



AL SEIB Los Angeles Times

**THE GONDOLA** from Union Station to Dodger Stadium would have a stop at Los Angeles State Historic Park. A company funded by former Dodgers owner Frank McCourt is seeking support from area residents.

# Battle over stadium gondola plays out at a housing project

Residents are divided as Metro board conditionally advances plan

By RACHEL URANGA AND BILL SHAIKIN

Maria Lemus doesn't remember exactly when she heard about a proposed gondola between Union Station and Dodger Stadium, but it was probably at the back-to-school backpack giveaway or the Christmas toy giveaway.

The gondola's team had been showing up at her family's housing project, the 415-unit William Mead Homes, for "the past four or five years" to make the pitch for the 1.2-mile gondola over Chinatown and answer

doubters' questions. The homes are less than a quarter-mile from Los Angeles State Historic Park, one of three stops along the route.

"They have been coming to community events," she said. "They have given our kids scholarships. They have brought turkeys and baskets of food to our community for Thanksgiving."

A company funded by former Dodgers owner Frank McCourt first proposed the gondola in 2018, selling the idea to politicians, the community and others as an alternative to the congested entry into the stadium that clogs neighboring streets.

On Thursday, the project passed a

major hurdle when the board of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority approved the project's environmental analysis in an 11-0 vote, with one abstention from county Supervisor Janice Hahn.

The approval was accompanied with a long list of conditions intended to protect the public agency from cost overruns and provide community benefits that would offset harm to Chinatown's housing market. Hahn said she appreciated the addition of the conditions but said: "I don't love this project. I really never have."

The conditions introduced by

# Hefty deposit in the state's water bank

Series of Sierra storms in February have significantly boosted seasonal snowpack.

By IAN JAMES

Concerns that California might remain in a "snow drought" this winter have eased after a series of storms this month blanketed the Sierra Nevada with a near-average amount of snow for this time of year.

The snowpack across the mountain range now measures 86% of normal for the date, according to state data, up from 28% of normal at the start of the year.

The latest storms have also brought enough rain to push the state's total precipitation to slightly above average for this time of year. And California's major reservoirs, which were filled

spectacularly by last year's historic wet winter, are still at 118% of their average levels.

The wet weather and improved snowpack mean that California appears headed for a less-extreme water year after whipsawing from three years of severe drought to one of the wettest years on record.

"Overall, I'm not worried about drought for the rest of this year," said Jay Lund, a professor emeritus and vice director of the UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences.

"We have a fairly good snowpack right now — not great, but it's not unusually dry," Lund said. "And even if it were to get dry, we're coming into it with a full set of reservoirs."

Shasta Lake, the state's largest reservoir, is now 87% full, while Lake Oroville stands at 82% of capacity.

[See **Water**, A10]



RAUL ROA Los Angeles Times

**HOW** close California comes to an average snowpack will depend on conditions over the next five weeks.



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

**FEW FEMALE** leaders who've backed Rep. Katie Porter's past campaigns support her Senate bid.

# Women's vote is eluding women running for Senate

By BENJAMIN ORESKES

When Rep. Katie Porter first ran for Congress in 2018, some of the nation's most influential female leaders and advocacy organizations lined up to support her, including then-Sen. Kamala Harris, Emily's List and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund.

In Porter's 2024 bid to become California's newest senator, and succeed Dianne Feinstein, many of those same voices are silent.

Little about Porter's campaign style or worldview has changed. As the Irvine Democrat attempts to court the same coalition of voters that got her elected in 2018 and reelected twice, she faces stiff competition from the other top Democrats in the race, Reps. Barbara Lee of Oakland and Adam B. Schiff of Burbank.

At least one woman has represented California in the U.S. Senate for the last three decades, a historic feat given that men account for 97% of the members who have served there since the birth of the nation. That streak may come to an end after the 2024 Senate election — and women appear to be a leading reason.

Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco), one of the most powerful women in California and national politics, has endorsed Schiff, as has former Sen. Barbara Boxer, who served alongside Feinstein for nearly a quarter-century. More than half of the women in the state's congressional delegation also back Schiff.

Along with recent opinion polls that show Schiff leading the field among likely voters, he also leads

# Grossman hit-run case goes to jury

'This was murder,' prosecutor says of two boys' deaths. Defense argues other angles.

By RICHARD WINTON

Prosecutors have offered an unflinching description of Rebecca Grossman.

Impaired by alcohol and Valium, they allege, she recklessly sped her Mercedes through a residential neighborhood, chasing her ex-Dodger boyfriend before killing two young boys in a crosswalk.

The question now is

whether jurors will believe this portrayal of a killer or see something more nuanced in the tragic events of that evening in Westlake Village three years ago.

Grossman's defense has challenged many parts of the prosecution's case, casting blame on her then-boyfriend, and insisting that she didn't intend to hurt anyone and was deeply remorseful about the boys' deaths.

The jury is being asked to determine whether Grossman is guilty of two counts of murder, two counts of gross vehicular manslaughter and one count of hit and run resulting in death. If convicted

of all charges, she faces 34 years to life in prison.

To secure a second-degree murder conviction, prosecutors must prove that Grossman acted with implied malice and knew that the act of driving at a high speed in a residential area was dangerous to human life.

But the jury could also settle on lesser charges, which would bring a significantly lighter sentence. Jurors will be able to consider vehicular manslaughter with ordinary negligence if they acquit her of those charges involving gross negligence. The lesser form of vehicular manslaughter can

result in a year in jail.

Or they could, as Grossman's attorneys have argued, find her not guilty.

Louis Shapiro, a Los Angeles defense attorney not associated with the case, said the defense has an uphill battle — but, he noted, the seriousness of the charges filed by prosecutors also is a potential barrier to a conviction.

"Some jurors might find it difficult to render a murder conviction simply for the fact that this is not the typical scenario where one would expect murder charges to be brought," Shapiro said. "They may feel a



AARON P. Bauer-Griffin/GC Images

**A THEATER'S NEW DIRECTION**

Jason Reitman discusses how he assembled an all-star team of filmmakers to buy the Village Theater — and offers a preview of their plans. **CALENDAR**, E1

**López Obrador disputes report**

Mexico's president blasts the latest article about a U.S. inquiry into his aides' alleged cartel ties. **WORLD**, A3

**Judge halts law on firearm suits**

Ruling bars enforcement of rule that allowed action over "abnormally dangerous" guns. **CALIFORNIA** B1

**Two portrayals in 'Rust' trial**

In opening statements, armorer is described as either sloppy or a scapegoat in an on-set shooting. **BUSINESS**, A6

**Weather**

Partly sunny.  
L.A. Basin: 74/53. **B6**

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