

What MYCT Achieved in Our Second Official Year

June 2020–June 2021

Prepared by Chair Nate Minor and Vice Chair Rowan Ali

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Dear Mayor Woodards and Tacoma City Council,

It is with honor I present to you the second annual report of the Mayor's Youth Commission of Tacoma (MYCT). This year was unlike any other, forcing the Commission to create new foundations and forms of engagement behind the glow of a computer screen. It hasn't been easy, but with the help of our wonderful admin and general members, we've added great achievements under the name of MYCT.

This year the Commission continued to fight for youth voices in Tacoma's government. We did not back down, even if that meant we weren't in full alignment with the city on every issue. Most notably, we fought for ranked choice voting and will continue to do so, thanks to Justice & Safety Chairs Tara Ryan and Tara Zolfaghari. We condemned police violence, taking a stance against police brutality in January 2021. We conducted a meeting with Mayor Woodards to hold the City Council accountable, and we'll continue to hold the city council accountable for their promises. Championed by the Environmental Health Committee, the Commission took a stance against the Liquid Natural Gas Plant (LNG), going against the City's opinion as it would negatively affect Tacoma's climate and the health of those around it, notably the Puyallup tribe and those at the Northwest Detention Center.

The COVID-19 pandemic allowed MYCT to take a step back and update its structure. A new logo was adopted on July 22, 2020 and the official by-laws were updated; changes went into effect on February 3, 2021. An ad-hoc committee was put together to review the by-laws, and spent two months updating, editing, and finalizing changes.

The Commission has achieved great things this year, every detail has been outlined by our amazing leadership in this document.

It has been an honor to lead the Commission this year. As stated above, it's been a foundational year for MYCT – there were many things we couldn't do because of COVID restrictions, but we were able to overcome and find a new way to engage in Tacoma's government. Many emails were sent, many Zoom meetings were had, and even a desk-that may or may not have been mine, broke during one of those Zoom meetings.

The Mayor's Youth Commission of Tacoma is a platform where dozens of driven youth have shined, and next year's team will take this platform to the next level. Thank you to the leadership team, general members, liaisons, and organizations that helped the Commission thrive this year.



Nate Minor, Commission Chair



Rowan Ali, Commission Vice Chair

Commission Achievements

1. Student Resource Officers (SRO's)

- a. The Commission took a stance against SRO's in Tacoma Public Schools in October 2020.
- b. Meetings were held with representatives to give the Commission's opinion on SRO's, developing the decision to take a stance against them.
- c. In June 2021, championed by the Justice & Safety Committee, a petition was run to demand an end to the contract between TPD and TPS.
- d. A post was run on Instagram for the petition on June 5th, 2021, becoming the most successful post in MYCT history.

2. By-Laws

- a. The Amendments & Revision Ad-Hoc Subcommittee formed in December 2020 to review the by-laws. Four admin members were a part of this group.
- b. Seven sections were revised and 11 were added. The updates reflect a flow created by multiple years of running and being a part of the Commission.
- c. On February 3, 2021, the by-laws were officially updated with every revision adopted.

3. Collaboration with 350 Tacoma

- a. In December 2020, the Mayor's Youth Commission of Tacoma partnered with 350 Tacoma, a local climate action group, to hold the city council accountable for their climate action promise in December 2019.
- b. Chair Minor gathered over a hundred shoes for the demonstration and donated them afterwards in the name of MYCT, and Environmental Health Committee members Rita Tumbusch, Hannah Albrecht, and Naomi Alvarez designed and painted a 12-inch round piece of fabric for the demonstration in the name of MYCT. Together, all painted rounds for the demonstration spelled out "PEOPLE OVER PROFIT."

4. Police Violence Stance

- a. On February 3, 2021, the Mayor's Youth Commission took a stance to condemn the police violence that took place on January 23, 2021, when a TPD officer ran over two people on 9th and Pacific Avenue.
- b. Chair Minor wrote and delivered the stance to the Mayor, subsequently holding a meeting with her and the Commission to discuss the City's promise.

5. Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) Stance

- a. In April 2021, the Commission took a stance against the LNG Plant, which has devastating effects on the environment and disproportionately affects those at the Northwest Detention Center and the Puyallup Tribe.
- b. Committee Chair Zoha Ahmad led her committee in writing a letter to the City Council denouncing LNG, stating how it would negatively affect the environment as well as those living in Tacoma and the surrounding areas.

6. Youth Summit

- a. On June 12, 2021 the Commission held its first ever youth summit, “Navigating Civic Engagement!”
- b. Environmental Health Chair Zoha Ahmad prepared and ran the summit, with presentations from the Education, Arts & Culture Committee; the Justice & Safety Committee; the Legislative Youth Advisory Council; and Citizens for a Healthy Bay.

