



## Greater Tulsa African American Affairs Commission (GTAAAC) Annual Report 2020

### I. Commission's Purpose and Work (about)

#### GTAAAC's Mission

GTAAAC exists to serve and advocate for African-Americans in the city of Tulsa to create a strong, prosperous, self-sustaining community while demanding systemic change.

#### GTAAAC's Work

As a commission we remain focused on working toward **systemic changes** in Housing & Transportation, Economic Development, Education, Culture and Awareness, Equal Justice & Accountable Policing, and Health & Wellness. We work to make recommendations, draft policy, and/or influence ordinances that ultimately improve social determinants of health and overall outcomes for Tulsa's Black residents. Our most impactful work happens in our monthly committee meetings and requires research, an awareness of the landscape, communication across organizations/sectors, and an idea of which policy/policies on which to focus for social impact.

#### Committee's and focus statements

**Education:** Focuses on poor student performance, failing schools in addition to increasing strategies to improve opportunities for technical training that will lead to: a living wage, and sustainable, skilled employment positions for African American graduates across industries.

**Justice and Accountable Policing:** Focuses on policing & judicial reform issues impacted at the local level that contribute to disproportionate incarceration rates among Tulsa's African-American population.

**Cultural Awareness:** Focuses on supporting events and actions that celebrate as well as protect and preserve the African-American culture in the greater Tulsa area.

**Economic Development:** Focuses on improving access for small business owners while increasing opportunities for employment and skills training for African-Americans in the workforce, developing revenue generating businesses & strengthening the tax base in the African-American community.

**Housing & Transportation (New for 2021):** This Committee will create its focus statement during its first committee meeting of 2021.

**Health and Wellness (New for 2021):** This Committee will create its focus statement during its first committee meeting of 2021.

### II. Achievements for Year 2020

#### a. Community Issues Advocated / Advised /Supported

Led by the Justice and Accountable Policing committee, GTAAAC advocated for:

1. Oversight and accountability: An Independent police oversight committee.
2. Fines & Fees: Mandatory hearings on ability to pay.
3. Warrants: Monthly municipal court amnesty days allowing Tulsans to have warrants rescinded.
4. Criminal code: Update criminal code to reflect non-punitive values.

Led by the Economic Development committee, GTAAAC advocated for:

1. Funding for black businesses and small, starter level black businesses.

2. Lack of incentives and investment in the Greenwood economic district that should be a hub of black economic investment.
3. Increased funding for workforce training participation, and increased cohesion between K-12, tech/community colleges with leading Tulsa industries.
4. Lack of intentionality or cohesive plan for the environments or landscapes that black people often inhabit.

Led by the Education committee, GTAAAC advocated for:

1. Disproportionate number of African American students in IEP (individualized education plans) in the Tulsa education system.
2. Partnership with Office of Resilience and Equity on Equality Indicators data regarding education.

Led by the Cultural Awareness, GTAAAC advocated for:

1. With the Tulsa City-County Library, we coordinated, promoted, and participated in the 2019 and 2020 Kwanzaa celebrations.
2. Promoted “The Face of Emmett Till” through Theatre North. This was a sold out production that took place at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center.
3. Participated in “Out of Africa” Alzheimer’s benefit event;
4. Participated in “Black Wall-Street Memorial March” with Tulsa Ancestral Society;
5. Conducted and participated in the Tulsa Remembrance Project Soil Collection
6. Participated in the dedication of the “Black Wall Street Memorial” on Vernon AME
7. Attended the renaming of Chamberlain Park to Jane Malone Park
8. Participated in the honoring of Veteran Joe Thomas (through renaming of a street in his honor) and his induction into the BTW Hall of Fame .
9. Supported the Expungement Expo
10. Supported Rental Assistance fees

### III. Goals and Priorities for 2021

As a commission we will remain focused on working toward **systemic changes** in Housing & Transportation, Economic Development, Education, Culture and Awareness, Equal Justice & Accountable Policing, and Health & Wellness. We work to make recommendations, draft policy, and/or influence ordinances that ultimately improve social determinants of health and overall outcomes for Tulsa’s Black residents.

Each meeting of the 2021 GTAAAC will have a focus rooted in one of our areas of work. We will re-tool our meetings to act as public listening sessions or hearings characterized by presentations that provide experiences, data, insight or recommendations in-line with the monthly focus area.

Driven by the work of committee’s, our Monthly meetings will be used to deepen the knowledge, and interest of GTAAAC and the community it serves on issues within the focus area.

### IV. Commission Recommendations

#### Education recommendations

1. City should release a report that measures the usage rate of Covid-19 related resources allocated through Cares Act funding (internet usage, food assistance, utility assistance, rental assistance);
2. City should convene a co-operative space/council/table that includes representatives from all City of Tulsa independent school districts and educational institutions.
3. Allocate funding to ensure every student has the appropriate equipment to compete academically.
4. Make Wi-Fi free for City of Tulsa residents

**Justice and Accountable Policing recommendations:**

5. Institute an Office of the Independent monitor or equivalent oversight body for Tulsa Police department
6. Re-prioritize the city of Tulsa's 77 recommendations on community policing to ensure that each drives toward ending racial disparities.
7. All law enforcement agencies in the City of Tulsa should engage in targeted recruitment campaigns to hire officers of color and move toward no less than a 1:1 ratio of officers to population by race.
8. Law enforcement agencies in the City of Tulsa should move from a "warrior" to a "guardian" mentality by implementing implicit bias training, eliminating ticket and arrest data as an evaluation tool and increasing transparency and accountability around problem officers.
9. The City of Tulsa should collaborate with large employers, to provide living wage stipends to North Tulsa residents who engage in employment trainings or GED courses as a means of disrupting barriers to access.

**Economic Recommendations:**

10. The City of Tulsa should begin a campaign highlighting the North Tulsa community in order to bring additional investment, business, employment and lifestyle opportunities to current residents of the area.
11. City of Tulsa should require all businesses who contract with or receive grants from the city to implement "ban the box" and "wage transparency policies.
12. City of Tulsa should have high functioning public transit routes throughout North Tulsa, so commute time to and from any part of North Tulsa, downtown, midtown, or the airport does not exceed 30 minutes.
13. City of Tulsa should allocate funding and establish ongoing mentorship programs to serve North Tulsa business owners as a means of disrupting systemic barriers to access.

**Cultural Awareness Recommendations:**

14. Make Juneteenth an officially recognized City of Tulsa holiday.
15. The City of Tulsa communications department should work with the cultural awareness committee to create official social media pages.
16. Establish A pool of funding available to African-American arts and culture.