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Development authority working to make downtown secure

By JANETSSY LUGO

Miami's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has taken many steps to bring people to Downtown Miami, said Manolo Reyes, chairman of the DDA and district 4 commissioner. The DDA is "trying to make it more secure for the people that work there and people that live there," Mr. Reyes said. Four additional police officers have joined an off-duty officer program that aims to keep businesses and

residents safe.

Security is being enhanced, said Mr. Reyes. "We are increasing security and we want people to feel safe. It's a safety program [the off-duty police officer program] for businesses and residents."

Additionally, the DDA has a free Downtown Miami transit circulator, said Mr. Reyes.

"We have those Freebees that ... have 18 key stops," he said. "That includes Metromover stations and parking garages

that are along the Downtown area. Some of those garages are blocks away from businesses in Downtown Miami, and what we're trying to do is to promote people to come to Downtown Miami. They can park in Miami Parking Authority garages and they can jump in those Freebees. We call them circulators, and they [people] can go around downtown as far as Kaseya Center."

The DDA has also focused on improving and helping the appearance of storefronts.

"We have the façade improvement, which is a grant that is offered [and] is ... \$50,000," said Mr. Reyes. "That is to individual businesses and property owners that can use that to enhance the overall appearance of the property ... to do away with the blight appearances, if there is one."

Downtown Miami is a unique and beautiful place full of history, said Mr. Reyes, and the Miami DDA will continue different programs "to provide ... the favorable conditions to bring downtown Miami back."