



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

August 14, 2026

Honorable Members of the City Council
c/o City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395

Honorable Members:

Subject to your confirmation, I have reappointed Ms. Sejal Patel to the Community Forest Advisory Committee for the term ending June 30, 2028. Ms. Patel's current term expired on June 30, 2026.

I certify that in my opinion Ms. Patel is especially qualified by reason of training and experience for the work which shall devolve upon her, and that I make the appointment solely in the interest of the City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Bass".

KAREN BASS
Mayor

KB:lap

Attachment

COMMISSION APPOINTMENT FORM

Name: Sejal Patel
Commission: Community Forest Advisory Committee
End of Term: 6/30/2028

Appointee Information

1. **Race:** API
2. **Gender:** Female
3. **Council District and neighborhood of residence:** 10 - South LA
4. **Are you a registered voter in the City of Los Angeles?** Yes
5. **Prior commission experience:**
6. **Highest level of education completed:** University of California, Los Angeles, Master of Arts, Asian American Studies
7. **Occupation/profession:** Vice President, Innovation and Economic Development, Rising Communities (RC) fka Community Health Councils
8. **Experience(s) that qualifies person for appointment:** See attached resume
9. **Purpose of this appointment:** Reappointment

SEJAL K. PATEL

EXPERTISE

- Provides executive-level project management to execute organizational initiatives, including expansion of current services.
- Designs place-based participatory regranting opportunities for disinvested communities pertaining to issues of housing, food security, early childhood education and job security in South Central Los Angeles and City of Los Angeles, including development of department staffing, infrastructure, and policies and procedures.
- Increased revenues by \$50M in 3 years via fiscal intermediary contract awards by designing/developing staffing, infrastructure, and policies & procedures to support multiple community-based initiatives for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and City of Los Angeles.
- Research and develop mechanisms to create and sustain natural resource assets and ecosystem functionality. Provide sound science to inform policy and management decisions at local, national, and international levels.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

RISING COMMUNITIES (DBA of COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCILS)

August 2021-present

Executive Director, Rising Communities Foundation, a Division of Rising Communities (RC)

RC is a non-profit, community-based health education, advocacy and policy organization established in 1992 in response to the growing health and healthcare crisis in disinvested communities. RC's mission is to collectively build equitable systems. RC has been at the forefront of systems change work to eliminate disparities in overall well-being. Our policy areas include Health Systems, Food Justice, and Community and Economic Resiliency.

- Work with executive team to grow RC's fundraising and grant-making subsidiary to pursue and support programs that advance systems change toward equity for disinvested communities across Los Angeles County.
- Lead foundational work and assessments of RC's portfolio of current grantmaking, grant-seeking and grant awarded organizations and contracts with First 5 Los Angeles and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health amounting to \$50M+ in total.
- Works closely with C-Suite team to drive revenue generating activities and business lines into the organization. Develop social enterprise businesses that advance equity and accessibility to resources for disinvested communities in several industries such as education and capacity strengthening, and health access.
- Supervise and coach a growing team of program officers, grants & contracts officers, grants and advancement managers, and digital systems specialists.

AKASHA CONSULTING SERVICES

September 2017-August 2021

CEO/President

Provides general project management needs to execute business and organizational initiatives. Designs and implements Corporate Social Responsibility programs and reporting mechanisms, including corporate and supply chain sustainability goals and workforce development solutions. Experience in building renewable energy infrastructure and complex policy analysis.

CLIENTELE:

- FAIR TRADE USA: Non-profit organization building an innovative model of responsible business, conscious consumerism, and shared value to eliminate poverty and enable sustainable development for farmers, workers, their families, and communities around the world.
- LAMPLIGHTER ENERGY (LLE): Energy infrastructure developer and operator of projects leading to the distribution of renewable energy, water access and carbon neutral hydrogen fuel. Built assets of 2.1+ GW with 13 GW under development.
- CALIFORNIA HARVESTERS, INC (CHI): Co-Founder, Trustee and Board of Directors, Secretary and Treasurer. Innovative labor empowerment business opportunity that offers wealth and skill building trainings for rural farmworkers. Successes featured in [Fast Company article](#) in inaugural year, 2018.
- SUN WORLD INTERNATIONAL (SWI): Top 10 table grape grower in the world and vertically integrated company with over 7,000 acres. Released CSR report, [The Better Future Project](#), and will release forthcoming annual reports updating goal progress.
- FROM LOT TO SPOT: Non-profit community-based organization serving under-resourced communities to create open, green and community garden spaces in South and Southeast Los Angeles.
- JUNGLI: A South Asian-inspired restaurant concept exploring South Asian cuisine beyond the typical Indian American fare and through a modern lens of new creative flavors and social impact in labor and sourcing of ingredients.
- CONTO: Meaning "tale" in Portuguese, [theconto.com](#) offers a unique B2B and B2C marketplace startup of specially curated goods and experiences with an emphasis on elegance, sustainability (packaging and product sourcing) and philanthropy where a percentage of product purchases will go towards health, education and environmental organizations.

