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CID launches effort to regain business in Gwinnett Place Mall area

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Holiday bells won't be the only thing ringing around Gwinnett County this Christmas season.

A business group seeking to revitalize the Gwinnett Place Mall area will make thousands of phones ring as well with exhortations to "discover the Gwinnett Place area again."

The Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District is sending voice messages from Executive Director Joe Allen to 10,000 homes around the west Gwinnett County retail district. It's part of an efforts to improve business conditions for shopkeepers there.

Once the retail center of Gwinnett County, Gwinnett Place has suffered in recent years as some stores and customers have migrated to new, bigger, fancier locations at the Mall of Georgia, Discover Mills and outdoor shopping destinations, such as The Forum in Norcross and The Avenue Webb Gin near Snellville.

The recorded messages will be followed up by postcards touting the wealth of shopping opportunities available at Gwinnett Place.

"This is one very positive thing we can do to help the retail community here," said Allen.

It's the second time the CID has used telephone messages and postcards to try to lure shoppers back to the mall area. The first time was for August's back-to-school tax free holiday.

Gwinnett Place Mall Manager Nick Nicolosi said it's hard to tell whether the campaign had any effect on shopping habits, but he said he's heard from retailers who were pleased with the results.

"That's hard to weed out, but there is no doubt that doing something like this is going to remind people and give you an advantage in this very competitive retail environment," said Nicolosi, who is also vice-chairman of the CID's board of directors.

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