) is conducted by:

- ◆ Public and private organizations or individuals through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements for specific research tasks.
- ◆ PD&R staff, augmented by staff from other HUD offices.
- ◆ Visiting scholars and student interns working at HUD.
- ◆ Other Federal agencies through interagency agreements or other cooperative arrangements.

Opportunities for participation in HUD research include:

- ◆ **Requests for Proposals (RFPs):** PD&R announces and solicits proposals for large-scale research projects through the *Commerce Business Daily*. Contractors are selected competitively. Interested parties can request to be placed on a mailing list for notification of such procurements.
- ◆ **Indefinite Quantity Contracts (IQCs):** For an IQC, PD&R competitively selects a contractor through an RFP to perform unspecified future research projects. As the Department identifies specific projects, it negotiates a task order with the contractor for those services.
- ◆ **Cooperative Agreements:** PD&R will consider unsolicited proposals consistent with its research priorities if significant cost sharing is involved.
- ◆ **Small-Purchase Procedures:** For research projects costing less than \$25,000 and conducted by individuals or small business, PD&R may select contractors without requiring formal proposals.
- ◆ **The Dissertation Grant Program:** PD&R's new University Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant Program will award grants of \$15,000 to support dissertations on topics in housing and community development.
- ◆ **Conferences and Roundtables:** PD&R holds conferences and roundtables on a wide variety of research and policy issues to expose HUD decisionmakers to the findings and implications of recent and ongoing research.

For more information contact:

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PD&R Information Services: HUD USER is an information service made available by PD&R for researchers and policymakers to provide access to the latest HUD information on housing and community development. Among the resources and services provided by HUD USER are the following:

- ◆ **HUD USER Hotline:** A toll free telephone number that puts you in contact with an information specialist who can help you access the information you need.
- ◆ **HUD USER Database:** A computerized database of bibliographic information on housing and community development.
- ◆ **Vanguard:** A new journal of policy-related housing and community-development research. First issue May 1994.
- ◆ **U.S. Housing Market Conditions:** A new quarterly report on national, regional, and local housing market trends.
- ◆ **Recent Research Results (RRR):** A free monthly bulletin summarizing new PD&R and other HUD reports.
- ◆ **Referrals** to agencies or organizations to contact for more information.
- ◆ **Directory of Information Resources in Housing and Urban Development, Third Edition:** Provides descriptions of 145 organizations and 44 online databases in the housing, planning, and development fields.
- ◆ **PD&R Research Reports:** Copies of recent PD&R research reports and documents. Among some of the most recent are:
 - ▲ *Home Building Cost Cuts: Construction Methods for Affordable Housing.*
 - ▲ *Assessment of Damage to Single-Family Homes Caused by Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki.*
 - ▲ *Practical Methods for Counting Homeless People.*
 - ▲ *Cost of Accessible Housing.*
 - ▲ *Housing Discrimination Study (Seven Volumes).*
 - ▲ *Nonprofit Housing: Costs and Funding.*
- ◆ **Public Use Databases:** Public use databases with accompanying documentation based upon the Annual Housing Survey, PD&R research, HUD administrative records, and other sources.

For more information on how HUD USER can help meet your information needs, or to become a registered user and receive a free subscription to *Recent Research Results*, call: 1-800-245-2691.

Callers in Maryland and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., area can dial: (301) 251-5154. Or you may write to:

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