



City of Columbia  
**YOUTH Advisory Council**

# ANNUAL REPORT



# YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The mission of the Youth Advisory Council is to empower the youth of our community to get involved and develop the skills necessary to lead a better future.

## GENERAL PARTICIPATION & ACCESS

15 Council Members

~100 Community Members Served (e.g., total participants, constituents engaged, residents reached).

2 Events Held (Honeysuckle Removal and Youth Summit)

10 Meetings Held

1 Meeting Canceled Due to Lack of Quorum

1 New Initiative

7 Volunteers

## MATERIALS & CONTENT

1 Annual Report Produced

5 Social Media Posts Created and Published

1 Letter of Support for Legislation



## PROJECTS AND KEY MILESTONES

### Honeysuckle Removal

- The Youth Advisory Council hosted a honeysuckle clean up in the fall, with the help of Mike Szydowski. There was a total of seven volunteers at this event.

### Meetings Attended

- Members met with Dr. Klein, the CPS Superintendent to discuss YAC.
- Members met with the Coalition of community violence to discuss youth life in Columbia and shared information about YAC with the community.

### Instagram Takeover

- Generating around 4,040 views, reaching 1,738 people, and engaging 101 people, the Youth Advisory Council created social media posts that revolved around their three areas of focus that were posted on the City's Instagram page.
- Creation of a Social Media Subcommittee.
- Worked with City Staff to create a YAC logo.

### Youth Summit at Earth Day Festival

- Youth Advisory Council Members attended radio shows to promote the Youth Summit.
- The Youth Advisory Council created four themed tables around their areas of focus, featuring trifolds and interactive elements for the community.
- Participants enjoyed rock painting, learning about resources in Columbia, playing BINGO, and answering questions.
- There were approximately 100 youth that engaged in the Youth Summit.

# YOUTH SUMMIT SUMMARY

While participation fluctuated across the different tables, approximately 100 youth engaged with the summit throughout the day. This was a significant increase from the 20 participants recorded last year. The following data represents the feedback collected from the interactive dot-polling boards located at each table, though it should be noted that individual response rates varied by question.

## PARTICIPANTS AGE RANGE

### PRE- K TO 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE



### 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TO 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE



### OLDER THAN 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE



## SUSTAINABILITY

### HAVE YOU EVER FELT WORRIED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET?

#### YES



#### NO



### WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE TO MAKE THE CITY OF COLUMBIA MORE SUSTAINABLE?

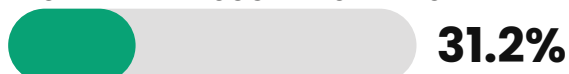


### WHAT IS THE BIGGEST BARRIER TO LIVING MORE SUSTAINABLE?

#### IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE



#### I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION



#### IT TAKES TOO MUCH TIME



# SAFETY & SECURITY

IN ONE WORD, WHAT DOES "SAFETY" MEAN TO YOU?



DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN COLUMBIA?

YES



NO



# WELLNESS

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST BARRIER TO PERSONAL WELLNESS?

ACADEMIC PRESSURE/GRADES



CLIMATE/WORLD NEWS



FAMILY EXPECTATIONS



FINANCIAL STRESS



WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY DE-STRESS ACTIVITY?



IS THERE AN ADULT YOU CAN TALK TO WITHOUT JUDGEMENT?

YES



NO



# RECOMMENDATIONS

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## OUTREACH AND REPRESENTATION

To strengthen its impact, the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) aims to ensure every high school has a dedicated seat at the table. By diversifying outreach through potential high school pop-ups, peer-led digital media, and volunteer opportunities, YAC aims to engage youth across Columbia to understand youth needs and advise the City Council on those matters.

## EVENTS

YAC proposes a collaborative Youth Conference in partnership with the City of Columbia, designed to serve as a professional development opportunity for local high school aged students. By offering this event at no cost to youth, the Council removes financial barriers to entry, ensuring equitable access to high-value networking and career-building resources for youth in Columbia. The conference would serve as way for students to explore local internships, volunteer roles, and employment opportunities. This joint effort fosters a stronger sense of civic investment by connecting Columbia's youth directly with municipal leaders and opportunity.

## STAFF LIAISON

As our current staff liaison prepares to leave to further her career, YAC recommends having a dedicated staff liaison who is truly committed to supporting our mission. It can be difficult for a student-led group to make a real impact when there is not a dedicated staff liaison. We need a mentor who understands how city government works and can help us navigate the logistics of turning our ideas into real impact. Having a consistent point of contact ensures our projects keep moving even after members graduate, providing the institutional support we need to be successful.

# SOCIAL MEDIA TAKEOVER REVIEW

From April 20<sup>th</sup> through April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Youth Advisory Council posted on the City’s instagram. This content revolved around our three areas of focus, and promoted our Youth Summit. Below is are graphs comparing the City’s instagram engagement from the week prior to the week of the takeover.