Committee Projects

Our four standing committees focused on different areas of the youth agenda to create lasting change in Tacoma

1. Justice & Safety - Presented by Tara Ryan and Tara Zolfaghari

- a. In June 2020, onboarding meetings were held with the committee chair and vice chair and each committee member.
- b. In July 2020, the committee reviewed Body Worn Camera Policy for Tacoma Police Department in partnership with the Community Police Advisory Committee.
- c. In November 2020, member Terah Gruber applied for and was selected to fill the youth seat on the Community Police Advisory Committee, serving as a contact for the two groups to collaborate.
- d. In March 2021, the committee created and ran an education campaign on what defunding the Tacoma Police Department would mean and look like.
- e. Between April and June 2021, the committee presented on police presence in Tacoma public high schools at the 2021 Charting Our Futures Graduate Tacoma Conference, the Mayor’s Youth Commission of Tacoma Youth Summit, and the Seeds of Peace Youth Summit. The committee contributed youth input to the decisions made by Tacoma Public Schools and Washington State on the role of district contracted and employed police officers.
- f. In September 2020, the committee collaborated with Rock the Vote on a Get Out the Vote and voter registration initiative for 2020 general presidential and local elections.
- g. In October 2020, the committee presented to the Mayor’s Youth Commission on ranked-choice voting and provided opportunities for organizing around Washington State to implement ranked choice voting.
- h. In January 2021, the committee led the Mayor’s Youth Commission of Tacoma to take a stance in support of the use of ranked-choice voting in Washington.
- i. In October 2020, the committee led the Mayor’s Youth Commission of Tacoma to take a stance to demand the contract between Tacoma Police Department and Tacoma Public Schools end.
- j. In June 2021, the committee ran a petition to demand the contract between Tacoma Police Department and Tacoma Public Schools end.

2. Education, Arts & Culture - Presented by Nathan Essman

- a. The Education, Arts & Culture Committee had a productive year in determining its future and goals. We were able to plot out the forms of education that would best serve students in our community, settling on understanding the true range of diversity around us.
- b. We developed a survey to explore this topic and received insightful information that guided our thinking. Members joined outside committees like the Tacoma Public School Board and Tacoma Creates Advisory Board to expand their learning of education and culture.
- c. The committee also created advertisements for the Tacoma Public Library's reading campaigns and participated in the Commission-wide youth summit, presenting on opportunities for local civic engagement.

3. Social Health - Presented by Logan Cornwell

- a. Presented at the Charting Our Futures conference hosted by Graduate Tacoma on the state of youth mental health, talking about high rates of anxiety and stress in teens, how youth handled quarantine, and what we can do to improve mental health in schools.
- b. Filmed and presented a video on the committee, background on mental health information, where to find help, and where to learn more, at the annual MYCT Youth Summit.
- c. Presented at a monthly general assembly meeting on mental health. Aubyana Clarke organized a presentation with the Social Health Committee.
- d. Hosted MYC Social Night, a game night for youth around Tacoma to unwind and socialize.
- e. Researched ways to make mental health resources more accessible online.

4. Environmental Health - Presented by Rita Tumbusch

- a. Environmental Issues Social Media Campaign
- b. Environmental issues specific to Tacoma
 - i. Environmental Education Survey
 - ii. Our goal was to gather input on youth opinion on climate change to use for reference in our future work. We received 41 responses.
 - iii. Investigated the LNG plant and its impacts.
- c. Met with
 - i. Representative from City of Tacoma Development Services.
 - ii. Deputy City Attorney
 - iii. Discussed probability of future plants coming to Tacoma and how to ensure that doesn't happen in order to preserve lower carbon emissions.
 - iv. We worked on a letter to send to the City in March regarding our stance on LNG plants.

Normal Function

Day-to-day basis

1. **Leadership Meetings** - We ran our own leadership meetings twice a month, on the first and third Wednesdays until January, where we switched to the second and fourth Wednesdays. These meetings included:
 - a. Receiving equity training and engaging in dialogue about Tacoma's racist history
 - b. Learning about grants and how to apply for them
 - i. Learning about the complexities of government money allocation
 - c. Exploring the processes involved with passing referendums and making proclamations
 - d. Voting on official business and positions as well as spending funds for youth projects
2. **General Assembly Meetings** - We ran our own general assembly meetings on the third Saturday of each month, with a total of 14 general assemblies held throughout the year. (Second general assembly held in July and August 2020). These meetings included:
 - a. Reviewing the council forecasts and commenting on items going before the City Council
 - b. Discussing major topics that the youth wanted to work on and starting projects around these ideas.
 - c. Meeting with City commissions, boards, committees and action groups to better understand our community and plan our work and priorities.
 - d. Engaging with new members and welcoming them to the Commission.
3. **Establishing MYCT/Updating By-Laws**

