

CONDOLENCE MOTION

Moved by: Councillor Jennifer McKelvie

Seconded by: Councillor Mike Layton

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Lois James on April 23, 2019.

Lois James was a spirited environmentalist who was instrumental in creating one of the world's first, national, urban park – the Rouge. She devoted her entire life advocating for the Rouge Valley's flora, fauna, watershed, and wetlands. Her expansive passion and love for the Rouge earned her the title "The Mother of the Rouge." Lois believed in the power of community involvement and connecting citizens to the issues that mattered directly. She understood that an intact and healthy Rouge and its natural treasures would be crucial to ensuring water conservation, clean air, soil health, forest cover, and proper natural for Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area. She wanted to ensure that her children, grandchildren, neighbours, and fellow citizens would have the opportunity to enjoy a complete and substantive natural biome nestled on the eastern edge of Canada's largest urban area.

Lois worked tirelessly to protect the Rouge from soulless urban sprawl, overdevelopment, and the waste lobby. In 1975, she founded the Save the Rouge Valley System; a group dedicated to protecting the Rouge and building political and communal support for safeguarding the Rouge. In recognition of her work on Rouge Park, she was awarded the prestigious Order of Canada in 2003. 12 years later, Lois lived to see decades of work finally come to fruition with the Rouge set aside as a National Park. Lois James' drive for knowledge and her continuous environmentalism efforts made her a role model and inspiration for environmental activists.

Lois James, "Mother of The Rouge", was a vibrant, hopeful, engaged, and hard-working eco-warrior devoted to the preservation of the natural environment. They say that an individual who plants a tree plants hope. Lois did more, she saved a forest. It is the hope of City Council that her example is remembered and followed. May she rest in peace.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to Lois James' family.

May 14, 2019