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## \$47 million OK'd for South Hayward transit village

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HAYWARD — Bond money has been secured for key portions of the proposed South Hayward BART transit village, moving the ambitious project one step closer to reality.

The state Department of Housing and Community Development awarded Eden Housing and the city \$47 million to support the construction of more than 200 low-income housing units for seniors and families, along with parking and infrastructure improvements necessary for the neighboring BART station.

"They gave us the maximum allowed under the program," City Manager Greg Jones said. "It really was necessary for the project, not because of the (housing) market, but because of the relationship to the BART station."

About \$30 million of the bond money will go to infrastructure projects such as a parking garage to replace spaces that BART will lose, and pedestrian and street improvements.

The remaining \$17 million will be used to fund the affordable housing units, which will be built above a large Safeway store. Jones said the developer is responsible for finding money to build the supermarket.

The project has been lauded by Hayward officials

and Assemblywoman Mary Hayashi, who worked with the city throughout the funding application process.

"(The effort) allows the city to transform an underutilized parking lot into an Earth-friendly transit village," Hayashi said.

Wittek Development officials could not be reached for comment Tuesday, but have said in the past that the \$300 million project's timing is dependent on market conditions and that the earliest they would expect to begin construction would be late 2010.

"A wild guess would have us breaking ground in 12 to 18 months," Jones said.

The project, along 12 acres of Dixon Street, will be completed in phases. The first will include the Safeway and affordable housing.

Later phases will include a large BART parking garage that will be 7 stories tall, with 910 spaces. That makes up for about 70 percent of the 1,200 spaces lost in the current surface-level parking, which will be used for most of the mixed-use development.

The project, approved by the City Council in March, eventually will include about 800 housing units, with neighborhood-serving stores at ground level.

Jones said it will create 700 construction jobs, and 150 permanent commercial jobs.

The funds approved last week come from Proposition 1C, the Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Act approved by voters in 2006.

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