

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia Office of the Chief Clerk Room 402, City Hall Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 230754)

RESOLUTION

Honoring and recognizing Lori “Tree Queen” Maple Hayes, on the occasion of her retirement, for her vision, leadership, integrity, and unwavering dedication to curating Philadelphia’s parks, trees, and greenery over her 42-year career of service to the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Lori Maple Hayes finishes her career as the Philadelphia Director of Urban Forestry. Lori is a Certified Arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture and a Penn State Master Gardener. Throughout her career, she has served under six Mayors and curated almost every major park in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Lori was raised in a Germantown row home and yearned for green spaces in her youth. She attended Walter Biddle Saul High School, where she studied Agricultural Sciences. Lori then finished her education at Penn State and Temple University, where she graduated with a degree in horticulture; and

WHEREAS, Lori began working for the City of Philadelphia in 1981 at the Fairmount Park Commission. At first a student summer intern, she started by cutting grass on Benjamin Franklin Boulevard and fell in love with the work. It did not take long for her to decide that this was the kind of work she wanted to do with her life; and

WHEREAS, One of Lori’s proudest moments was when she passed the Grounds Maintenance Worker 1 test and began a permanent appointment working for Philadelphia Parks and Recreation. She steadily rose through the ranks of Grounds Maintenance Workers, soon becoming a Grounds Maintenance Crew Chief. Before long, she was promoted to Landscape Projects Technician, and then to Park District Manager, where she ran the Fairmount Park Organic Recycling Center in West Park; and

WHEREAS, Throughout her tenure as Park District Manager, Lori oversaw the Horticulture Center, the historic Sofuso Japanese House, Franklin D. Roosevelt Park, and Cobbs Creek. Although she loved her work at each park, her heart always drew her toward horticulture, which she had spent years studying; and

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WHEREAS, Lori briefly served as the North Regional Manager for Parks and Recreation, where she oversaw a vast area encompassing the Northeast, Germantown, Manayunk, and the Riverwards. However, she ultimately followed her passion for horticulture and arboriculture when, in 2016, she was selected as the Philadelphia Director of Urban Forestry; and

WHEREAS, As the Director of Urban Forestry, Lori and her unit were responsible for the operations tree division, supervising the street tree contract unit, responding to emergencies involving trees, overseeing TreePhilly, and the pruning, planting, and removal of all street trees in Philadelphia. In this role, Lori was a pivotal and inspiring force in promoting, protecting, and growing urban forestry throughout the entire City. In particular, Lori thrived in responding to emergency situations. She took pride in her teams' abilities to quickly respond to urgent situations; and

WHEREAS, Lori's work with the TreePhilly program had a particularly inspiring impact on Philadelphia. Through the program, she led the charge not only to make the City more beautiful, but also to increase its tree canopy coverage to 30% in all neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, In each of her positions, Lori was known by her colleagues to always be looking out for everyone around her. She believes that quality public service is a true team effort, and she was dedicated to supporting and uplifting every person she worked with. Lori was a model leader, inspiring her colleagues to be better public servants; and

WHEREAS, In 2022, Lori was honored as one of Philadelphia Citizen Magazine's Philadelphia Integrity Icon. She was chosen as one of the most principled, hardworking, and service-oriented City workers in Philadelphia. In particular, she was nominated for her efforts to make TreePhilly's programs accessible to everyone: the elderly, the blind, women aspiring to be arborists, low-income communities and returning citizens; and

WHEREAS, In 2023, the natural resource management class at Walter Biddle Saul High School dedicated a tree to Lori during an Arbor Day tree planting; and

WHEREAS, In November 2023, Lori will be awarded the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club's Rosalie Edge Conservation Award. This award is given to one individual annually in recognition of work done that has made a significant contribution to conservation of the environment; and

WHEREAS, In November 2023, Lori will be recognized as a 2023 Honoree of the Wagner Free Institute of Science of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Apart from her career, Lori is an active teacher, advocate, and mentor in her community. She organizes and oversees courses and workshops for women tree climbers and arborists. She teaches workshops on terrariums and volunteers at community yard tree giveaways. She is also an equity advocate who works with Philadelphia high schools to plant more trees in low-income communities around the City. Lastly, Lori ran Gifts for All Seasons,

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which helped people plant memorial trees and construct memorial benches for their loved ones throughout Philadelphia parks; and

WHEREAS, Lori has a clear vision on how to achieve a greener Philadelphia and has spent her career and personal life contributing to that vision. She believes a greener Philadelphia starts with educating residents on the benefits of tree canopy, encouraging buy-in from communities to want more trees in their neighborhoods, and planting trees around schools so students can learn the value that trees bring to Philadelphia. Lori retires after inspiring countless Philadelphians to share this vision and take action toward it; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honors and recognizes Lori Maple “Tree Queen” Hayes, on the occasion of her retirement, for her vision, leadership, integrity, and unwavering dedication to curating Philadelphia’s parks, trees, and greenery over her 42-year career of service to the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to Lori Maple Hayes, representing the deepest respect of this legislative body.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty sixth of October, 2023.

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Brooks

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Brooks, Squilla, Vaughn, Driscoll, Jones,
Gauthier, Phillips and Gilmore Richardson