Poverty and Inequality in Dayton and the Surrounding Areas

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Main Idea: There are severe disparities in overall economic well-being between the city of Dayton and the surrounding areas such as Oakwood, Kettering, Centerville, and Beavercreek.

Historical Context
- In the early 1900s, Dayton was a beacon of manufacturing and economic success, housing many Fortune 500 companies like NCR and GM.
- When WWII hit, Dayton received nearly $1.7 billion in government defense contracts, bolstering the economy.
- However, from the 1970s to today, the Dayton economy has plummeted for a number of reasons.
- Dayton also has a history of segregation that has limited the African American population.

Current Economic Situation
- Unemployment is improving, but wages are declining, leading to declines in overall income.
- Poverty is worse in Dayton today than it was at the beginning of the Great Recession.
- In Montgomery County, nearly one in five people are living below the poverty line.
- The economy needs to expand to create more jobs.

Current Efforts
- Community engagement projects such as Rebuilding Together Dayton to brighten up the poor neighborhoods.
- Catholic Social Services and Montgomery County Job and Family Services offer job training and coaching, as well as financial assistance.
- Easier access to early childhood education for poor families.
- East End Community Services.
- Tax and regulation reform to help small businesses get started.

References

Facing Project Narratives
- “My appreciation of the importance of home ownership came from my experience in 1966, when I tried to build my first house in the West Wood Neighborhood. Loan services were not attainable based on my skin color and choice of neighborhood…” (Bill Johnson).
- “During this time, employment and housing was not equal. Black people lived on the west side, and the white people would be elsewhere” (Emma Trent).