



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

**2025 LA County
Youth Climate Commission
Annual Report**



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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The County of Los Angeles recognizes that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples. We honor and pay respect to their elders and descendants — past, present, and emerging — as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We acknowledge that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multigenerational trauma. This acknowledgment demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these ancestral lands. We are dedicated to growing and sustaining relationships with Native peoples and local tribal governments, including (in no particular order) the

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
Gabrielino/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
San Fernando Band of Mission Indians

To learn more about the First Peoples of Los Angeles County, please visit the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission website at lanaic.lacounty.gov.

LETTER FROM THE LA COUNTY YOUTH CLIMATE COMMISSION CHAIR

Dear Friends, Partners, and Fellow Changemakers,

As I write this letter, I am struck by a deep sense of gratitude and humility. It has been one of the greatest honors of my life serving as the inaugural Chair of the Los Angeles County Youth Climate Commission.

What began as an idea, a dream that young people could and should have a seat at the decision-making table, has thrived into a living, breathing institution. Together, we have proven that youth voices are not only worthy of being heard, but essential to shaping the policies, solutions, and culture that will define our shared future.



KEVIN J. PATEL
CHAIR, LOS ANGELES COUNTY
YOUTH CLIMATE COMMISSION

This will be my last letter as Chair, and though stepping away comes with a mix of emotions, I do so with immense pride in what we have built together. When we first conceived of this Commission, there was no blueprint. There was only imagination and a conviction that young people, when trusted with leadership, would rise to meet the moment. And rise we did.

Over these years, our Commission has advanced policies, sparked community engagement, and shown what happens when young leaders are empowered with resources, respect, and responsibility.

In moments of climate despair, when the headlines feel heavy with loss, catastrophe, and urgency, it can be easy to lose sight of hope. But I have learned that imagination is one of our most powerful tools. Imagination built the world as we know it, and imagination can rebuild it—this time centering not only climate resilience and justice, but also joy, community, and belonging.

Our work is not only about avoiding the worst of the crisis; it is about reimagining the best of what can be. It is about crafting a future where justice, laughter, happiness, and sustainability live side by side.

To every Commissioner, partner, and community member who has walked alongside me: thank you. Your courage, creativity, and tenacity are the reason this Commission exists and thrives. To the young people reading this report: know that this work is yours to inherit and re-shape. The systems we confront today are vast, but so too are the possibilities you carry within you. Every idea matters. Every voice counts. Every action, no matter how small, can ripple into waves of change. Though my formal role as Chair concludes here, my advocacy does not end. I will forever be an advocate for youth leadership and a believer in the radical potential of our generation.

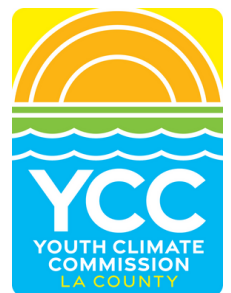
In closing, I leave you with this: the fight for climate justice is not only about sacrifice and survival. It is about possibility. It is about the world we want to create together. It is about gardens planted in unlikely places, communities rebuilt with love, and the audacity to believe in joy even amidst struggle. Thank you for trusting me with the privilege of serving as your first Chair. May we all continue to imagine boldly, act courageously, and never forget that joy is itself a form of resistance.

With gratitude and hope,



Kevin J. Patel

CHAIR, LOS ANGELES COUNTY YOUTH CLIMATE COMMISSION



ROLE & VISION

VISION

The YCC empowers youth and young adults to use their voices and agency to combat climate change in Los Angeles County.

ROLE OF THE YOUTH CLIMATE COMMISSION

The YCC advises the Board of Supervisors and County departments on policies, programs, and legislation related to climate change and works closely with youth across the County to amplify their voices. Commission meetings are held quarterly to discuss climate issues and advance the work of the Commission, and these meetings are open to the public. Each of the 25 Commissioners are appointed by the Board of Supervisors with five from each District. They actively engage with the community to learn about youth priorities and build local youth capacity to take climate action.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Youth Climate Commission (YCC) completed its second year of work engaging with LA County youth and advising the Board of Supervisors and departments on youth climate priorities. Building off of last year's focus, the Commission redoubled its efforts to connect directly with youth and advocate on their behalf. The YCC tabled 19 community events, hosted 9 district coalition meetings, and met with Supervisorial District Deputies to share feedback from these engagements. Based on the [LA County Youth Climate Priorities Survey](#) and additional youth input, the YCC advised on multiple County plans, including the [2025 OurCounty Sustainability Plan](#), and submitted two letters of recommendation to the Board on policy issues of high concern to youth. The Commission also launched the Clean Air Resilient Communities (CARE) mini grant, awarding \$1,000 to youth-led projects in each of the five supervisorial districts in support of Clean Air Day. The YCC also advocated for the establishment of similar youth-based commissions globally, meeting with representatives from 19 countries and testifying before the District of Columbia City Council in support of creating a youth climate commission in that jurisdiction.

