



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

March 27, 2026

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

Honorable Members:

Subject to your confirmation, I have appointed Ms. Paula Daniels to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Board of Directors for the term ending December 31, 2030.

I certify that in my opinion Ms. Daniels 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.

Ms. Daniels will fill the vacancy created by the departure of Miguel Luna.

Sincerely,

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

KAREN BASS
Mayor

KB:lap

Attachment

COMMISSION APPOINTMENT FORM

Name: Paula Daniels
Commission: Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Board of Directors
End of Term: 12/31/2030

Appointee Information

1. **Race:** API
2. **Gender:** female
3. **Council District and neighborhood of residence:** 11 - West LA
4. **Are you a registered voter in the City of Los Angeles?** Yes
5. **Prior commission experience:**
6. **Highest level of education completed:** J.D., Southwestern University School of Law
7. **Occupation/profession:** Executive Director, LA County Office of Food Systems
8. **Experience(s) that qualifies person for appointment:** See attached resume
9. **Purpose of this appointment:** Appointment
10. **Current composition of the commission (excluding appointee):**

Commissioner	APC	CD	Race	Gender	Term End
Carl Douglas	N/A	N/A	African American	M	12/31/2026
Nancy Sutley	East LA	1	Latinx	F	12/31/2026
VACANT					12/31/2030
Tracy Quinn	West LA	11	Caucasian	F	12/31/2024
Matt Peterson	N/A	N/A	Caucasian	M	12/31/2024

SUMMARY

Significant career experience as a private sector attorney, public sector official, and non-profit executive. Known for designing and implementing innovative initiatives, in a variety of issue areas, including: water policy and management, urban forests, green infrastructure, food systems and food policy. Experience with environmental justice, civil rights and social justice. Expert at organizational development, team building, stakeholder engagement, public policy, public relations, government relations, developing and managing complex collaboratives. Highly skilled in strategy and communications. Awarded the prestigious Ashoka Fellowship for her entrepreneurial, big picture, interdisciplinary, systems thinking.

Public Policy

1999 to present

Through a number of high level public appointments, provided leadership in California water policy and in the development and implementation of nationally recognized initiatives in water management, food policy, and sustainability in the built environment.

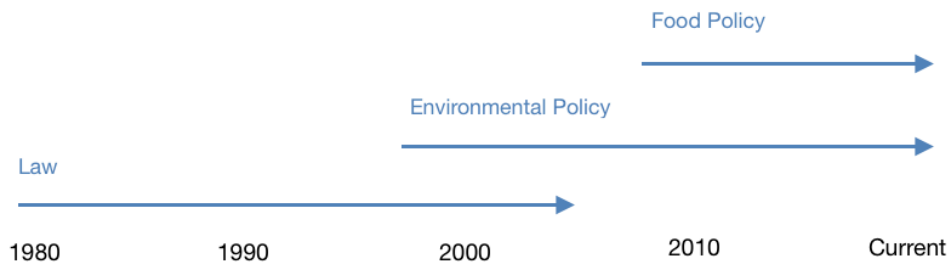
Non-Profit

1991 to present

Experience at the executive staff level as well as board level for a number of well-known non-profit entities focusing on environmental and social justice issues. Founded and incubated two highly successful non-profit organizations which achieved national and international recognition; developed and launched a public policy initiative at the University of Southern California.

Legal

1980 to 2005



Twenty five years as a civil litigator; fast tracked to partner in a mid-sized civil litigation firm; active involvement in law firm management since achieving partner in 1989. Founding partner of a boutique law firm established in 1993. During the shift toward full-time environmental policy work, became of counsel to a public interest law firm. Through bar related activities, provided national and local leadership on the administration of justice, public interest and civil rights.

CAREER DETAILS

January 2025 to present

**Inaugural Executive Director
LA County Office of Food Systems**

The LA County Office of Food Systems was established as a directive of the LA County Board of Supervisors, and created through an official partnership agreement between LA County and local philanthropic organizations. The Office, which is a non-profit fiscally sponsored by Community Partners, works to cultivate a fair, flourishing, resilient, and healthy food system for all County residents. We are an innovation and R&D center on food systems for the County, working in collaboration with a diverse network of stakeholders to address food system challenges across LA County.

