

Bank of America, Nonprofit Partner to Develop Green Affordable Housing

Thanks to a \$25,000 grant from the Bank of America Foundation, Mutual Housing California will start the predevelopment phase of 61 new apartments and townhomes for agricultural workers.

The nonprofit said it plans to finish predevelopment work and start construction by the end of 2013. The development is expected to finish by early 2015 and cost approximately \$22.2 million.

The Mutual Housing at Spring Lake in Woodland, California, which is designed by Kuchman Architects PC/LN Productions, “is expected to bring the green revolution to a population that has not been able to take advantage of it in the past,” said Mutual Housing California CEO Rachel Iskow.

The goal is to begin closing the “green-divide” she said. The community “will be one of the first zero-net energy communities for farm workers” in the area.

The current inventory of affordable housing developments with the energy-efficient design and energy-creating systems is small to nonexistent, said SVP, global corporate social responsibility at Bank of America, Lori Rianda. A Mutual Housing survey of workers in the fields, at packing houses and processing plants, revealed utility expenses were their main concern after rent.

The photovoltaic installations at Spring Lake are designed to produce at least as much energy as is used by the community. In addition the mutual housing model includes a community center with a counseling office, computer learning lab, free Internet access for residents, community gardens and open space nearby.

Development funding will also include federal and state tax credits in addition to contributions from the City of Woodland, NeighborWorks America, and the Yocha Dehe Community Fund. Wells Fargo Bank is the tax-credit investor.

Founded in 1988, Mutual Housing California develops and operates well-designed rental housing for the diversity of the region’s households. The communities have nearly 3,000 residents, nearly half of whom are children.

Through Mutual Housing’s focus on leadership, the nonprofit also provides training and mentoring as well as educational programs, community-building activities and services for residents and neighbors.

Mutual Housing California develops housing that is affordable to a diversity of households. Our housing builds strong and stable communities through resident participation and leadership development. For more information, call (916) 453-8400 or visit our website at mutualhousing.com.