Over the past year, the YCC has worked tirelessly to establish itself as a critical bridge to youth as well as a voice for youth on the climate issues that resonate most deeply with them. This further advances both the vision and mission of the YCC and helps ensure the County builds a sustainable future that reflects the priorities of the generations that will inherit it.

The remainder of this report provides details on the status of the three Workstreams established and approved by the YCC in its 2025 Work Plan:

- Workstream I: Advise on the development and outreach for County climate and youth-related plans, initiatives, and legislation, particularly the OurCounty refresh.
- Workstream II: Consistent engagement with youth and development of District-specific actions based on priorities.
- Workstream III: Communicate with Board, County departments, and public on YCC priorities and progress.

YCC Outreach By the Numbers

21
Public
Presentations!



3,725
Youth Surveys



21
POP-UPS!



9 District
Coalition
Meetings



2 Recommendations
to the Board



WHERE WE WERE & WHAT WE HEARD



SD1

- Hosted one District Coalition meeting in Sunshine Park.
- Tabled five pop up events at the Cherry Blossom Festival in Monterey Park, LA Zoo Youth Symposium, Pomona Farmer's Market, Youth on Root Summit at UCLA, and the Los Angeles Extreme Weather People's Hearing

What we heard: Youth love their parks and playgrounds, especially Sunshine Park, but want to see more of these spaces in their neighborhoods. Shade is needed at playgrounds and in communities, and free ice cream at parks wouldn't hurt. Trees, especially fruit trees, and gardens are highly valued, and youth want more of these as well.

Accomplishments: Commissioners organized their district coalition meeting in partnership with LA County Parks and Recreation. It was hosted in the park's community room, and the coalition meeting enhanced the itinerary of Sunshine Park's Earth Day event. In total the meeting had approximately 20 youth under 18 years of age in attendance. In addition, SD 1 came together and assisted other districts with tabling events to expand the outreach of the Commission to youth across the County.



SD2

- Hosted one District Coalition meeting in Lennox Park.
- Tabled three pop up events at the Compton College Farmers Market, Regional Youth Summit at USC, and Theodore Roosevelt High School.

What we heard: Youth are anxious about the state of our climate and the world. They want to feel empowered to be able to have influence despite feeling like those in power will not support them or their futures.

Accomplishments: This year SD 2 shifted to prioritizing creating physically safe spaces where youth could gather, especially amongst the ongoing ICE raids, while also promoting the mental safe spaces where different ideas and mindsets could come together. Our district coalition wants to aim for more action focused meetings so they can feel a sense of accomplishment as well as tangible results where possible.



SD3

- Hosted one District Coalition meeting in Sylmar Park.
- Tabled three pop up events at the Topanga Farmers Market, Calabasas Environmental Forum, and West Hollywood Library Earth Day event.

What we heard: Youth identified the need for improved public transit, more green space and shade, and cleaner air. There were calls for further fleet electrification, reduction of noise and air pollution at the Pacoima Airport, more public trash cans in northern cities, and an automatic opt-in system for free tap cards for students. Youth were highly engaged with thoughtful feedback at all events across the district.

Accomplishments: The civic engagement and innovative problem-solving the youth are championing at such a young age is a source of great hope for the future of Los Angeles County and the planet. Through the SD 3 community events events, the Commissioners derived great pride in centering the needs of the East Valley – a community often overlooked. SD 3 Commissioners brought two recommended Board Letters to the Commission that were approved and sent to the Board of Supervisors.



SD4

- Hosted three District Coalition meetings in Whittier, Lakewood, and a virtual cafe.
- Tabled seven pop up events at the Girls Empowerment Conference, Hispanic Heritage Month at Sorenson Park, Rio Hondo Community Climate Action Day, the Sun Day in Whittier, the Concert in the Park at Sorenson Park, Supervisor Hahn's Earth Day Fair at Don Knabe Park, and the Earth Walk at Monte Verde Park.

What we heard: Youth reiterated that clean air is the number one priority for them in their community. There's an interest in learning about how government works on climate issues and how youth can engage, but there's also a strong desire to do hands-on, action-oriented work to make a difference.

Accomplishment: SD 4 Commissioners built a lot of great connections to groups within the community and took the time to listen and hear what folks want to see from this body.



