



Resolution

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE TO LYDIA KOU FOR SERVING ON CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, Lydia Kou was first elected to the Palo Alto City Council in 2016, was re-elected in 2020, served as Vice Mayor in 2022 and as Mayor in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Lydia represented the City Council on many regional bodies such as the Cities Association of Santa Clara County, SFO Community and Santa Clara/Santa Cruz Counties Airport Roundtables, Santa Clara County Emergency Operational Area Council, Valley Water, Cities Association of Santa Clara County Legislative Action Committee, Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority, Valley Transportation Authority Policy Advisory Committee, Santa Clara County Housed Task Force, Caltrain Local Policy Maker Group, Santa Clara County Planning Office Stanford Community Resource Group, League of California Cities (Peninsula Division); and

WHEREAS, Lydia served on the City Council’s Finance, Policy and Services, Rail, City/Schools, Council/CAO Committees; and as Council liaison to the City’s Library Advisory, Human Resources, Parks and Recreation, Public Art Commissions, Historic Resources Board, and also served as the Council liaison to the Business Association of California Avenue, Palo Alto Downtown Business and Professional Association, Avenidas, Lytton Gardens, Palo Alto Transportation Management Agency (PATMA), allcove Palo Alto Community Consortium, and Friends of the Children’s Theater; and

WHEREAS, Lydia became intimately familiar with regional airplane noise patterns and pollution, and for years advocated for the City’s interests with local, regional, and national bodies such as Sky Posse, the SFO Roundtable and Airport Authority, SJC Airport Advisory Committee, Santa Clara/Santa Cruz Counties Airport Roundtable, and the FAA; and

WHEREAS, Lydia has been a staunch supporter of small businesses and retail protection in Palo Alto, often visiting and informing merchants of upcoming impactful decisions by City Council; and

WHEREAS, Lydia has been an unwavering advocate for the voice, authority and self-determination of Palo Alto’s residents in shaping their community’s future, quality of life, natural and built environment, and land use planning and development control as witnessed by the Resolution of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Expressing Support for Actions to Further Strengthen Local Democracy, Authority, and Control as Related to Local Zoning and Housing Issues (Resolution No. 9942) which originated from a colleagues’ memo; and

WHEREAS, Lydia created Diversity Events which highlights and celebrates the many cultural traditions represented by Palo Altans, such as the first Chinese New Year, Diwali and Holi celebrations in the Barron Park neighborhood, and organized over 30 engaging events online during the COVID-19 pandemic to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, Lydia has been a consistent and proactive proponent of the Roth Building as a community asset where the Palo Alto Museum can collect and relate our city’s history of innovation; and

WHEREAS, Lydia advocated for the inclusion of environmental preservation, protection and furthering biodiversity and the natural environment into the Climate Change and Sustainability Plan. Additionally, Lydia has staunchly insisted that parks and open space must be easily accessible by all including people with developmental disabilities, that mature trees be preserved and trees are planted by ratio to population, and artificial light pollution at night should be minimized; and

WHEREAS, Lydia co-authored the proposal for the City’s first Safe Vehicle/RV Parking plan, championed approval of the 88-unit transitional housing project at 1237 San Antonio Road, the 50-unit rental deeply affordable housing for special needs including services and programs at 525 E. Charleston Road, and supported the 58-unit deeply affordable rental housing for special needs at 3705 El Camino Real; and

WHEREAS, Lydia has been a strong advocate of Palo Alto’s most vulnerable residents, including promoting increased renter protections, co-authoring Palo Alto’s emergency just-cause eviction proposal, and tirelessly supporting La Comida’s ability to continue serving low-income seniors, particularly during the time it had no stable location in the Downtown area; and

WHEREAS, Lydia helped lead the former Fry’s site negotiation that yielded the City over three acres of land dedicated for future affordable housing and parkland, and also memorialized the contributions of Mr. Thomas Foon Chew, the Chinese proprietor, innovator and businessman who owned and operated the original building as a cannery and was major employer in Palo Alto; and

WHEREAS, Lydia has actively and continually pressed for adequate Fire and Life Safety and Emergency Medical Services based on her prior leadership as an Emergency Services Volunteer and Trainer for the City considering input from City businesses, residents and City Firefighters; and

WHEREAS, Lydia has continually supported our Police Department operations, including improving hiring and retention practices, and the addition of mental health experts to de-escalate crises; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Palo Alto does hereby honor and highly commend Lydia for her eight years of outstanding public service, and records the appreciation of the Council, residents, and businesses for her meritorious service, integrity, passion and deep commitment to our City as a Palo Alto Mayor and Councilmember.

ADOPTED: January 6, 2025

APPROVED:

Mayor Greer Stone

Vice Mayor Ed Lauing

Councilmember Pat Burt

Councilmember Lydia Kou

Councilmember Julie Lythcott-Haims

Councilmember Greg Tanaka

Councilmember Vicki Veenker

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Manager

City Attorney