



Photographs by GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

RETIRED DMV worker Patricia Payan has leased her home in El Sereno since 1986. She is now in escrow to buy her house from the state. But many renters fear they may remain in escrow for as long as two years.

Waiting for their slice of the American dream

Tenants in Caltrans-owned homes want to be owners, but the pace of sales is still a source of frustration

By LIAM DILLON



CALTRANS sold this vacant property in El Sereno to San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity, which will remodel it.

For nearly four decades, Patricia Payan has lived in a leased version of the suburban ideal, a two-bedroom, one-bathroom home on Sheffield Avenue in El Sereno.

Payan rents the house from the state of California, one of hundreds publicly owned in the community because of a freeway that was planned but never built. Living there for so long, Payan has made countless memories and put personal touches on the property. Her son and daughter had their birthday parties in the same backyard where her grandchildren now do. She redid the floors in the kitchen herself and paid for her own gardener.

The one thing missing for Payan was the home's title. That's now changing. Six years after the freeway was officially declared dead, Payan is in escrow to buy her house from the California Department of Transportation.

"I've always wanted this," said Payan, 77. "It's a dream to be a property owner."

Sales of the homes, apartments, lots and other properties owned by Caltrans are the final step toward healing the wound opened in the mid-20th century by plans to complete the 710 Freeway through the San Gabriel Valley. Decades of [See **Property**, A9]

Trump's golf course flirts with disaster

Known for landslides, scenic Rancho Palos Verdes is also home to club

By HAILEY BRANSON-POTTS

A mile west of Trump National Golf Club in Rancho Palos Verdes, a road sign warns: "Use Extreme Caution. Constant Land Movement."

A few blocks away, a sign just off Palos Verdes Drive South touts the Estates at Trump National Golf Club Los Angeles, where potential residents can "build your custom dream home."

Those signs sum up the promise and the peril of Trump's clifftop, open-to-the-public golf course, which he bought from bankrupted developers in 2002 after the 18th hole slid into the ocean. The club has even played a role in Trump's New York fraud trial.

On Friday morning, Trump is scheduled to hold a news conference at his club [See **Golf course**, A6]



CAROLYN COLE Los Angeles Times

FORMER President Trump purchased his golf course in Rancho Palos Verdes, seen in 2022, after the 18th hole fell into the ocean. Now, the city is a disaster zone.

As fires ravage the Southland, experts warn of a worse autumn

Dry vegetation abounds, and Santa Ana winds could arrive early this year.

By HAYLEY SMITH

For the first time in years, Southern California has found itself once again besieged by wildfire. In recent days, multiple blazes have exploded across heat-seared hillsides, blanketing the region in ash and smoke, threatening homes and communication towers and sending thousands of residents fleeing for their lives.

But as crews struggle to contain the 37,000-acre Line fire in San Bernardino County, the 23,000-acre Airport fire in Orange and Riverside counties, and the 51,000-acre Bridge fire in Los Angeles and San Bernar-

Evacuees wait and wonder

More than 19,000 Riverside County residents are under evacuation orders. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

dino counties, experts warn that the season is just getting started.

The impending arrival of hot Santa Ana winds — combined with two years of overgrown vegetation — all but ensure that this fall will be fraught with danger.

"The odds definitely favor a continuation — and maybe even an escalation — of Southern California fire season over the next couple of months," said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with UCLA.

The worst setup for wildfire conditions in Southern [See **Fires**, A7]



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

THE LINE fire left behind a scorched hillside along Highway 330 in San Bernardino County on Sunday.

Pocketbook woes may sway Nevada

Harris has a thin edge over Trump in the key state, but the cost of living has some voters doubting Democrats.

By JAMES RAINEY

LAS VEGAS — Vice President Kamala Harris has never met Maria Rodriguez. She probably never will. But the Democratic presidential nominee should be worried about Rodriguez, and voters like her.

The single mother of three from Henderson, Nev., is a onetime Democratic voter who frets about the economy (meaning: the price of just about everything) and says she plans to vote for former President Trump.

Rodriguez cast her ballot for Joe Biden four years ago, hoping for better times. But, regardless of what government statisticians might say about the economy, the 36-year-old finds it's harder to pay the bills today, even though she is working two or three jobs as a nurse and home healthcare worker.

"Going to the market is really hard right now," Rodriguez said as she pushed a mostly empty cart up an aisle of a Dollar Tree discount store last week. "Sometimes, before, you would go in with 100 bucks and come out with a full cart. It was pretty OK. Now, with 100 bucks, you can get maybe 10 things. It's living paycheck to paycheck."

"I was potentially a Democrat," she said. "But I have changed my way of [See **Nevada**, A6]

Unusually active year for L.A. quakes

Thursday's magnitude 4.7 temblor north of Malibu is the region's latest moderate event. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Pac-12 rebuilds with four schools

Conference adds Boise State, Fresno State, Colorado State and San Diego State. **SPORTS, B7**

Weather

Turning sunny. L.A. Basin: 80/63. **B6**

For the latest news, go to **latimes.com**.

Tech billionaire takes spacewalk

Jared Isaacman carries out first private mission hundreds of miles above Earth. **BUSINESS, A8**

Printed with soy inks on partially recycled paper.



Subscribers get more in the app.

Download now to experience all of The Times.