SD5

- Hosted one District Coalition meeting at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden.
- Tabled four pop up events at Youth Commission D5 Healing Session in Pasadena, Summer Institute Resource Fair at College of the Canyons, Earth Day Celebration in Pasadena, and Celebration of Cool at Descanso Gardens.

What we heard: Young people spoke to how much they value trees for the shade they provide, the oxygen they produce, and their natural beauty. There's also significant concerns about wildfires and the intersection of climate and development, especially as it relates to affordable housing. A lot of youth also would like to see more environmental education, mobility, and green spaces – top responses from our tabling events.

Accomplishments: The Celebration of Cool shade equity event was an amazing experience interacting with so many youth and hearing their experiences at school. Also, going to the Teen Council organized LA Zoo event continues to make it clear that youth-led activities are essential to propel climate action forward.



Workstream I:

Advise on County Sustainability-Related Plans & Legislation

Workstream I: Advise on the development and outreach for County climate and youth-related plans, initiatives, and legislation, particularly the OurCounty refresh.	
Purpose	
Provide youth perspective on current and future climate action planning and priorities.	
Actions	Status
Provide input to the CSO on the OurCounty refresh.	Achieved
Advise and support community engagement on OurCounty refresh to ensure youth voices are heard and incorporated.	Achieved
Stay apprised of and provide input on other OurCounty-related initiatives, including the Community Forest Management Plan, Heat Action Plan, Water Plan, and others	Achieved
Provide recommendations, as needed, to the Board on climate-related State and Federal legislation.	Achieved
Provide regular updates to YCC on OurCounty progress and other important climate-related issues.	Achieved

One of the key strategic plans on sustainability issues for the County is the OurCounty plan, and the YCC has served a critical role in the update to it. To ensure youth voices were reflected in the 2025 OurCounty plan, the YCC tabled 12 pop up events across LA County, encouraging youth to fill out the OurCounty Update Survey. They were also regularly briefed at Quarterly Commission meetings by the Chief Sustainability Office on the development of the plan, and Commissioners participated in multiple stakeholder workshops providing their input and insights. Finally, Commissioners provided comments on the draft plan for incorporation into the final report being submitted to the Board.

Other critical sustainability-related plans the Commission provided input on include participating in the County Heat Action Plan Stakeholder Workshop and serving on the Office of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Planning Team (SD 5 Commissioner Emily Ng). Additionally, Commissioners have been advising the Chief Sustainability Office on biodiversity work related to the Community Forest Management Plan.

Workstream I:

Advise on County Sustainability-Related Plans & Legislation

The Legislative Ad Hoc Committee was reestablished for the 2025 Legislative Session to review bills that relate to climate change and impact LA County youth. Through a bill tracking process and meetings with the Chief Sustainability Office, four state bills were analyzed by the Ad Hoc Committee and shared with the County Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (LAIR) Office. Working closely with LAIR and County departments, LAIR decided to support one of the recommended bills, and the Ad Hoc Committee decided not to pursue a letter of recommendation to the Board for the others. Additional details on the process and final recommendations can be found [here](#). This collaborative process epitomizes the role and purpose of the YCC by bringing youth priorities and concerns to the County for consideration and then working together to determine next steps.

Workstream II: Conduct Community Engagement

Workstream II: Consistent engagement with youth and development of District-specific actions based on priorities.

Purpose	
Build youth capacity by informing young people about the YCC and County climate work while also continuously creating opportunities for youth input on priorities and concerns.	
Actions	Status
Host or co-host with a community partner 3 District Coalition meetings in each District to seek youth input on priorities and share YCC work.	In-progress
Table a minimum of 3 events per District with a particular focus on youth attended events.	Achieved
Maintain District-specific Instagram promoting YCC and other climate news.	Achieved
Host or support at least 3 youth-focused countywide events on climate-related topics and youth capacity building, including the Regional Youth Summit and Generation Earth.	Achieved
Support outreach activities by connecting Commissioners to opportunities, helping to secure venues, providing support materials, offering technical assistance, and more.	Achieved
Maintain YCC Instagram with at least 5 posts/year and publication of quarterly YCC newsletter.	Achieved
Provide Commissioner training and technical assistance to support community building work.	Achieved

Workstream II: Conduct Community Engagement

The YCC has significantly expanded its outreach efforts through community tabling events, district coalition meetings, social media, and collaboration with youth-focused groups. A major focus for this year was the establishment of district coalitions that could serve as a platform for youth to share ideas and take action both within districts as well as across districts. A total of 9 district coalition meetings were held, with both virtual and in-person options. Additionally, districtwide coalition meetings were hosted quarterly to facilitate discussion on impactful climate action as well as self care. Most recently, the September districtwide coalition meeting hosted a discussion on climate mental health with a member of the Climate Mental Health Network Gen Z cohort. This type of engagement has built a strong base of youth voices and engagement with the Commission.

