



To Whom It May Concern:

The Housing Action Coalition is pleased to endorse Signature Development's exemplary mixed-use project at Willow Village in Menlo Park. After a detailed presentation, the committee determined the project exceeds our high standards in addressing the regional affordability and displacement crisis.

The committee commends the excellent land use of the project, which replaces a 59 acre site of warehouses and office space with 1,729 new homes, over 1.2 million square feet of office space, 200,000 square feet of retail space, and significant public space in the forms of parklands, a town square, and public plazas. At 99 units per acre, Willow Village will offer much-needed dense housing to the Peninsula and justifies increased spending on local public transportation. The committee recommended the project team work with local elected leaders to bring more transit options to Willow Village.

The project site sits between the Belle Haven neighborhood and East Palo Alto, two historically underserved communities with relatively minimal public transit. Willow Village will include over 2,000 bike spaces and 6,000 car spaces, and while the committee would prefer less car parking to encourage alternate transit use, we understand feasibility concerns for this area. Additionally, the Committee recognizes that a large portion of the parking is dedicated for the new office spaces. Beyond the environmental benefits that increased housing density will bring, all of Willow Village's buildings will be built with LEED Gold certification. Buildings will be equipped with 100% electric power, and use recycled water, sustainable materials, and increased photovoltaics. Using mass timber as the primary structure material will also substantially reduce carbon emissions. Included in the project is a community space covered by a glass canopy, which the committee thought innovative and beneficial to the public. The committee also admired the project team's dedication to sustainability, and believes that Willow Village will be a model of sustainable development in the future.

Approximately 20% of Willow Village's homes will be subsidized affordable, equalling 320 homes. Of these, 120 will be reserved for very-low and extremely low-income seniors. The affordable count has increased in response to community input, and goes above and beyond local standards. In totality, Willow Village will be the largest market rate and affordable home project in Menlo Park.

The project team has been communicating with neighbors for almost four years, and has been responsive to community feedback. This has included prioritizing a grocery store affordable for all residents, reserving retail space for local businesses, adding more affordable homes, and decreasing office space to create a more balanced ratio of homes and offices. In response to concerns about physical and economic separation between Belle Haven and Willow Village, the project introduced an elevated parkway that will cross Willow Road, a major thoroughfare, to connect with Belle Haven. The project will also construct a tunnel under Highway 84 to provide safe access to miles of bayside trails. The committee applauds Signature's commitment to engaging with the community. At the same time, we would like to see

increased accessibility to the sky bridge, and also encourage additional connections on the south side of the site.

Overall, we appreciate the project team's commitment to alleviating the impact on the nearby community. The team has demonstrated continued community involvement by amending plans that achieve the best possible housing outcomes and community open space. We are excited that Signature has committed to union labor for a large portion of the project, and encourage them to continue conversations with labor groups.

The Housing Action Coalition applauds the project team for striving to achieve the best possible project for the community. Ultimately, we are proud to endorse Willow Village, which will provide well-designed and well-located homes that help address our region's ongoing affordability and displacement crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd David". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Todd David, *Executive Director*