July 2015 to December 2024

**Co-Founder, Chief of What's Next and Founding Board Chair
Center for Good Food Purchasing**

Co-founder of this national non-profit which is a spin off from the Los Angeles Food Policy Council(LAFPC), which I founded in 2011. (The LAFPC was recognized by the One Planet Network of the United Nations Environment Program as a [top 10 outstanding example of a multi-stakeholder mechanism](#).) Building on that, the Center was created to meet the national demand for its Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP), a values based food procurement program for large institutions, which in 2018 received an international award for [Scaling Up Agroecology from the World Future Council, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization](#), and IFOAM Organics International.

My emphasis was on policy development and enactment. Some recent examples: (1) worked closely with Assemblymember Richard Bloom to develop and advance AB1009 (2022) to a \$15 million for a food hub pilot program in California; (2) worked with Senator Skinner's office to secure \$100 million for California schools to purchase locally grown and climate smart foods; (3) anchoring a collaboration of national organizations to advance values based purchasing in federal agencies and programs.

April 2015 to April 2016

**Executive Director, California Central
University of Southern California**

Executive Director of this specific term public policy initiative founded by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa at the USC Price School of Public Policy. The purpose of the initiative was to delve into key issues of California's future. Designed and developed

the initiative mission, vision, branding, objectives and structure; created and led the execution of its programming and policy papers in the areas of the economy, education, and the environment. Responsible for fund development, team building, organizational development and executive management.

July 2013 to April 2015

Completed a project for the Stanton Fellowship award; traveled extensively for speaking engagements and participation as an invited guest at various meetings, symposia and workshops related to food systems and water issues; co-founded the nonprofit Center for Good Food Purchasing; fulfilled academic appointments at UCLA and Vermont Law School; held appointed public policy positions at Governor Brown's Office of Planning and Research, and the National Organic Standards Board.

August 2011 to June 2013

Senior Advisor on Food Policy, Special Projects in Water

Office of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa

Founded, incubated and served as chair and de facto chief executive of the internationally recognized Los Angeles Food Policy Council; managed extensive stakeholder engagement in food policy and other areas; advanced the development of the national Food Policy Task Force of the US Conference of Mayors; provided advice to the Mayor on food policy issues and legislation on a federal, state and local level, on issues including healthy food access, food security, local food system economies; developed strategy for and implementation of programs, public events and press conferences; participated in national food policy strategic planning and legislative activities; provided advice to the mayor on key water initiatives.

August 2005 to August 2011

Commissioner, Los Angeles Board of Public Works

Appointee of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to this full-time commission overseeing the Department of Public Works, a department with an annual budget of over \$1.5 billion and over 5,000 employees responsible for the city infrastructure.

Overall management of public works, including solid waste management and urban infrastructure. Specific focus was in water management and water quality, water recycling, the urban forest, and organizational improvement, including streamlining of processes and other organizational development. Led the creation, development and implementation of leading edge green infrastructure initiatives for the City of Los Angeles (to address water quality through bio-filtration and water supply through groundwater recharge), including: the first standard plans for Green Streets in the United States; development of Green Streets policies for the Department of Public

Works; guidelines for drought tolerant planting in parkways; a Low Impact Development ordinance and best practices manual ; a workforce development program, the Native Green Gardener; Green Streets retrofit pilot project. Also developed the foundational strategic plan and organizational model for the Million Trees LA project, which was awarded "One of the Top Models in the Nation" for large planting programs, by the U.S Forest Service in 2011.