To connect with other youth-based organizations, the Commissioners served on the Regional Youth Summit planning committee to help organize a successful event that brought youth councils and commissions from Southern California together to discuss areas of concern such as climate mental health. They also organized a meeting with the Department of Public Health Youth Advisory Committee on the intersection of public health and climate change, joined the LA Zoo Youth Symposium and LA County Youth Commission Fifth District Healing Session, served on a panel at Generation Earth during Earth Month, and established quarterly check ins with the South Coast Air Quality District Youth Advisory Council. All of these events helped strengthen the connection to LA County youth and built collaborative relationships with youth-focused organizations.

With social media being a frequently cited source for news and information by young people, the YCC posted at least weekly throughout the year on the Commission Instagram site - @yccamplified - as well as additional postings on the five district-specific YCC Instagram pages. Quarterly newsletters were shared with the YCC's extensive mailing list, and flyers, poster boards, stickers, and plantable bookmarks were also created to help spread the word about the YCC. Two Commissioners (Commissioner Mayra Catalan-Orozco and Commissioner Guisel Hernandez) were featured in a Spanish-language documentary about youth climate action on Univision 34, further expanding the Commission's reach.

Workstream III: Communicate on Priorities and Projects

Workstream III: Communicate with Board, County departments, and public on YCC priorities and progress.

Purpose	
Keep Board and departments apprised of youth perspective so they can be inputted into County decision-making and ensure transparency and accountability with the public.	
Actions	Status
Commissioners report back to the Commission and Board Offices on district-specific feedback from youth.	Achieved
Take action on top priorities from LA County Youth Priorities Survey.	Achieved
Publish public Annual Report (October 2025) and submit to the Board.	Achieved
Invite key departments and organizations to present on important and developing climate-related work for YCC feedback, input, and insights.	Achieved

With the feedback received from youth engagement activities, Commissioners reserved time at Quarterly meetings to report back insights, lessons learned, and opportunities for additional action both within the district and countywide. This helped strengthen engagement and identify shared goals for the Commission to work towards. Commissioners also separately briefed their Board Offices throughout the year on the work being done and youth feedback received. The ability to serve as a bridge between youth who cannot vote and elected officials is a highly valued part of the Commission's work.

The YCC submitted two letters of recommendation to the Board. The first letter of recommendation advises the Board to support heavy rail alternatives as the Locally Preferred Alternative for Metro's Sepulveda Transit Corridor (STC) Project. The project will have a significant impact on improving air quality, a top youth priority, and the YCC sees STC as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to advance Los Angeles County's goals for clean transportation, regional equity, and youth mobility. The second letter of recommendation advises the Board to have Los Angeles County become an official observer to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and become a member of the California Global Biodiversity Working Group. By participating in these initiatives, the YCC believes LA County will solidify its commitment to youth environmental priorities, including biodiversity, and advance the work of the OurCounty Plan.

Workstream III: Communicate on Priorities and Projects

The YCC was briefed on a number of sustainability-related plans that will define the landscape of LA County for generations to come, and they provided both formal and informal feedback. These include:

- 2025 OurCounty Sustainability Plan
- LA County Climate Resilience Initiative
- County Heat Action Plan
- Department of Economic Opportunity Youth@Work Program
- UN Convention on Biological Diversity (presentation from CA Global Biodiversity Working Group)
- Building Electrification Opportunities (presentation from Sierra Club)
- Composting in LA County (presentation from LA Compost)

Based on the Youth Climate Priorities report, air quality was identified as the area of deepest concern for youth in LA County. As a result, the YCC launched the Clean Air Resilient Environment (CARE) mini grant in September to encourage youth-led initiatives in support of Clean Air Day. Young people between the ages of 5 - 18 years of age, were encouraged to submit their ideas for addressing air quality with \$1,000 awarded in each of the five districts for the best proposals. Winners were announced on Clean Air Day, and the YCC will support their implementation this year. This initiative reflected the important connection being made between youth input and engagement and tangible, youth-led action being made through the YCC.

Next Steps

The YCC continues to deepen its ties to LA County youth and grow its platform to advance youth climate priorities. Building those relationships requires consistent outreach and a multipronged approach that meets people where they are. Over the year, the YCC has proven itself to be up for the challenge as they worked to create a coalition of youth whose voices are heard at the highest levels of County government. It is an iterative process that the YCC is committed to investing in.

In 2026, the YCC will continue to advance the progress made. By deepening relationships and identifying new opportunities to take actions on the issues youth care most about, the YCC can help ensure that transgenerational collaboration happens and a more sustainable future is within reach for all.



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