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Union Mission sale closes; work to start on apartments

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NORFOLK

Union Mission Ministries' former downtown home is set to be transformed into apartments by next year.

Developer Buddy Gadams completed his purchase of the iconic building on Friday for $4 million, about six months after striking a deal to buy it. Union Mission previously used the building as a homeless shelter.

Construction will begin Monday on 86 luxury apartments, Gadams said Friday, and his company, Marathon Development, will start building a five-story structure on an adjacent parking lot that will have 50 units.

The Union Mission building at Boush Street and Brooke Avenue was built in 1909 and was used by the Navy as a YMCA until 1972.

The nonprofit had been trying to sell the property for at least five years. In 2009 it entered into a contract with Columbia, S.C.-based U.S. Development, but the company couldn't come up with $6 million to complete the sale, so it languished until October.

Less than two months after that deal fell through, Gadams signed a contract with Union Mission.

This is the latest in a string of residential developments Gadams has undertaken in downtown through a combination of renovation and new construction. When the projects that have been announced are finished, Gadams will have added 660 apartments to the downtown market.

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