

32400 PASEO ADELANTO
SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA 92675
(949) 493-1171
(949) 493-1053 FAX
www.sanjuancapistrano.org



MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

TROY BOURNE
JOHN CAMPBELL
SERGIO FARIAS
HOWARD HART
JOHN TAYLOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Matisse Reischl
Assistant City Manager
(949) 443-6315
mreischl@sanjuancapistrano.org

CITY OF SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO CONFIRMS NO PATH FORWARD FOR BATTERY STORAGE PROJECT AT SADDLEBACK CHURCH SITE

CITY OF SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO (December 23, 2025): Yesterday afternoon, Engie North America submitted a letter to the California Energy Commission (CEC) requesting that the CEC suspend processing of the Compass Energy Storage Project proposed for the Saddleback Church property in San Juan Capistrano. In its filing, Engie stated that it will evaluate alternative sites and reassess the economic viability of the proposed project. Engie's filing acknowledges that site-specific conditions have materially affected the project's feasibility, validating concerns consistently raised by the City throughout the State certification process.

In addition, an Engie representative has gone on record indicating that Engie's option to purchase the Saddleback Church property has been voided. The City has independently confirmed with Saddleback Church that the underlying real estate transaction will not proceed. Without control of the property, there is effectively no remaining pathway for the Compass Energy Storage Project to be constructed at the Saddleback Church site.

Under the leadership of the City Council, the City played an active and deliberate role in the CEC review process to ensure transparency and a comprehensive evaluation of potential impacts. The City submitted formal comments, coordinated with regional partners, and identified critical deficiencies related to public safety, environmental impacts, evacuation constraints, emergency access, and effects on major regional transportation corridors, including Interstate 5, the 73 Toll Road and regional rail infrastructure. Additional concerns included significant site constraints such as an eroding creek, a history of landslides and wildfires, limited access across an at-grade rail crossing, and proximity to residential neighborhoods and schools.

Throughout this effort, the City Council was guided by a strong commitment to protecting public safety and listening to the concerns expressed by residents. "What mattered most throughout this process was protecting our community and ensuring local voices were heard," said San Juan Capistrano Mayor John Campbell. "From the very beginning, the City took this proposal seriously, conducted a thorough analysis, and spoke up when it became clear that this project posed unacceptable risks and could have caused irreparable harm to our community. While we received incredible support from community members and regional partners, I want to personally acknowledge Congressman Mike Levin, Senator Catherine Blakespear, Assemblywoman Laurie Davies, and Supervisor Katrina Foley for standing with San Juan

Capistrano, across political ideology, to advocate for our residents. This effort was never about politics. It was about doing what is right, and it is gratifying to be able to bring this outcome back to our residents.”

The City’s actions throughout the CEC process reflect the City Council’s commitment to ensuring that State-level decisions fully account for local conditions, public safety, and long-term environmental considerations. The City’s position has never been opposition to renewable energy, but rather the importance of appropriate siting and responsible project design.

The City extends its sincere appreciation to community members and regional public agencies whose participation, thoughtful input, and engagement throughout this process were instrumental in identifying concerns and reinforcing the need for a thorough and transparent review.

###