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**UBE FEST:** The iconic jeepney from the Pilipino Workers Center brought vibrant color, cultural heritage, and unmistakable Filipino pride to UbeFest, drawing crowds eager to take photos and celebrate tradition. A symbol of community and resilience, the jeepney added an authentic touch to the event, connecting generations through a beloved and enduring piece of Filipino identity.

## Questions Mount Over La Palma Police Oversight After \$8.4 Million Verdict

Beyond the lawsuit, there has been significant turnover among top City Hall positions over the past 18 months, raising broader concerns about oversight and accountability.

By Brian Hews

**LA PALMA** — An \$8.4 million jury verdict against the City of La Palma is now raising broader questions about how the city handles internal complaints within its police department, with a La Palma resident telling Los Cerritos Community News that residents should formally call for an independent investigation and records request.

An Orange County jury awarded \$8.4 million in damages to former La Palma po-

lice officer Ross Byer in December, finding the City liable for discrimination, retaliation, and failure to prevent discrimination. The verdict included approximately \$3.9 million in past damages and \$4.5 million in future damages. The City has since filed an appeal.

According to court records presented at trial, Byer alleged he was subjected to discriminatory treatment by a supervisor and reported the conduct to department leadership. Documents disclosed during the case indicate those concerns were elevated to City officials, but questions remain about how—or whether—the City responded.

Adding to those concerns, a La Palma resident has now formally urged the

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## Whittier Narrows Dam Project Could Shut Down Pico Rivera Landmarks, Officials Tell Residents

Army Corps outlines \$735 million dam upgrades, potential closures impacting Pico Rivera parks and facilities

By Stepheny Gehrig

Officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers joined Pico Rivera leaders to outline the scope of the

more than \$735 million, is designed to strengthen the dam's ability to manage flood risk for a large portion of Los Angeles County. The structure has long been considered critical infrastructure, protecting more than one million residents and billions of dollars in property downstream.

Construction is expected to begin in 2027 and continue into the early 2030s. While the dam



**DAM IMPACT:** Officials outlined Whittier Narrows Dam upgrades, warning Pico Rivera residents of potential closures affecting sports facilities, parks, and recreation areas as construction begins in 2027.

long-anticipated safety improvements and what they could mean for local facilities as construction moves forward.

Among the most significant concerns discussed were the potential closures of the Pico Rivera Sports Arena, the Pico Boys Baseball League fields, a city-owned golf course, and nearby park areas. Equestrian Bicentennial Park was also identified as a site that could be affected during construction.

The project, estimated at

itself will remain operational throughout the process, officials indicated that surrounding areas may face temporary or extended disruptions depending on construction phases.

The meeting also highlighted the scale and complexity of the work, which has been years in the making and recently moved forward with the selection of a construction contractor.

City leaders emphasized the importance of keeping res-

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## Whittier Voters Deliver Landslide Election Night

By Brian Hews

**WHITTIER** — It's still unofficial, but if history holds, Tuesday night's election results in Whittier are already telling a very clear story — and it's one of decisive wins, not close calls.

In the headline race, Aida Susie Macedo delivered the biggest shock of the night, overwhelming incumbent Fernando Dutra with 67.04% of the vote to Dutra's 26.88%. Felipe Longoria trailed with 6.08%.

"I am deeply humbled by the trust that voters have placed in me," Macedo said, crediting a grassroots campaign built on volunteer support and community outreach. She also acknowledged Dutra's concession, thanking him for his years of service and calling his outreach "gracious."

But the District 4 result wasn't an outlier — it was part of a broader pattern across the city.

In the mayor's race, James Becerra holds a commanding lead with 66.39%, well ahead of Joe Vinatieri at 31.99%, while Isaiah L. Leon Savage captured just 1.61%.

District 2 is shaping up the same way, with Vicky Santana pulling in 61.14% of the vote, far ahead of Octavio Martinez at 24.87%. Other candidates, including Rene Ramos, Rolando Cano, and Brian Ahern, remain in single digits.

While the results are still semi-official and subject to cer-

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## Ticketmaster Monopoly Verdict Raises Questions After Cerritos Move to Ticketing Giant

Federal jury finds Live Nation-Ticketmaster used its dominance to stifle competition, raising fresh questions about local venue decisions.

By Brian Hews

**CERRITOS** — A blockbuster federal jury verdict finding Live Nation Entertainment and its subsidiary Ticketmaster operated an anticompetitive monopoly is sending shockwaves through the live entertainment industry — and raising fresh questions locally following Cerritos' recent move to the ticketing giant.

A Manhattan federal jury ruled this week that Live Nation and Ticketmaster used their dominance over major concert venues to suppress competition, siding with more than 30 states

that pressed forward with the case after rejecting a federal settlement.

The lawsuit alleged the company leveraged its massive control of venues and ticketing to block competitors and drive up prices for consumers. During trial, attorneys described Live Nation as a "monopolistic bully," pointing to practices that limited venues' ability to work with alternative ticket sellers.

The verdict comes as the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts recently transitioned its ticketing operations to Ticketmaster, a move that at the time raised eyebrows among some observers familiar with the company's long-running controversies.

Live Nation, which merged

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## Teachers Walk Out in Little Lake District, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, and Downey Students Impacted

By Brian Hews

Teachers in the Little Lake City School District walked off the job Thursday morning after months of stalled contract negotiations, triggering picket lines across campuses serving Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, and parts of Downey.

The strike, led by the Little Lake Education Association, comes after an overwhelming 94% of union members voted

to authorize the walkout earlier this month. Educators began picketing early Thursday, with plans for a rally and march to district offices later in the day.

The dispute centers largely on rising healthcare costs, class sizes, and staffing levels—issues teachers say are directly impacting classrooms.

Union leaders say proposed changes to health benefits could push some employees' monthly costs as high as \$1,400, effec-

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