1978 to 2005

Legal Career

Over twenty five years of experience as a civil litigator; fast-tracked to partner in a mid-sized civil litigation firm which specialized in business and real estate disputes; active involvement in law firm management since achieving partner in 1989; managed and cultivated a significant business in computer software litigation, growing it into a boutique business and product liability practice which carried over to a self established firm. During the carefully managed shift (beginning in 2001) toward environmental and public policy work, and as a transition, became of counsel to two firms, including a well-known public interest law firm.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND FELLOWSHIP AWARDS:

2023

Lecturer, UCLA School of Law

Advance course in legal foundations of agroecology

2018

Ashoka Fellowship

Awarded the lifetime Ashoka Fellowship for social entrepreneurs

2017-2020

Lecturer, UCLA Department of Urban Planning

Graduate seminar on food policy

September 2016

Resident Fellow, Bellagio Center

One month resident fellowship at Bellagio Center of the Rockefeller Foundation, for a writing project regarding food policy.

2016

Lecturer, University of Southern California

Taught an upper division undergraduate seminar on food policy

2010 to 2015

Lecturer, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability

2015 — Pritzker Environment and Sustainability Education Fellow

Taught upper division undergraduate seminar (2014) and graduate seminar (2015) on food policy; from 2010 through 2012, taught upper division undergraduate course on water policy

2014

Professor, Summer Faculty, Vermont Law School

Summer seminar on food policy

2012 to 2013

Visiting Professor, UC Berkeley

Lee Chair, Distinguished Professor in Real Estate Law and Urban Planning at the College of Environmental Design

Taught a graduate class in food policy

2012 to 2013

Stanton Fellowship

Fellowship project to investigate the development of a food hub in Los Angeles and policy issues related to commercial scale sustainable aquaculture

2004 to 2006

Senior Research Fellow, UCLA Institute of the Environment

Appointed to develop a non-profit environmental mediation center

GOVERNMENTAL APPOINTMENTS (volunteer positions):

July 2020

to present

Member, President's Advisory Commission on Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of California

March 2015

to October 2016

California Water Commission

Appointee of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

January 2015

to July 2015

National Organic Standards Board

Environmental position, appointment by USDA Secretary (voluntarily resigned due to Water Commission appointment)

- June 2014
to July 2015 **Senior Fellow for Food Systems, Water and Climate**
Office of Planning and Research, Office of Governor Edmund G.
Brown, Jr.
- 2003 to 2010 **Public Member, Bay-Delta Authority**
Appointee of Governor Gray Davis, reappointed by Governor
Arnold Schwarzenegger
- 1999-2000 **Commissioner, California Coastal Commission**
Appointee of Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa
- 1994 to 1998 **Los Angeles County Superior Court Bench and Bar ADR
Committee** Developed and implemented a performance based
oversight structure and system for the court's volunteer arbitration
program
- 1990 to 1993 **California State Bar Standing Committee on the Administration
of Justice**
Member of a select committee that provided recommendations to
the State Bar on pertinent legislation

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:

- 2012 **LA Weekly**, [Top Ten People Making LA a Better Place](#)
2012 **Green LA Coalition**, 2012 Honoree
2007 **Regional Water Quality Control Board**, Water Quality Leadership Award
2005 **California League of Conservation Voters**, Environmental Leadership Award
1991 **Heal the Bay**, Super Healer Award

NONPROFIT BOARDS:

- 2017 to 2020 **Durfee Foundation**
Board of Trustees
- 2014 to present **UCLA Resnick Program for Food Law and Policy**
Advisory Board
- 2015 to present **Center for Good Food Purchasing**
Co-founder and Founding Chair
- 2011 to present **LA Food Policy Council**

