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## Security added for Black Friday at Gwinnett Place Mall

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By Sandra Parrish

DULUTH — Businesses near Gwinnett Place Mall want shoppers to know they can feel safe while shopping those Black Friday deals.

After finishing their Thanksgiving meal, shoppers will begin hitting the stores as some open as early as 6 pm.

Joe Allen, executive director of the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District, says the CID will be providing extra security patrols beginning tonight.

"There will be at least three CID-funded patrols in the area and then that will continue from now until the early part of the year," he tells WSB's Sandra Parrish.

The patrols work in addition to the increased presence by Gwinnett County Police.

Despite receiving a bad rap in the past, Allen says crime is actually down along the Pleasant Hill corridor.

"When we began the community patrols back in 2007, and if you compare those numbers with where we were last year, we've actually seen a reduction of crime in this area by 34 percent," he says.

Tanya Smith lives in the area and is already a cautious shopper. After the recent murder of a woman in a Conyers Walmart parking lot, she no longer shops at night.

"It is a concern that we have to keep our eye out and know what's going on at all times," she says.

But the extra security patrols puts her a bit more at ease.

"I think that's great that they're doing that; I think that's going to make people feel a lot safer."

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