



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

May 20, 2024

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, 2026. Ms. Patel's current term expires on June 30, 2024.

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:tga

Attachment

COMMISSION APPOINTMENT FORM

Name: Sejal Patel
Commission: Community Forest Advisory Committee
End of Term: 6/30/2026

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:** Vice President, Innovation and Economic Development, Rising Communities (RC) fka Community Health Councils
7. **Occupation/profession:** University of California, Los Angeles, Master of Arts, Asian American Studies
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 business and organizational initiatives.
- Designs place-based participatory regranting opportunities for BIPOC 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 2 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 Centers for Disease Control.
- Experience in conservation forestry, renewable energy infrastructure development, designing metrics-based supply chain Corporate Social Responsibility programs, workforce initiatives for undocumented residents, and complex environmental and social policy analysis.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

RISING COMMUNITIES (RC) (formerly COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCILS)

August 2021-present

Vice President, Innovation and Economic Development

Executive Director, Rising Communities Foundation (RC subsidiary)

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 BIPOC communities. RC's mission is to support and advance community voice under the social determinants of health framework to eliminate disparities in overall well-being. Our policy areas include Health Systems, Food Justice, and Community and Economic Resiliency.

- Growing the RC's grant-making subsidiary, Rising Communities Foundation, to financially support and strengthen the capacity for 58 community-based organizations serving BIPOC communities in the County of Los Angeles. Distributing over \$3.6M through annual Participatory Grant Making campaigns in South Central Los Angeles.
- Advancing foundation and assessments 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. Activities include BIPOC community engagement, pre-award processes, post-award processes, funding distributions, and reporting and evaluation processes.
- Driving revenue generating activities and business lines into the organization. Develop social enterprise businesses that advance equity and accessibility to resources for communities of color in several industries such as education and capacity building, and linkages to care.
- Supervise and coach a growing team of program officers, grants & contracts officers, digital systems specialists, and work closely with finance department to build and develop fiscal compliance infrastructure.
- Meet with Board of Directors quarterly, member of the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) committee, and collaborated on organizational re-branding activities.

AKASHA CONSULTING SERVICES

September 2017-August 2021

CEO/President

Provided executive-level project management needs to execute business and organizational initiatives. Designed and implemented 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

October 2020-July 2021

Responsible Recruitment Training Developer

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.

- Worked in partnership with UK-based Stronger Together labor certification organization to create and publicize a free 4-hour training on responsible recruitment in the US produce market. Invited retail companies, agricultural growers, farm labor contractors, shippers/exporters, and advocates to a highly interactive training to identify forced labor conditions in cross border, H2A visa and local farmworker recruitment.

JUNGLI

October 2020-present

Project and Construction Manager

A progressive 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.

- Project managed the financial modeling for the startup with an eye on using profits to secure better pay and working conditions for a 60-employee labor force.
- Construction manage new restaurant site.

CONTO

September 2020-present

Supplier Relations

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.

- Vendor communications on inventory, shipping, special orders, agreements and financials to ensure seamless launch of marketplace for customers and vendors. Utilization of project management (PM) and customer relations management (CRM) software.

LAMPLIGHTER ENERGY (LLE)

September 2019-September 2020

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 13GW under development.

- Completed a rigorous 12-week training program on renewable energy infrastructure development and design; financing (pro forma design, debt/equity/tax equity, cash flow plans, alternative financing, investors); contracting, term sheets and power purchase agreement risk analysis; project development organizing (GANTT and problem solving); sales; construction (GANTT, work force, cost overruns, change orders); hydrogen fuel cell; land & title; permitting (fed, state, municipal), resource analysis (solar, wind, water, hydro-electric, power needs analysis); and interconnection.
- Designed projects to progress Los Angeles County and the State of California to 100% renewable energy by 2045 by building (solar design, contract materials, vendors and pro formas) for the following projects in various phases of concept and development:
 - 4GW Carver urban solar greenhouse program. Identified 4GW of vacant and surplus lands in the Los Angeles City and Los Angeles County where solar greenhouses can be installed, providing local power, local jobs, workforce development training programs and local produce with limited agricultural inputs. Create business pipeline to progress the State of California’s Electric Vehicle and Fueling Stations program.
 - 10MW solar ground mount project at the former BKK Landfill site in West Covina, CA, sales slated for Target or Home Depot stores, City of West Covina or Clean Power Alliance.
 - 7MW carport solar structures at the Rose Bowl parking lots in Pasadena, CA.
 - 50kW solar rooftop and carport structure at Singpoli Group real estate developer headquarters in Arcadia, CA.
 - 12.6kW solar greenhouse structure at Hotel Constance in Pasadena, CA for restaurant’s use of growing herbs.
- Monitored local, statewide and federal policy on climate change, renewable energy, trade tariffs and agriculture.

CALIFORNIA HARVESTERS, INC (CHI)

September 2017-present

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

Innovative labor empowerment business opportunity that offers wealth and skill building trainings for farmworkers

- Developed new worker-based economic model called a Worker Trust, where employees become members of the Trust and provides input on the direction and financial growth of the company.
- Provide technical, budget, operations (staffing, policy and procedures) and budgeting assistance for this farmworker labor company that offers a high-skilled, stable workforce to agriculture growers.
- Successes featured in [Fast Company article](#) in inaugural year, 2018.

SUN WORLD INTERNATIONAL (SWI)

September 2017-June 2019

Top 10 table grape grower in the world and vertically integrated company with over 7,000 acres.

- Implemented a comprehensive sustainability program, showcasing SWI as a standout leader in the table grape grower and agricultural produce market. Advanced corporate responsibility through concerted data-driven efforts of empowering people and protecting the environment. Sustainable agricultural practices and goals include: renewable energy/GHG emission reductions, soil and bee health, workforce betterment initiatives, and water conservation.
- Successfully achieved Fair Trade USA certification as 1 of only 2 large growers certified in the country.
- Released CSR report, [The Better Future Project](#), and will release forthcoming annual reports updating goal progress.

