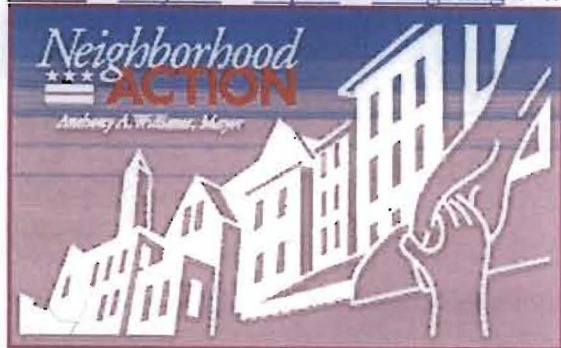


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Washington, DC Citizen Summit II

Sponsor:

Office of the Mayor, Washington, DC

Topics:

[Budgeting](#), [Timeline](#)

Location:

Washington, DC

Date:

November 2001

Participants:

Approximately 3,000

Citizen Priorities Shape District Budgets

In 1999, Washington, DC Mayor Anthony Williams launched a process to renew people's faith in government and to get them personally involved in changing life in the District. In partnership with *AmericaSpeaks*, over the course of six years the Mayor's office held seven DC-wide 21st Century Town Meetings®, through which more than 13,500 residents deliberated about the city's spending priorities and made recommendations for change. In 2000, the Mayor held a special Youth Summit, during which more than 1,400 young people articulated their priorities and planned for more active participation in governance.

Participants in the Citizen Summits saw millions of dollars in the city budget allocated to their priority concerns: an additional \$270 million for education; \$10 million for senior services; 1,000 new drug treatment slots; an additional \$25 million for a housing trust fund; \$2 million for citizen involvement; and nearly \$20 million for more police and juvenile-related initiatives.

Participants also helped establish new community-based governance mechanisms – such as the Office of Neighborhood Action – with enhanced oversight. The Summits also produced a new and codified role for youth in the District's policy development process. In the 2005 Summit, residents strongly supported a shift in the allocation of jobs training dollars, critiqued a Blue Ribbon panel's vision for the future library system, and called upon developers to set aside more affordable housing units.

- 1999 – [Citizen Summit I](#) (3,000 people)
- 2000 – [Citizen Summit I Follow Up](#) (1,500 people)
- 2000 – [Youth Summit](#) (1,400 people)
- 2001 – [Youth Summit Follow-up](#) (125 people)
- 2001 – [Citizen Summit II](#) (3,000 people)
- 2001 – [Citizen Summit II Follow-up](#) (1,250 people)
- 2003 – [Citizen Summit III](#) (2,800 people)
- 2005 – [Citizen Summit IV](#) (2,000 people)

Impact

Public input led to better budget allocations and the formation of new community-based governance mechanisms, such as the Office of Neighborhood Action.

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1050 17th Street, NW Suite 350 | Washington, DC 20036 | 202-775-3939 | info@americaspeaks.org

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Poorly housed Canadians face same challenges as homeless: study

NORMA GREENAWAY
POSTMEDIA NEWS

OTTAWA – For every homeless person in Canada, 23 others are barely keeping a roof over their heads, according to a new study that paints a bleak picture of what it calls the country's "hidden emergency."

While there are 17,000 shelter beds available across Canada every night, as many as 400,000 men, women and children are living in inadequate,

unsafe housing where rent alone eats up more than half of the household income, the study says.

Authors say the study documents for the first time that poorly housed Canadians experience the same severe health and security worries as people living on the street.

The numbers of people suffering the devastating health outcomes associated with inadequate housing could be "staggering" and go far beyond previous esti-

mates based on shelter and street counts, the study says.

People who don't have a healthy place to live – regardless of whether they are homeless or housed in substandard conditions – are at high risk of experiencing hunger, physical and mental health problems and hospitalization, the study says. They also have problems accessing needed health care.

"The real gulf in health outcomes doesn't lie between people who are homeless and

people who aren't homeless. It's between those who have continued access to healthy housing and those who don't."

Stephen Hwang, a medical doctor and the lead researcher from the University of Toronto, called on the federal government to recognize the problem and develop "national housing standards that ensure universal, timely access to decent, stable and appropriate housing."

The recommendation echoes one made earlier this

week by an all-party Commons committee, which told the government an effective strategy to end poverty must include steps to guarantee an adequate supply of affordable housing.

Regardless of whether those interviewed were poorly housed or homeless, the study found:

■ Almost one in four said they had been beaten up or attacked in the past year.

■ More than one in four, or 28 per cent, of people said they

have lost a limb, have trouble walking or other mobility problems.

■ More than half, 52 per cent, reported a past diagnosis of mental health problems.

■ Sixty-one per cent said they had a traumatic brain injury at some point in their lives.

■ Thirty-three per cent reported having trouble getting enough to eat.

■ Fifty-five per cent said they had visited an emergency department in the previous year.