

FAQs on Environmental Impact Report Challenge to Johnson Drive Economic Development Zone

Updated September 26, 2018

1. What is the Johnson Drive Economic Development Zone (JDEDZ)?

The JDEDZ is a proposal that began in April 2014 to encourage investment in roughly 40 acres of underutilized and vacant land fronting I-680 along Johnson Drive at Stoneridge Drive. A citizens' initiative to prohibit retail uses of 50,000 square feet or greater (thereby eliminating large retailers like Costco) qualified for the November 2016 ballot but was defeated (approximately 63 percent of voters rejected the measure). The City Council subsequently approved the JDEDZ in November 2017.

2. Why is the City of Pleasanton being sued over the JDEDZ?

In December 2017, a group of citizens filed a lawsuit challenging the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document underlying the JDEDZ that the City Council previously certified at its November meeting.

3. What are the specific allegations in the lawsuit?

There are two allegations—that insufficient information was provided in the supplemental environmental impact report regarding air quality effects of the JDEDZ on the Stoneridge Apartment complex, located at 6259 Stoneridge Mall Road, across I-680; and that more time should have been provided for public consideration of the economic analysis, which concluded that the new hotels, a Costco, other retail and offices will not adversely impact other similar uses that exist in the community.

4. Does this mean that the JDEDZ will not move forward?

No, not necessarily, but before the JDEDZ moves forward, the City has committed to conduct additional supplemental environmental review that will include the apartment complex across from I-680 and recirculating the economic analysis; this will be followed up with a public comment period; the Planning Commission and the City Council will

then reconsider the project. Costco supports the additional environmental review as well, along with the subsequent hearings and review process that will occur prior to City Council reconsideration.

5. Why is this happening?

Environmental review associated with projects in California is often challenged. In 2009, the City faced a similar lawsuit challenging the environmental review in conjunction with the Staples Ranch development, a more than 120-acre development near I-580 and El Charro Road. That project was similarly reconsidered and subsequently reapproved and is now home to senior community Stoneridge Creek, along with commercial uses including auto dealerships and the new Pacific Pearl shopping center.

6. Where do we go from here?

At its meeting on September 18, 2018, the City Council voted to rescind the JDEDZ approvals and to conduct additional environmental review to address any concerns associated with the project and to avoid further delays and costly litigation. This supplemental environmental work has already begun and will be recirculated for public comment in late 2018, after which the City Council may again consider reapproving the JDEDZ project, likely in early 2019.

7. What happens to existing approvals in the JDEDZ?

At its hearing on June 27, 2018, the Planning Commission approved the design of two hotels with a total of 231 rooms. Their approval was contingent on the resolution of the lawsuit and any subsequent actions. Pending the outcome of this additional environmental review and the ensuing public comment period and hearings, the hotels may be able to proceed.

8. Will Costco still come to Pleasanton?

Costco remains committed to a store at this location, and according to Costco representatives, “Costco Wholesale is committed to our future Pleasanton location. We have purchased our site at 7200 Johnson Drive and, with the support of the City, we continue to work to obtain all necessary governmental approvals. We believe this

location represents a great opportunity for us to better serve our many members in Pleasanton.”

Costco has also joined the City in defense of this lawsuit and supports conducting this additional environmental analysis.

9. How can I find out when the additional environmental review will be available for more review and public comments?

- Visit the project webpage, which has information about the project, and notices of upcoming meetings: cityofpleasantonca.gov/JDEDZ
- Sign up for email notifications about JDEDZ-related meetings and information at [Johnson Drive EDZ Notifications](#).
- Check us out on Facebook [@CityofPleasanton](#) Twitter [@pleasantonca](#) and sign-up for Nextdoor.com for email updates.
- For questions or comments, please email City of Pleasanton Community Development Director Gerry Beaudin at gbeaudin@cityofpleasantonca.gov.