## Posts table

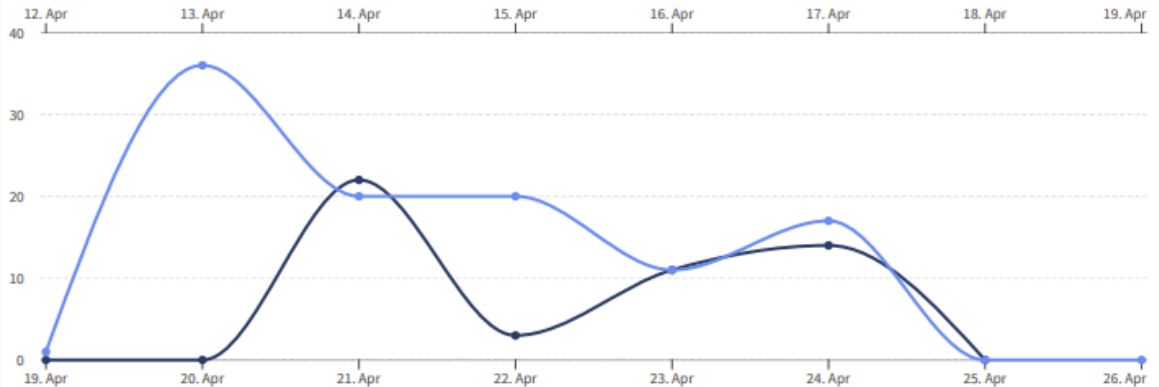
DATE	MESSAGE	COLLABORAT...	LIKES	COMME...	SHARES	SAVES	VIEWS	REACH	ENGAG...	% ENGAG...
comogov Apr 20, 12:01	Meet the Youth Advisory Council 🌟 These student leaders help advise City Council on issues impacting...	None	24	0	7	1	1,256	418	33	7.89%
comogov Apr 22, 14:01	Safety matters. For everyone. Today, the Youth Advisory Council is highlighting youth safety and secur...	None	12	0	5	0	719	321	20	6.23%
comogov Apr 24, 14:01	A better future starts with action 🌍 The Youth Advisory Council is committed to empowering young...	None	11	0	5	0	559	340	17	5%
comogov Apr 21, 17:01	Pulling honeysuckle. Growing our canopy. Making a difference 🌿 The Youth Advisory Council is taking...	None	11	0	7	0	859	346	20	5.78%
comogov Apr 23, 12:01	Wellness is for everyone 🌟 Columbia is home to people from all walks of life, and every person deserves the...	None	6	0	4	0	647	313	11	3.51%

