MT. OLIVE
APOSTOLIC ORIGINAL HOLY CHURCH OF GOD

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September 14, 2009

City of Menlo Park Planning Commission
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Re: Menlo Gateway

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We, the undersigned, are writing to express our support of the Menlo Gateway project proposed by the David D. Bohannon Organization. We are members of the Mt. Olive Apostolic Original Holy Church of God and/or residents of the Belle Haven neighborhood in Menlo Park.

We believe that the Menlo Gateway project will be a major benefit to our community financially, aesthetically and by providing services and resources that will enhance the Menlo Park area east of Highway 101.

From a financial perspective, the project will bring in much needed revenue for the city in the form of taxes and fees. In tough economic times like these, a major revenue producing project like Menlo Gateway can provide significant assistance to the City in balancing its budget. And, indirectly, it benefits the residents of Menlo Park because the more income the City has from projects like this, the less the City will have to raise taxes and fees and cut services. For the residents of Belle Haven, many of whom are lower income and, therefore, less able to afford higher taxes and fees and more dependent upon city services, this is of particular importance.

The Menlo Gateway project will also have a more direct impact upon the residents of Menlo Park in the form of approximately 2,100 jobs that will be created (on top of the approximately 1,900 construction jobs that the project is expected to generate). David Bohannon has demonstrated his commitment to the City by entering into a Letter of

Intent with JobTrain, insuring that Menlo Park residents will be given first priority for any available jobs. With an unemployment rate of 11.8% in the Silicon Valley, this is a major benefit, particularly for Belle Haven residents.

Aesthetically, the project will provide a much-needed "face lift" to the industrial area near Marsh Road and Highway 101. Everyone in the area is familiar with the transformation taking place in East Palo Alto at University Avenue and 101. The office buildings, Four Seasons Hotel and the surrounding retail areas have been a significant enhancement to that area. Menlo Gateway will do the same for the eastern section of Menlo Park. It will provide a beautiful hotel, office buildings, a café, retail space and a health club. We also believe the completion of this project will entice other businesses to the area, thus continuing the trend of improvement.

Speaking on behalf of the church, it will be wonderful to have a hotel so close by. We host several events each year, including our annual Pentecost convention which draws delegates from across the United States. The hotel will give our delegates a beautiful, convenient place to stay. We are also looking forward to the opportunity to host events such as banquets, meetings, etc. at the hotel that are too large for us to host at the church.

Retail services and community facility space are extremely limited in Belle Haven and the fact that the Menlo Gateway project will contain both is an added benefit.

In summary, we have long desired major improvements to the eastern section of Menlo Park. The City has made progress in the form of the new housing development and the streetscape design on Hamilton Avenue, along with the retail area on the corner of Willow Road and Hamilton Avenue. The Menlo Gateway project will be another major step toward the redevelopment and beautification of our neighborhood. This, along with David Bohannon's commitment to providing much needed jobs for the residents of Menlo Park and the financial benefits to the City, make this project a win-win for everyone and we strongly encourage you to make a positive recommendation of the project to the City Council.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. H.L. Bostic
Pastor/Founder
and Menlo Park Resident

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