

Woodland affordable housing project gets another funding boost

An affordable housing project in Woodland for farmworkers could get underway before year's end, with a \$25,000 grant for predevelopment expenses going to the builder, Mutual Housing California.

The Bank of America Foundation gave the grant, which makes a critical difference for getting projects like Spring Lake off the ground, said Rachel Iskow, Mutual Housing California's chief executive officer.

"It's considered kind of risky to get involved before you start building," Iskow said. "It's actually pretty expensive; you have to get the design work done so you can pull a permit."

Other costs include building fees, site surveys and appraisals, she said. But Bank of America officials were particularly interested in Spring Lake because of its environmentally friendly construction, she added.

Mutual Housing still has to work on getting financing, including using

tax credits previously allocated, for actual construction of the 61-unit project, Iskow said.

Making the project possibly the first energy-efficient apartment and townhome complex for farmworkers in the county was no coincidence, after polling of local workers found utility costs were the second-highest financial concern after rent, according to Mutual Housing.

Set to open in 2015, Spring Lake will have a community center, space for gardens, a computer lab and other amenities. The overall development has a projected cost of about \$22 million.

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.

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Rendering courtesy of Kuchman Architects, PC/LN Productions.

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.