We approved a new logo and updated our by-laws on July 22, 2020 and February 3, 2021 respectively.
4. **Elections**
 - a. We held our last meeting of the 2020-21 year on June 19, 2021 to vote on leadership for the upcoming term, hear kind words from community leaders, and honor our graduating seniors. We heard words from:
 - i. Victoria Woodards, Mayor of Tacoma
 - ii. Laurie Jenkins, Speaker of the House for Washington State and Representative for the 27th Legislative District
 - iii. 2019-20 MYCT Chair and Vice Chair Rosemary Sissel & Yasmin Aref
 - b. We transitioned the leadership team, offering guidance to newly elected leadership after the final general assembly.
 - i. This guidance took the form of meetings, texts, and emails.
5. **COVID-19**
 - a. The Commission flourished in the transition to the online realm despite all the struggles we faced. We utilized different platforms such as Zoom for our meetings, GroupMe for communication, and Instagram, where we voiced the majority of the Commission's stances and enlisted new members.

6. Ad-Hoc Committees

- a. Social Media Ad-Hoc Subcommittee
 - i. Formed to help the Commission Chair design the Instagram page throughout the year
- b. Amendments & Revision Ad-Hoc Subcommittee
 - i. Formed to add to the by-laws and change outdated language
- c. Youth Summit Ad-Hoc Subcommittee
 - i. Formed to create and plan the first annual youth summit which was held on June 12, 2021.

7. Conflict Resolution

- a. Whenever conflicts among members came up, they were dealt with in a mature manner, involving lots of safe discussion and openness allowing all to be heard and issues to be resolved for the betterment of the Commission. New guidance was also added in the by-laws to deal with conflict as well.
 - i. 2.8.1 stating members can be removed for disrespectful or disruptive behavior that makes members feel unsafe to attend or participate in meetings or events; disruptive actions that delay and cancel meetings, projects, or other logistical functions of the Commission; behavior involving physical violence, threats, documented bullying or harassment; unprofessional retaliation in regards to a member alleging misconduct; and sexual harassment as defined as unwelcome conduct and/or comments of a sexual nature, prohibited conduct may be verbal, non-verbal, physical, deliberate or unintended, unsolicited or unwelcome, as determined by a reasonable person. Including unwelcome remarks, questions, jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature; including sexist comments or sexual invitations; and verbal abuse, intimidation, or threats of a sexual nature.
 - ii. 2.10.1 Removal of a member must be recommended and brought to the leadership team for a vote, and section 2.10.2 Higher offenses including misconduct, bullying, or harassment including sexual harassment, shall be brought directly to the staff liaisons for review and removal.
- b. Removal is the last approach. Asking questions, having a meeting with those you have conflict with, or having mediation are all steps that would take place before removal.

List of all organizations, offices, and city collaborations the Commission and committees have had through the year:

Whole Commission

- 350 Tacoma
- Charles Wright Academy
- Citizens for a Healthy Bay
- Cityline
- COT Environmental Services
- COT Legal Department
- COT Neighborhood and Community Services
- COT Office of Equity and Human Rights
- Council Member Walker

- Environmental Policy and Sustainability
- Graduate Tacoma
- Legislative Youth Advisory Council
- Mayor Victoria Woodards
- Pierce Transit
- Racial Justice and Equity Committee
- Seeds of Peace
- Speaker Laurie Jenkins
- Sunrise Tacoma
- Tacoma Creates
- Tacoma Police Department
- Tacoma Public Library
- Tacoma Public Schools
- Workforce Central

Justice & Safety

- Community Police Advisory Commission
- FairVote Washington
- Graduate Tacoma
- Rock The Vote
- Seeds of Peace
- Tacoma Public Schools
- Tacoma Police Department

Education, Arts & Culture

- Tacoma Creates
- Tacoma Public Library
- Tacoma Public Schools

Social Health

- Equity Action Network – Mackenzie attended a meeting and reported back to the general meeting.
- Graduate Tacoma/ FFTS – Charting Our Futures contact: Cecilia Garza cgarza@graduatetacoma.org. We communicated with Cecilia about logistics of the Charting Our Futures conference, but worked with Leandra to plan our session.
- NAMI Pierce County President: Lovey Offerle - kekuluo@yahoo.com - Although we never officially partnered with NAMI, here is a potential contact for future endeavors.
- Safe Streets: Dominique (Domi) Watkins – dwatkins@safest.org - Domi was interested in what the MYC was and so we met with her 3/12/21 to share what we do.

Environmental Health

- Patrick Babbitt, COT Environmental Policy and Sustainability
- Sunrise Tacoma
- Graduate Tacoma STEAM Learning Network
- Youth Ocean Conservation Summit

Thank you for reading this document! And thank you once more for giving us this opportunity and platform. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.