

# **REC 0022 Guide to the Department of Housing Preservation and Development image collection, 1961-2012**

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Original finding aid by Caitlin Biggers and Jill Reichenbach, 2016. Revision of original finding aid and EAD encoding by staff archivist Kelli O'Toole, 2023.

New York City Department of Records and Information Services,  
Municipal Archives

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	New York City Department of Records and Information Services, Municipal Archives
<b>Creator:</b>	New York (N.Y.). Department of Housing Preservation and Development
<b>Source:</b>	New York (N.Y.). Department of Housing Preservation and Development
<b>Creator:</b>	New York (N.Y.). Housing and Development Administration
<b>Title:</b>	Department of Housing Preservation and Development image collection
<b>ID:</b>	REC 0022
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1961-2012
<b>Physical Description:</b>	100 Cubic Feet
<b>Physical Location:</b>	Materials are stored onsite at 31 Chambers Street in Manhattan and at 147 41st Street in Brooklyn.
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English.
<b>Abstract:</b>	This collection consists of materials created by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. Materials are primarily visual in nature and relate to the agency's programs and events and their work in affordable and supportive housing. Material includes, negatives, slides, photographic prints, press releases, agendas, contacts sheets, memoranda, pamphlets.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of item, date; Department of Housing Preservation and Development image collection, 1961-2012; REC 0022; Series name; box number; folder number; Municipal Archives, City of New York

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## Biographical / Historical

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The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development's predecessor, the Housing and Redevelopment Board, was created by Mayor Robert F. Wagner in 1961. Wagner created the organization in direct response to the Committee on Slum Clearance, headed by Robert Moses, and its effect on lower-income communities. The agency's primary objective was the total reorganization of urban renewal efforts, including taking over all ongoing Title 1 and rehabilitation efforts.

The agency grew and became the Housing Development Administration in 1965 and remained so until 1977, when it became the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). Since that time, the agency's primary mission has been the rehabilitation of vacant or heavily damaged pre-war housing, and the creation of new affordable housing in areas with the greatest need, including private home-ownership, affordable rental housing, supportive housing, housing for the elderly, and housing for people with disabilities. Today, HPD continues to pursue these goals through housing policy and support programs.

### Sources

- 1 Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York, by Samuel Zipp, Oxford University Press, 2010.

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## Scope and Contents

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New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development image collection includes photographic negatives, prints, and documents chronicling the Department of Housing Preservation and Development's history, programs, and events from 1961 through 2012.

The collection features images on a myriad of New York City housing related topics. Notable subjects include construction, building sites in situ, street views, excavations, accidents, facades, aerials, apartment interiors, rehabilitations, "before-and-after" photos, demolitions, and photos of City Hall events such as swearings-in, press conferences, and inaugurations. The collection also features photos of community hearings, street life, portraits of tenants, home-owners, and agency staff, as well as events like blood drives, toy drives, retirement parties, and sporting events. There are images documenting every major urban renewal project since 1961, including West Side Urban Renewal, Seward Park, Lincoln Square, Bellevue South, Morningside Heights, Washington Street, East River, Bradhurst, Camden Plaza, Atlantic Terminal, Coney Island Industrial, Children's Museum, Saratoga Square, Williamsburg, Arverne, Corona-East Elmhurst, Bronxchester, Melrose, Soundview, and Mott Haven. The collection also documents a considerable number of historic buildings across all five boroughs

and holds images of every New York City Mayor since 1961. Photos of elected officials, public figures, and agency Commissioners/Administrators are also included.

Materials are primarily visual, with the majority of the collection comprised of black and white and color negatives in formats ranging from 35 millimeter to 10 x 12 inches. The collection also includes 35 millimeter slides, photographic prints ranging from 3 x 5 inches to 30 x 40 inches, computer discs, contact sheets and textual documents like press releases and brochures, event programs, flyers, agency memoranda and agendas, presentation materials, reports, and pamphlets.

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## Arrangement

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The Department of Housing Preservation and Development image collection is arranged into eighth series based on physical format or function. Series 3 has been further arranged into two subseries. Within these series, materials are arranged to reflect the original institutional order or are arranged chronologically. Please see arrangement notes on the series and subseries level to determine which is used.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

New York City Department of Records and Information Services, Municipal Archives

### Revision Description

Revision of original finding aid and EAD encoding by staff archivist Kelli O'Toole. 2023

### Existence and Location of Copies

Series 1: Negatives, has been digitized and is available through our [online gallery](#).

### Custodial History

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and its predecessors, the Housing Redevelopment Board (1961-1965) and the Housing Development Administration (1965-1977), maintained custody of the collection since

the agency's 1961 founding until 2017. Before the collection was transferred to the New York City Municipal Archives in 2017, the collection was processed at HPD through a grant from the Local Government Record Management Improvement Fund. Digitization was undertaken by the Department of Records and Information Services (DORIS). After processing and digitization, the collection was officially transferred from HPD to the New York City Municipal Archives, a department within DORIS.

