

SAFETY IN PERSPECTIVE

"We want people to feel safe and we're always looking for better ways to do that," says Mike Maggitti, director of safety. These days he and his colleagues are exploring the use of technology as a means of sharing crime data with the public in a more automated, timely, and usable way. The intent – and ultimate effect – is not to frighten but to better protect people by reducing the rate of incidence, and to create a sense of partnership in crime prevention. In essence, he says, what they're doing is "crime mapping" – or, literally mapping out what crimes are occurring and where.

Downtown Visions currently receives two reports from the Wilmington Police Department (WPD) – the weekly "Call for Service" which details calls that require a police dispatch, and the "Daily Bulletin" which gives a daily accounting of more serious crimes, citywide. These are in addition to the press releases from WPD. DTV currently keeps track of the crimes that are reported Downtown to

tailor their patrols of safety ambassadors and more closely monitor surveillance cameras in the area(s) of concern.

"What we're really looking at is a better way to share information about crimes," says Maggitti. Sharing crime data with the public in a more real-time manner would be helpful in many ways. This data can empower individuals to take certain precautions for themselves, assist WPD by soliciting information to solve crimes, as well as dispelling rumors and misinformation.

The concept and practice of crime mapping isn't new. It has been used for more than a decade by police departments and business districts around the country, including New Castle County, DE and the City of Philadelphia. Which technologies will be utilized has not yet been determined. **But as** DTV moves forward, it will look to its neighbors for best practices as it continues its efforts to keep Downtown clean and safe.