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## **Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation Appoints Kathryn Ott Lovell as President & Chief Executive Officer**

**May 4, 2022 (PHILADELPHIA)** – The Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation (“Visitor Center”) today announced the appointment of Kathryn Ott Lovell as its next President and Chief Executive Officer, effective July 10, 2023. Lovell will join the Visitor Center bringing significant leadership experience and service to the City of Philadelphia, most recently serving as the Commissioner of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR) since 2016.

“We had outstanding candidates put their names forward for this position, each with a strong understanding of what the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation has accomplished in the last 20 years, and distinct visions for what it could become in the years to come,” said Debbie O’Brien, Board Chair, Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation. “Kathryn Ott Lovell’s qualifications and experience were unmatched as was her enthusiasm to welcome visitors to our great city. There is no better champion for Philadelphia than Kathryn. Our Board of Directors is proud that she is joining the organization as President & CEO, and we are eager to see the impact of her leadership as we look ahead.”

As PPR commissioner, Lovell instituted the department’s first strategic plan, which established a renewed vision and set in motion a powerful trajectory toward an equitable and exceptional parks and recreation system that connects people to each other, enriching experiences, and the natural world. She has led innovative initiatives to activate Philly’s parks and engage residents and visitors city-wide including Enhanced PlayStreets, Swim Philly, The Oval+, Parks on Tap and the Philadelphia International Unity Cup soccer tournament. Ott Lovell has also spearheaded ambitious park projects including the transformation of FDR Park and the reimagining of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

Prior to joining Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, Lovell served as executive director of the Fairmount Park Conservancy, where she elevated the organization’s profile and ushered in a dramatic shift in its strategic vision, building a host of new programs, executing high-profile projects, and securing funding from an array of local and national funders. She also served as chief advancement officer for Mural Arts Philadelphia for six years, during a time of significant growth and programmatic shifts for the organization.

“Philadelphia is my home and I take great pride in welcoming visitors to our city offering them a uniquely Philly experience,” said Lovell. “From historic sites and cultural experiences to amazing restaurants and the nation’s most passionate sports fans, our city is one-of-a-kind. As we prepare to welcome the world to the birthplace of America in 2026, Philadelphia has the opportunity to shine on a global stage. Leveraging the great success of the Visitor Center to-date, I look forward to working with our dedicated board, staff, and partners to further elevate and enhance the visitor experience for the millions who come to our region each year.”



Philadelphia expects to welcome an unprecedented number of visitors from around the world in 2026 for major events including FIFA World Cup 26™, the Major League Baseball All-Star Game, and the nation's 250th anniversary celebrations. As the city's tourism and hospitality industry continues to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Visitor Center will continue to partner with VISIT PHILADELPHIA®, the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB), the Pennsylvania Convention Center, the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association, and stakeholders across the city to prepare for these moments where all eyes will be on Philadelphia.

Lovell's appointment results from a thorough, region-wide search for the organization's next leader that commenced in January 2023. Lauri Kavulich, Member in Charge of Clark Hill's Philadelphia Office, serves as Chair of the search committee on behalf of the Visitor Center's Board of Directors, with support and facilitation from executive search firm Korn Ferry.

"We were highly impressed by the quality and caliber of candidates who came forward with interest in this important role," said Kavulich. "The strength of candidates we considered demonstrates the vitality of the Visitor Center and its significance as a key player in Philadelphia's regional tourism industry."

For more information on the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation, please visit:

[www.phlvisitorcenter.com](http://www.phlvisitorcenter.com).

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**About the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation:**

The Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation is a Pennsylvania nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization, that works in cooperation with VISIT PHILADELPHIA®, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Philadelphia, National Park Service, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation operates the Independence Visitor Center in cooperation with the National Park Service. The Independence Visitor Center is the primary point of orientation for Independence National Historical Park and the official visitor center of the Philadelphia region, including Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties. In addition, the Corporation operates the LOVE Park Visitor Center, City Hall Visitor Center, the Philly PHLASH® Downtown Loop transit service, and the private event space, The Liberty View at Independence Visitor Center. Visit us at [www.phlvisitorcenter.com](http://www.phlvisitorcenter.com), and follow @PHLVisitorCenter on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.