## Post engagement

**105**  
engagements

📈 110% from 50

## Post engagement

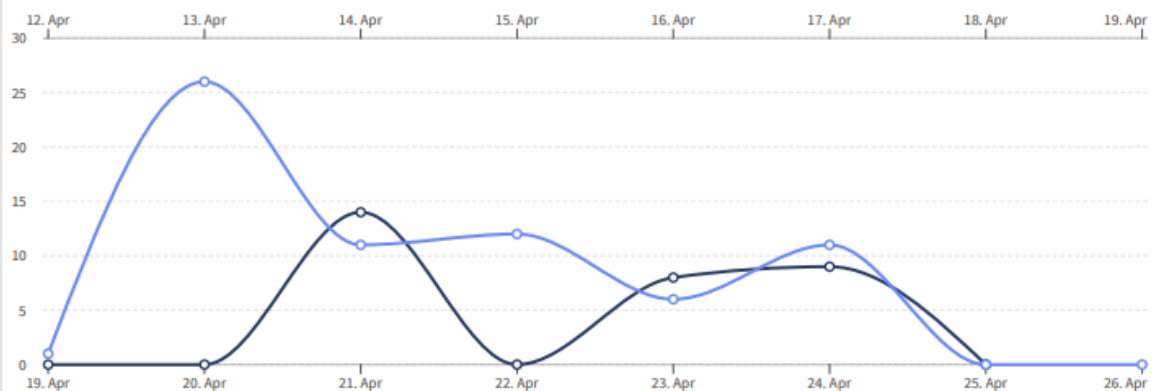


## Post likes

**67**  
likes

📈 116% from 31

## Post likes

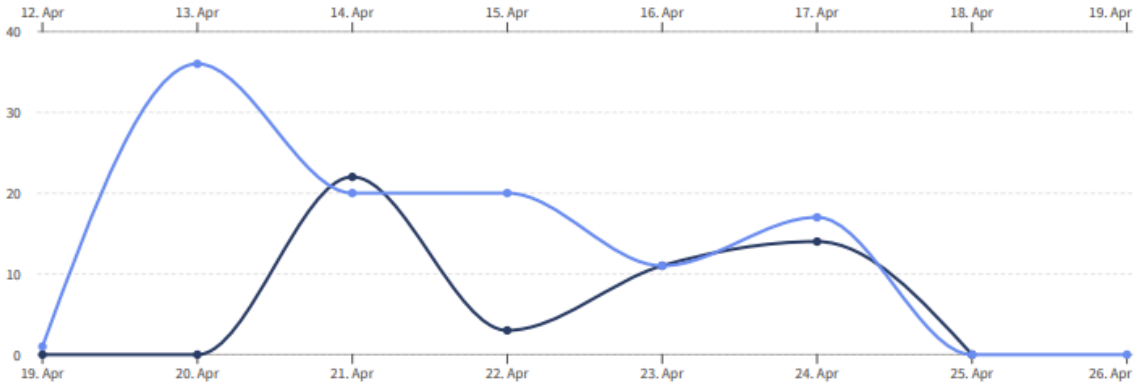


📊 Page engagement

**78**  
engagements

📈 129% from 34

📊 Post engagement

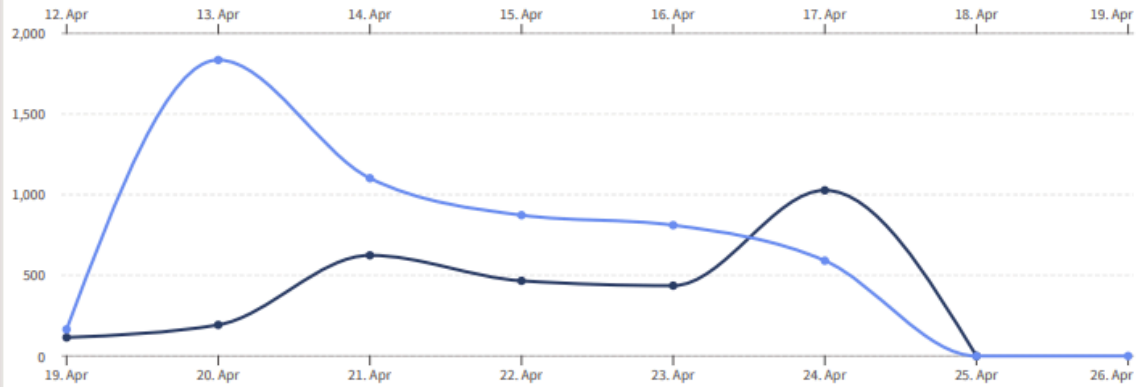


📊 Post views

**5,377**  
views

📈 87.9% from 2,861

📊 Post views

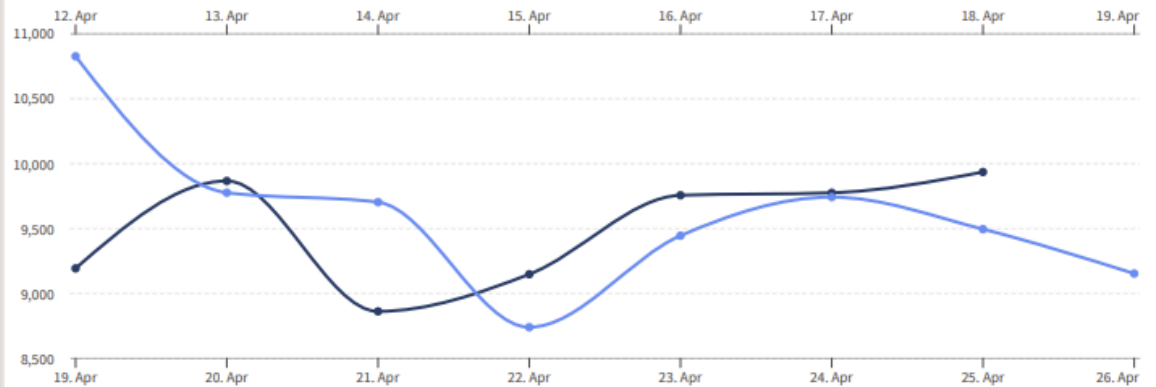


📊 Profile views

**76,888**  
views

📈 15.5% from 66,542

📊 Profile views

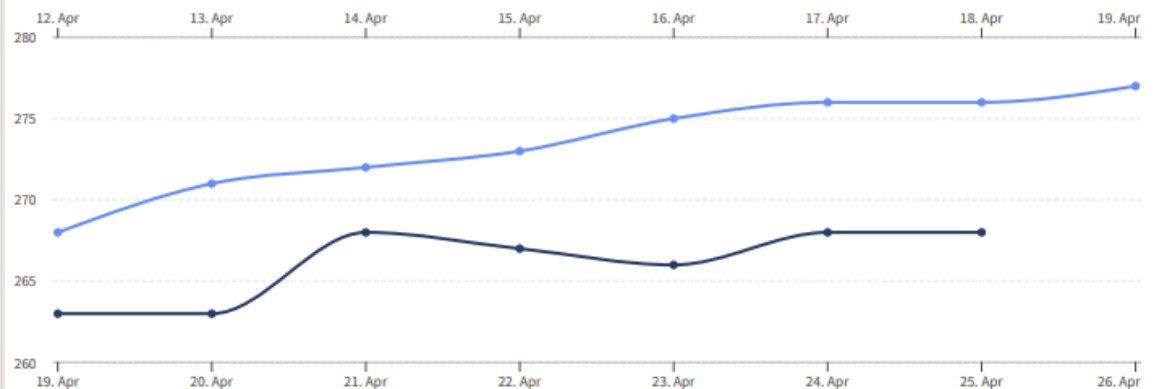


📊 Followers

**277**  
followers

📈 3.4% from 268

📊 Followers



Dear Missouri General Assembly,

On behalf of the City of Columbia's Youth Advisory Council, representing 15 members from across Columbia, Missouri, we are writing to express our strong support for HB 2234 and SB 922 sponsored by our local representatives Rep. Kathy Steinhoff and Senator Stephen Webber. We urge the Missouri General Assembly to vote in favor of this legislation and act to protect our community from gun violence.

The Youth Advisory Council's mission is to empower the youth of our community to get involved and develop skills for a better future. We believe in protecting our community, and taking reasonable, evidence-based steps to ensure that guns are used safely and do not fall into the wrong hands.

We specifically support these bills because we believe:

- It should be illegal under state law for minors to have guns in public urban areas.
- Minors should not be allowed to own handguns.
- Restricting youth access to firearms will have a direct reduction on youth violence in our communities, and Columbia

Gun violence has a lasting impact on our community, impacting the safety of our schools, businesses, and neighborhoods. HB 2234 and SB 922 offer a constructive, proactive approach to reducing these incidents.

We thank you for your time, dedication, and service to our district. We look forward to seeing you take action on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

City of Columbia Youth Advisory Council

Grace Harris, Chair

<b>What is the biggest barrier to living more sustainable?</b>			<b>Do you feel safe in Columbia?</b>		<b>Is there an adult you can talk to with out judgement</b>	
It's too expensive	18		Yes	62	Yes	52
It takes too much time	4		<b>None word, what does "Safety" mean to you?</b>	3	No	3
I don't have enough information	10				<b>What is your biggest barrier to personal wellness?</b>	