- 2013 to 2016 Founder and Founding chair
Island Press
Board of Directors
- 2007 to 2010 **Trust for Public Land**
Member, California Advisory Board
- 2004 to 2014 **California League of Conservation Voters, Education Fund**
Board of Directors
- 2001 to 2003 **California League of Conservation Voters**
Board of Directors
- 2001 to 2005 **Liberty Hill Foundation**
Environmental Justice Community Funding Board
- 2001 to 2005 **Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center**
Member of Board of Directors
- 2000 to 2003 **National Asian Pacific American Bar Association**
2003 Chair, Annual Conference of Coalition of Bar Associations of
Color (Delegate to Coalition, 2001 to 2003)
Regional Governor and Board of Directors (2000 to 2002)
- 1999 to present **Asian Pacific American Bar Association**
Former Member of Board of Directors
President 2002 to 2003
Current affiliation: Advisory Board
- 1991 to 1997 **Korean Youth & Community Center**
Executive Officer and Member of Board of Directors
President 1995 to 1997
- 1991 to present **Heal the Bay**
Executive Officer and Member of Board of Directors
Last office: President of the Board
Current: Member of honorary Board of Governors

EDUCATION:

- Legal: **Southwestern University School of Law**
Juris Doctorate, 1980
- Undergraduate: **University of Southern California**
Bachelor of Arts, Broadcast Journalism, 1977 (magna cum laude)

PERSONAL:

Avid outrigger canoe paddler with deep generational roots in Hawai'i.

SPEAKING EXPERIENCE:

Frequent guest lecturer, keynote speaker and panelist; extensive experience with print and broadcast media.

SOME OF MY PUBLISHED WORK:

A book I co-edited: [True Cost Accounting for Food: Balancing the Scale](#). (2021, Routledge). Edited By Barbara Gemmill-Herren, Lauren E. Baker, Paula A. Daniels. This book explains how True Cost Accounting is an effective tool we can use to address the pervasive imbalance in our food system.

[“True Cost of School Meals: School Meals Case Study”](#) (November 2021). I co-authored this case study with the Rockefeller Foundation, applying a true cost accounting methodology to US school meals programs, and forecasting the net positive impacts if there were a shift to local suppliers, among other shifts, for 30% of food purchasing in these programs.

[“Investing in a Good Food Future”](#) (May 2020, Medium; reprinted in the e-book compilation, [Resilience Matters: Reimagining the Future in a Tumultuous Year](#). [2021, Island Press, edited by Mazur, L.]) we provide recommendations on public policy investments for a “Good Food” system — one that is rooted in community resilience, equity, sustainability, and health

[“What Hurricanes Warn Us About the Future of Food”](#) (September 2018, Medium; reprinted in the book [“Resilience Matters: Strengthening Communities in an Era of Upheaval”](#) [2019, Island Press, edited by Mazur, L.]). My thoughts about some key priorities for Hawai’i in developing a more localized food system, and why it’s necessary.

[“Designing a Renewable Food System”](#) (January 2017) Stanford Social Innovation Review. Essay comparing the renewable energy trajectory to a pathway for food system reform.

“Domestic Farmed Fish Production: an overview of governance and oversight in the US aquaculture industry,” (2015, Routledge). A book chapter in the book *Political Ecologies of Meat*, edited by Emel, J. and Neo, H.

[“Know Your Fish Farm”](#) (January 2014). A report developed as a Stanton Fellowship project, regarding the potential for closed loop aquaculture systems to be part of a local food system to address environmental and food access issues

Ong, P., Loan, L., Daniels, P. “Ethnic Variation in Environmental Attitude and Opinion Among Asian American Voters” AAPI Nexus Journal, 11:1, page 91 (2013)

[“Water Use Efficiency and Jobs”](#) (December 2011). Commissioned, produced and served in lead editorial role in this study by the Economic Roundtable regarding the job impacts of water use efficiency projects, including a comparison to energy retrofits and traditional industry

“The Good Food for All Agenda: Creating a New Regional Food System for Los Angeles” (July 2010). Developed, produced and edited this report of the Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force (available at: https://goodfoodlosangeles.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/good-food-full_report_single_072010.pdf)



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

March 27, 2026

Dear Ms. Daniels:

Congratulations! I am pleased to inform you of your appointment to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Board of Directors for the term ending December 31, 2030, 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 written in a cursive, flowing style.

KAREN BASS
Mayor

KB:lap

Attachment I
Ms. Paula Daniels
March 27, 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 Traci Park

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.