RENEWABLE RESOURCES GROUP

January 2012-September 2017

Vice President, Sustainability/Impact

Venture capital asset management company that owns, manages, and develops agriculture, land, water and renewable energy assets in the U.S. and internationally.

- Developed comprehensive company-wide and asset-level sustainable programs with discreet goals around soil health, chemical usage, water footprint, GHG emission reductions, zero landfill waste, and sustainable packaging. The programs increased RRG's exposure to current and prospective investors as a leading asset manager with a direct focus on sustainability and impact.
- Managed and supported \$150 million in water and agricultural capital investments. Specifically, managed overall project operations, including financial models for a \$23 million water assets company, Homer LLC, and an \$11 million almond farm development company, Tule Fog LLC. Oversaw the growth of Tule Fog from a purchased land value of \$10M in May 2012 to an appraised real estate value of \$21M in March 2013 and to \$34M in 2016. For Homer LLC, I made direct sales of \$6M of our water assets in 2016, increasing overall profitability of our water company during the CA drought crisis.
- Monitored local, statewide and national policy goals around water, renewable energy and climate change.
- Expertise in biomass energy technology, including permitting with the local air quality board to meet emissions standards and Southern California Edison to enable net metering.
- Collaborated with several local water agencies throughout the Central Valley to produce creative transfers of water assets.

SERVICE EMPLOYEES' INTERNATIONAL UNION 721 (Los Angeles County)

August 2010-January 2012

Deputy and Interim Director, Research & Policy

Largest public-sector employee union local in the nation, representing workers from cities and counties throughout Southern California.

- Per the provisions of the then newly enacted Affordable Care Act that would be administered by County public employees, I developed strategic policy initiatives and lobbied Sacramento to protect and enhance the new work roles for LA County Departments of Health and Social Services' workforce in welfare/Medi-cal eligibility and enrollment.
- Led successful implementation of the organization's Health Care Policy goals in partnership with LA County Health and Social Services Department executives.
- Supervised, designed professional development tools for a team of 8 Research Analysts and 2 Policy Coordinators, and coordinated workflow between departments within the organization.
- Analyzed public and private finances and budgets and actuarial reports related to public employee pension reform. Presented key findings and data discrepancies on finances and budgets to the President. Made policy and legislation recommendations to preserve quality public services, improve efficiencies and acquire greater revenues for city, county and state governments. Monitored and analyzed California and U.S. Federal budgets as they related to the funding of public services such as Medicaid, Medicare, CalWORKS and Calfresh.

LOS ANGELES ALLIANCE FOR A NEW ECONOMY (LAANE)

October 2007-August 2010

Policy and Research Analyst, Clean and Safe Ports Project

Through grassroots community organizing and community-oriented policy, LAANE builds a new economy rooted in good jobs, thriving communities and healthy environment for working families.

- Produced position papers and research to inform policy development and campaign strategy of the Clean and Safe Ports Campaign, including authoring and producing original quantitative data for [*From Clean to Clunkers: The Economics of Emissions Control*](#), a report released in April 2010 that was used for federal lobbying efforts with members of the United States House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The report helped inform members of Congress of the very low wage and long work hour of the largely Latino independent contractor truck drivers.
- Reviewed, tracked and analyzed CEQA/NEPA Environmental Impact Reports for Los Angeles and Long Beach Port Expansion projects, the largest ports in the world at the time and the hub of the international goods movement between China and the US. Created talking points for members of the low-income communities adjacent to the Ports and port trucking workers to make comment during Port Board hearings, citing the air pollution and health impacts due to Port activities.
- Formulated strategic corporate campaigns on the drayage trucking industry, analyzing trucking firms' lines of business, geographic market, industry position, financial health, business plan, and regulatory structure. Conducted in-depth interviews with largely immigrant port drayage drivers on workforce issues. Created a custom database to house all data and research.

SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION - UNITED HEALTHCARE WORKERS WEST

Jan 2007-Sept 2007

Research Analyst, Southern California region

- Conducted research and analyzed private and non-profit hospital systems in Southern California including lines of business, geographic market, industry position, and financial and business plans.
- Assisted in contract bargaining, analyzing employer wage/benefit proposals, redesigning proposed wage scales, drafting recommendations.
- Provided analysis for SEIU's healthcare legislation and directive policies at the Federal level.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH**August 2006-December 2006**

Lecturer, Women's Studies Department

- Taught senior level general elective requirement course on the topic of Globalization and Women. Was called back year after year to teach the course again.

ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India**September 2005 – August 2006***American India Foundation William J. Clinton Fellow**Large International NGO working on a multitude of human rights issues, including organizing to improve the lives of two rural-based communities involved in caste-based commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking (CSE&T).*

- Formulated and implemented new public policies to grant government welfare benefits and education access for rural women and girls in the Caste-Based Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking (CSE&T) workforce.
- Conducted in-depth interviews with rural-based CSE&T women on topics ranging from personal hardships, mental health challenges, male clients (largely truck drivers) and interface with public institutions concerning health, education, prosecution, and government welfare. These findings were used for grant funding purposes, strategize ways to provide greater aid to CSE&T families and devise strategies on how to dissuade minors from participating in the trade.
- Implemented local public policy initiatives of organizing and building a rural residential school pilot project for underage girls most at risk for CSE&T.

ASIAN AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER, Pomona College, Claremont, CA**July 2001-July 2003***Assistant Director*

- Produced programming to educate the Pomona College community on the Asian American experience in the United States.
- Supervised 20 intern college students.

EDUCATION**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINSVILLE**

Master of Science, Forest Resources and Conservation, concentration in Ecological Restoration, GPA 4.0, 2022-2024.

School of Forest, Fisheries and Geomatic Sciences, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Global Forest Dynamics Lab member with advisor, Dr. Daniel Johnson.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

Master of Arts, Asian American Studies, 2005

Honors & Fellowships: Graduate Opportunity Fellow, 2003; Institute of American Cultures Research Grant Program in Ethnic Studies, 2004-2005; College Academic Counselor Education Award, 2004-2005; Teaching Fellow, University of Hawai'i, Monoa Ethnic Studies, Summer 2004.*Activities:* Teaching Assistant, 2005; Editorial Board, *Ufahamu: Journal of African Studies*, 2004; Article authorship in *SAMAR Magazine*, Winter 2005.**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR**

Bachelor of Arts, Sociology (major) and Women's Studies (minor), 2001

Activities: Student Legacy Award winner. Participated in numerous student leader activities, including co-founding 2 new student organizations, leading conferences, and devising and developing first annual symposiums on topics of social and economic equity and access**BOARD & ADVISORY COMMITTEE POSITIONS****LOS ANGELES COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLUS****May 2024 - Present**

Advisory Coalition Member

Advise the LA County Department of Parks and Recreation with the PNA+ Implementation Project, a planning effort instrumental to Achieving California's 30x30 targets for land conservation and environmental restoration. The PNA+ Implementation Project will provide a roadmap for frontline organizations and regional partners to actualize the recommendations of the 2022 PNA+ Report. CA's 30x30 goals include increased biodiversity, nature access, and climate resilience in LA County; advance the equitable distribution of parks and open spaces; achieve environmental reparations for EJ communities through the restoration and stewardship of urban degraded lands; expand funding agencies' definition of land conservation projects to include urban and degraded parcels; increase the capacity of community-based organizations in LA County to advocate for 30x30 efforts countywide and access funding for their park projects.

CALIFORNIA JOBS FIRST LA REGIONAL HIGH ROAD TRANSITION COLLABORATIVE**September 2023-Present**

Steering Committee member and Affinity Group Lead (topic area Immigrants)

State-led effort to promote equity and inclusion in regional economic planning in high growth clean/green sectors. Members responsibilities include uplifting under invested community needs to ensure inclusion in LA County's 10-year Regional Economic

Recovery Plans; ensure disinvested community members can access job and economic opportunities in high-growth sectors; map and support local community readiness to transition toward a carbon-neutral tomorrow.