FROM LOT TO SPOT

October 2018-March 2019

Project Manager

Non-profit community-based organization serving under-resourced communities in South and Southeast Los Angeles.

- Implemented new public policy to convert an unsafe, blighted easement into a public green space.
- Created community engagement plans and facilitated meetings with local residents, community members at large, and non-profit stakeholders including Communities for a Better Environment (CBE), Tree People, and Latino Equality Alliance in partnership with the City of Huntington Park government staff and elected officials to garner community input to convert a

Los Angeles Dept of Water and Power 10-block easement into a community-usable green space.

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
2006

September 2005 – August

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 women and girls in the Caste-Based Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking (CSE&T) workforce.
- Conducted in-depth interviews with 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 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, 4.0 GPA, 2022-2024 (in progress).
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 POSITIONS

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 community centered around the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda that is based in Los Angeles and has a global following.

- 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.

YUCCA ARGYLE TENANTS ASSOCIATION

January 2016-September 2020

Chair, Founder

- Succeeded in negotiating an unprecedented Right of Return Agreement between current tenants, the City Council office of Mitch O'Farrell and real estate developer Bob Champion, to enhance tenant protections in a housing development project of a market-rate luxury high-rise development that demolishes the current rent-controlled building during a housing and homelessness crisis in Los Angeles and nationwide.

ALMOND BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

January 2014-December 2015

Leadership Program Participant

Trade and Regulatory Affairs Committee Member

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 under Obamacare.

- 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.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS / CERTIFICATIONS**THE GLOBAL FOREST DYNAMICS LAB AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**

Research Member, 2021

Study of how forests work and how humans interact with them. Focus on the mechanisms that drive the dynamics of forest ecosystems as essential ecosystem functions (such as healthy watersheds and diverse wildlife) and indispensable natural resources (such as timber production, recreation, and carbon capture). Research on the patterns of forest diversity and the mechanism that can create and maintain diversity to better manage natural resource and ecosystem functionality. Provide sound science to inform policy and management decisions at local, national and international levels. Focus on linking big long-term forest data sets across special scales paired with detailed experiments to provide answers to pressing ecological and economic questions.

THE SUSTAINABILITY CONSORTIUM

Completed Training Service Provider Certification, October 2020

Speaker, Managing Upstream Labor Risks in Supply Chains, February 11, 2021 Webinar

Global non-profit organization developing and administering Key Performance Indicators and annual audits on sustainable business operations for the major retailers, such as WalMart and Sam's Club, and their respective supply chain, in the industry sectors of clothing, footwear & textiles; electronics; food beverage & agriculture; and general merchandise.

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN WATER, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Education Subcommittee member, Los Angeles Chapter since January 2020

The Exchange Mentorship Program 2021

Fostering a community dedicated to the advancement of all women in the fields of water, energy & environment, based in California. Mentoring a Master's in Engineering student in Nairobi, Kenya on advancing her career in water, agriculture and renewable energy, including creating a professional timeline to reach her goal of starting her own small business.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN ENERGY – career development and networking forum based nationwide with Los Angeles chapter

REAL ESTATE EXECUTIVES' FORUM (REEF) – explores the link between social inequity and real estate, based in Los Angeles, CA

HOBBIES

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



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

May 20, 2024

Dear Ms. Patel:

I am pleased to inform you that I am reappointing you to the Community Forest Advisory Committee for the term ending June 30, 2026, subject to confirmation by the City Council.

To begin the reappointment process, please review, sign, and return the enclosed Remuneration Form and undated Letters of Separation **within one week** of receiving this letter. These documents are necessary to ensure the most efficient, open, and accountable city government possible.

As part of the reappointment process, Heather Hutt, your Councilmember, and Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky, the Chair of the Energy and Environment Committee, may wish to meet with you to answer any questions they have. Our office will assist with arranging these meetings.

Additionally, you will be required to attend public meetings at City Hall where your reappointment will be considered. You will be hearing from our office and a City Council Clerk who will let you know when your reappointment will be considered by the Energy and Environment Committee. Sometime thereafter, you will be notified of the date when your reappointment will be presented to the full City Council. Immediately following the meeting, you will again be required to take the Oath of Office in the City Clerk's Office located in Room 395 of City Hall. If you require parking for these meetings, please contact my Commissions team by email at myr-commissions@lacity.org.

Ms. Sejal Patel
May 20, 2024
Page 2

Per the City Charter, most commissioners must be registered voters of the City of Los Angeles, and must therefore reside within Los Angeles. If you move at any point during your term, or your contact information changes, please contact my Commissions team immediately at the email listed below. While we hope that you complete a successful term, if for some reason you intend to resign, please do so in writing to my Commissions team at myr-commissions@lacity.org.

Congratulations, and thank you for agreeing 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:tga

Attachment I
Ms. Sejal Patel
May 20, 2024

Nominee Check List

I. Within 7 days:

- Email the below completed documents, found on the last three pages of this letter, to: myr-commissions@lacity.org OR mail them to:

Office of the Mayor
Attn: Thomas Arechiga
200 N. Spring Street, Room 303
Los Angeles, CA 90012

- Remuneration Form
- Undated Separation Letters (2)

II. The Mayor's Office will notify the below Councilmembers of your nomination, so that they may reach out to schedule a meeting with you should they wish.

- Your City Councilmember Heather Hutt
- Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky, Chair of the Council Committee considering your nomination

III. Public Meetings at City Hall:

- Energy and Environment Committee Hearing
- Full Council Hearing