

MICHAEL WOO BIO

Michael Woo is Dean of the College of Environmental Design at Cal Poly Pomona, which has established a unique reputation for offering practical, “learn-by-doing” instruction in architecture, landscape architecture, urban and regional planning, art, and regenerative studies.

The first trained urban planner elected to the Los Angeles City Council (1985 – 1993), Woo has become increasingly involved in cutting-edge issues such as climate change, smart growth, the relationship between land use and transportation, and the promotion of healthy cities.

Woo is a member of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission, initially appointed by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and confirmed by the L.A. City Council in 2005, and then re-appointed to a second term in 2008. As a planning commissioner, Woo played a key part helping to draft the “Do Real Planning” principles, adopted by the Commission in 2006, which publicly stated the Commission’s expectations of proposed new development projects. He has been a strong proponent of transportation demand management requirements and reform of off-street parking policies. Most recently, Woo initiated the temporary moratorium on new electronic billboards which was approved by the City Planning Commission in November 2008 and enacted by the L.A. City Council in December 2008. He initiated a Planning Department study of land use options for reducing the health effects of breathing polluted air within 500 yards of a freeway.

From 2008 - 2009, Woo worked as a consultant to ClimatePlan, a statewide coalition advocating changes in local land use and transportation policies as a key strategy for combating climate change. In early 2009, Woo was appointed to the Regional Targets Advisory Committee which gave recommendations to the California Air Resources Board for reducing greenhouse gas emissions relating to land use and transportation changes in each region of the state.

For seven years, Woo was an Adjunct Professor at USC’s School of Policy, Planning, and Development, teaching the undergraduate introduction to urban planning and development.

In his spare time, Woo is active in community affairs. He chairs the Board of Directors of Sustainable Economic Enterprises of Los Angeles (SEE-LA), the nonprofit organization which runs the Hollywood Farmers Market, the largest certified farmers market in the City of Los Angeles. He chairs the Board of Directors of Smart Growth America, the national coalition promoting smart growth policies at the national level. He is a new member of the TreePeople board of directors.

When he was an L.A. City Councilmember, Woo initiated the Hollywood Redevelopment Plan which set forth the 30-year legal and financial framework for Hollywood’s current revitalization and played a key role in choosing the route and station locations for the Metro Red Line subway. In 1993, Woo gave up his Council seat to run for Mayor of Los Angeles. Out of 24 candidates in the field, he reached second place, ultimately receiving 46 percent of the citywide vote in the June 1993 run-off election.

Woo earned a B.A. in Politics and Urban Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and received his Master of City Planning degree from UC Berkeley. He was a Fellow of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. The Los Angeles chapter of the American Institute of Architects designated him as an honorary member of the AIA in 2008.