COMMUNITY FOREST ADVISORY COMMISSION

May 2023 – Present

Commissioner Appointee of Los Angeles City Mayor Karen Bass

With a mission to achieve a healthy, safe, and enduring Los Angeles community forest ecosystem for wildlife as well as for the enjoyment and well-being of all Angelenos, duties of the committee include: advise City Council on tree policies, practices and challenges; develop policies to expand and improve Los Angeles's urban forest and enhance biodiversity; advise City Departments on procedures regarding preservation, tree care and tree planting; promote equitable distribution of the benefits and services provided by the urban forest; help community members work with the City on tree issues; advocate for tree-related funding for Departments; review and comment on specific projects in the City; and advocate for urban forestry and biodiversity as key city priorities that address public health and the climate crisis.

CALIFORNIA HARVESTERS, INC.

September 2017-May 2023

Co-Founder, Trustee and Board of Directors, Secretary and Treasurer

Innovative labor empowerment business opportunity that offers wealth- and skill-building trainings for farmworkers, while applying new technologies to build a competitive 21st century minimum wage workforce.

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP (SRF) HOLLYWOOD TEMPLE

January 2017-March 2022

Lay Disciple Council, Member, Special Events Committee, Co-chair, Digital Communications Committee, Chair

SRF is a meditation-based spiritual center

Lead fundraising campaign to raise \$1.5M capital project to construct handicap accessible facilities on the temple grounds. Raised full amount between May 2019-Dec 2019 through newly developed social media campaign.

WORKFORCE EDUCATION & RESOURCE CENTER – LOS ANGELES HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

May 2011-May 2012

Executive Board Member

WERC prepares the Los Angeles County workforce to meet the increased demand generated by the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and is committed to supporting the transformation to a preventative, primary care, culturally competent healthcare safety net system.

HEALTHCARE FIRST SOUTH LA

June 2011-January 2012

Executive Board, Steering Committee, and Workforce Committee Member

Accountable Health Organization whose mission is to enhance and improve healthcare access for the region of South Los Angeles.

- Worked with private and public hospitals and physician groups to establish the first Accountable Care Organizations (ACO).

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD, CITY OF LOS ANGELES

February 2011-December 2012

Executive Board and Sector Oversight Subcommittee Member

LA City Board that trends for workforce investment within the top job sectors in the City and County

- Appointed by the City of Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Los Angeles County Labor Federation.
- Focused on workforce development and job growth in healthcare, commercial and residential energy efficiency, and renewable energy sectors.

HOBBIES

Cooking, reading, meditation, yoga (certified instructor), hiking, camping, playing tabla and harmonium (classical South Asian musical instruments), and long-life learner!



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

August 14, 2026

Dear Ms. Patel:

Congratulations! I am pleased to inform you of your appointment to the Community Forest Advisory Committee for the term ending June 30, 2028, subject to confirmation by the Los Angeles City Council.

On behalf of the people of Los Angeles, thank you for your willingness to serve. Our boards and commissions are a vital part of the City's governance, and your leadership and expertise will play an important role in shaping the future of Los Angeles.

To move forward, there are a few steps you must complete prior to the Council's consideration of your appointment. My Commission Affairs team has prepared an attached checklist with deadlines and submission instructions, and they are available to support you throughout the confirmation process.

Once again, congratulations, and thank you for your commitment to serve the people of Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Karen Bass'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Karen' and last name 'Bass' clearly distinguishable.

KAREN BASS
Mayor

KB:lap

Attachment I
Ms. Sejal Patel
August 14, 2026

Nominee Check List

I. Within 7 days of appointment:

- ☐ Submit the completed forms, found on the last three pages of this letter, to: myr-commissions@lacity.org **OR** mail them to:

Office of the Mayor

Attn: Luz Portillo

200 N. Spring Street, Room 303

Los Angeles, CA 90012

- Remuneration Form
- Undated Separation Letters (2)

II. Council Member Meetings:

You may be asked to meet with Councilmembers prior to your hearings.

- ☐ Your City Councilmember Heather Hutt
- ☐ Councilmember Adrin Nazarian, Chair of the Council Committee, considering your nomination

III. Public Meetings at City Hall:

- ☐ Energy and Environment Committee Hearing
 - The Clerk's office will contact you once your item has been scheduled.
- ☐ Full Council Hearing and Oath of Office
 - The Clerk's office will contact you once your item has been scheduled.

V. Standing Requirements

- Notify the Commissions team of any changes in address or contact information.
- If you wish to resign, you must submit a resignation letter to myr-commissions@lacity.org.