## Immediate Source of Acquisition

The collection was transferred from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to the New York City Municipal Archives (NYCMA) in 2017. The collection was accessioned by the NYCMA in 2018.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Housing -- New York (State) -- New York
- Housing policy -- New York (State) -- New York
- Public housing
- Color photographs
- Construction projects -- New York (State) -- New York
- Aerial photographs
- Aerial photography in city planning
- Black-and-white photographs
- Urban renewal
- New York City Hall (New York, N.Y.)
- Architecture -- New York (State) -- New York
- New York (N.Y.)
- Negatives (photographs)
- Housing rehabilitation
- New York (N.Y.). Department of Housing Preservation and Development

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## Collection Inventory

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### Negatives, 1961-2006

Physical Description: 24 Cubic Feet

## Scope and Contents

This series includes 8 x10 inch, 5 x 7 inch , 4x5 inch, 2 ¼ x 2 ¼ inch, 6 x 17 centimeter and 35 millimeter negatives and a small number of color transparencies and inter-negatives. The photos focus on affordable housing, supportive housing, and other housing advocacy topics and typically feature building interiors and exteriors before and after rehabilitation, construction in progress, vacant sites and damaged buildings, tenants and apartment interiors, staff portraits, ribbon cutting ceremonies, press conferences, groundbreakings, dedications, agency, city hall, and community events.

## Arrangement

This series is arranged by the identifier assigned by the photographer. Identifiers consist of the last two digits of the year a roll was photographed, followed by a three digit roll number in sequence. Identifiers generally follow chronological order with some slight deviation from strict chronology.

### Existence and Location of Copies:

## Existence and Location of Copies

This series has been digitized and is available to view through our [online gallery](#).

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## Slides, 1964-2002, (1989-1991)

Physical Description: 4 Cubic Feet

## Scope and Contents

This series includes sleeved, color and black and white 35 millimeter slides. The majority of the slides are acetate and cardboard or plastic slides but there are a small number of glass slides. The photos feature select HPD programs and events, typically featuring office interiors, building exteriors, construction in progress, tenants and apartment interiors, staff portraits, ceremonies, press conferences, community events. The glass slides most often feature plans or renderings of agency presentations. Well represented programs include Capital Budget Homeless Housing Program (CBHHP), Division of Relocation Operations (DRO), Division and Bureau of Vacant Apartment Repair and Rental (BVARR) and the Tenant Interim Lease Program (TIL).

## Arrangement

This series is arranged to reflect the original subject groupings of the slides. Binders are arranged alphabetically by primary subject name.

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## Subject files, 1961-2009

Physical Description: 48.5 Cubic Feet

## Scope and Contents

The majority of this series is comprised of 4 x 6 photographic prints affixed to 8.5 x 11 inch sheets of white paper. These sheets typically feature two photos per page, and some handwritten addresses,

programs, and dates. They are sometimes grouped together in soft-cover plastic binders. Other materials include loose 4 x 5 and 8 x 10 prints, sometimes in original commercial processing envelopes, handwritten notes, program information sheets, maps, event programs and agendas, ledgers, and address lists. Common subjects include building exteriors, interiors, before and after photos, street views, dedications, ground breakings, ribbon cuttings, press conferences and portraits of HPD staff, tenants, landlords, and construction personnel. Nearly all HPD programs are represented.

### **Arrangement**

This series is arranged into two subseries.

## **Program files, 1988-2006**

### **Arrangement**

This subseries is arranged by program, then by borough.

## **Chronological files, 1961-2009**

Physical Description: 30 Cubic Feet

### **Arrangement**

This subseries is arranged chronologically. In folders where multiple dates were present, folders were arranged by the earliest date. Folders listing only a year can be found at the end of said year.

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## **Optical discs, 1997-2012**

Physical Description: 2.5 Cubic Feet

### **Scope and Contents**

This series is comprised of CD-Rs and DVD-Rs. The series is unprocessed.

### **Arrangement**

This series is arranged chronologically. In instances where multiple dates were listed, discs were arranged by the earliest listed date. Discs listing only a year can be found at the end of said year.

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## **Press materials and ephemera, 1964-2011, (1964-1990)**

Physical Description: 3 Cubic Feet

### **Scope and Contents**

The press materials and ephemera series is comprised of primarily textual documents related to HPD programs, events, and its goals as an agency. Ephemeral materials include, handwritten notes, annotated event programs, invitations, flyers, pamphlets, memoranda, lists of people and addresses,



speech transcripts, and some contact sheets originally housed with their corresponding negatives. These materials primarily date between 1964-1990. There are also press releases, press brochures and publications detailing HPD programs and plans.

### **Arrangement**

This series is arranged chronologically.

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## **Exhibition prints, 1964-2005**

Physical Description: 13.2 Cubic Feet

### **Scope and Contents**

This series is made up of 30 x 40, 16 x 20, 11.5 x 16.5, 11 x 14 and 8 x10 inch photographic prints. Like the negatives they were produced from, the photos detail building interiors and exteriors before and after rehabilitation, construction in progress, vacant sites and damaged buildings, tenants and apartment interiors, staff and construction personnel portraits, ribbon cutting ceremonies, press conferences, groundbreaking, dedications, agency, city hall, and community events associated with a variety of HPD programs.

### **Arrangement**

This series is arranged by descending print dimension.

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## **Contact sheets, 1964-2006**

Physical Description: 4.5 Cubic Feet

### **Scope and Contents**

This series is comprised of 8 x 10 inch contact sheets made from the negatives contained in Series 1. There are also a small number of 4 x 6 inch digitally produced contact sheets from between 2003 and 2006.

### **Arrangement**

This series is arranged by the identifier assigned by the photographer. Identifiers consist of the last two digits of the year a roll was photographed, followed by a three digit roll number in sequence. Identifiers generally follow chronological order with some slight deviation from strict chronology.

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## **Bronx Planning Unit materials, circa 1961-2012**

Physical Description: 2 Cubic Feet

## **Scope and Contents**

This series is unprocessed and scope and contents are unknown but will be updated when processed.

## **Arrangement**

Unknown arrangement.

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