

"We're going to need more people and we have people that will be retiring as well, so we've got to have enough to refill the positions that come open naturally as well as add more manpower," said Davis.

A new project off West Tennessee Street might be able to help with that. Bethel Missionary Baptist Church is looking to partner with Miami based, Global City Development to build a more affordable-mixed use apartment complex aimed for the city's workforce in Tallahassee.

First priority for these units would be given to first responders, teachers and medical professionals, something Davis said could be a big help for firefighters.

"Anything that the city can do to help lower that cost of living or lower some of those constraints on those starting firefighters is definitely a good thing and I think it's a great thing to think outside of the box and try to alleviate some of the strain on them," said Davis.

The proposed \$100 million project will have 300 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments for rent starting at \$1,300.

The average cost of a one-bedroom apartment in downtown Tallahassee is \$1,900 according to Zumper. Terrence Hinson, a broker working with Bethel on the project, said these units will be more competitive and slightly affordable.

"Prices for houses are going up extremely high. A part of Bethel's mission, not just with this project but with other projects, is to make these properties affordable," said Hinson.

Global City Development is requesting a loan of \$7 million from the Tallahassee Community Redevelopment Agency to help with construction costs. Executive Director of CRA Stephen Cox believes this project will help the city's goal of creating more affordable housing close to downtown.

"300 units would be a tremendous addition to the downtown community. It's right off of Tennessee Street, so again, it would be a major development for the community as well as the city of Tallahassee," said Cox.

The developers are asking for the \$7 million loan during Tuesday morning's CRA Downtown District Redevelopment Commission meeting. If approved, construction is expected to start in October 2024.