<b>Have you ever felt worried about the future of the planet?</b>			No crime		Academic pressure/grades	21
Yes	36		Feeling comfortable with your surroundings and environment		Family expectations	7
No	4		Protected		financial stress	7
<b>What ides do you have to make the City of Columbia more sustainable?</b>			Family		Climate/world news	8
Every placeshouldhaveapapertowelnot in the restroom			Protected		<b>What is your primary de-stress activity?</b>	
open the refcycling center back up -more information on what COMO has to offer			Protection/ed		Basketball	
More saft space to walk and here flawey			People Protect me		play with my beardie	
Zoning that allows for walking to destination			Secure, no one is being mean and no one is hurting each other and I'm safe in my home		walking	
Light Rail System			being safe and comfortable		cuddle with my stuffies	
Open recycling place			Saftey to me is havein good days and lots of support		texting my friends	
Sidewalks in Central CoMo			being protected		spend time with friends	
More greener - more on notice plant species!			sleep family and friends being comfortable		watch tv	
<b>Did you see our instagram posts?</b>			Makes you feel good		kiss and hug mom and daddy	
Yes	8		comfortable		eat	
No	6		comfort		play games	
<b>What grade are you in?</b>			Feeling comfortable in your community		sleep/reading	
Pre-K	2		Loved ones		I like to draw	
Kindergarden	4		Food		reading, painting, sleep	
1	6		Safety means being treated with respect in every environment.		hang with friends + phone	
2	9				play with my cousin, go places with my cousin	
3	8		My family		I like to read	
4	5		helps keep us safe		drawing	
5	11		feeling secure where you are		pet and cat	
6	3		very safe		PBS kids	
7	3		having people to look up to		playing roblox	
8	2		I feel very safety in here		play by myself in my room	
9	5		safety means that you are safe and they bring you to a safe place		sqish sqishy's	
10	5		safety means feeling secure and well appreciated to me		drawing and making beats	
11	3		Safety to me means you can feel comfortable to be yourself wherever you are		read or draw	
12	4				basketball	
Older	2				play with my dad	
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>				play with my friend	
					make books	
					game	
					hiking	
					Chooen on mi thumb	
					go swing on my swing	
					resting	
					walking my dog especially while listening to music	
					hang with my pal Alyssa	
					sleep, stuffed animal	