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Miami DDA expands safety efforts with self-defense classes, increased police presence downtown

Miami residents are learning how to better protect themselves as the [Miami Downtown Development Authority](#) expands its efforts to improve public safety through self-defense training and enhanced security measures.

Kylie Russell said she's lived in downtown Miami for nine years and has watched the area transform.

"When I first got down here there were maybe two or three high-rises in this area, and now they're shooting up," Russell said.

With that rapid growth, Russell said she believes it's important to be prepared.

"You still see some homeless or some drug addiction in the area. And so I think it's really important to be able to understand your surroundings," she said.

Russell was among those attending a self-defense class hosted by the Downtown Development Authority. Trainers said the goal is to equip participants with practical techniques to escape dangerous situations.

"If you can at the very least be prepared for what's coming your way, get out and get out of the way. Potentially throw a counter and get out, you're safe," professional fighter Taylor Robertson said.

The self-defense classes are part of a broader public safety initiative the DDA says is aimed at making downtown Miami safer.

According to the organization, those efforts include:

- Increasing the police presence in Brickell and the central business district.
- Expanding security cameras and license plate readers into Brickell.
- Exploring the addition of a second police drone.

The DDA also said it has been working closely with Miami police and is already seeing a decline in crime.

"Brickell, crime is down 18%, and the central business district, it's down over 20%," said Michael John Green, Miami DDA's acting executive director.

Downtown safety has remained a major focus since [a woman was attacked and stabbed](#) outside her apartment building last month. Police made an arrest in that case, but Green said improving safety requires an ongoing, collaborative effort.

"The DDA, along with the police and the commission, are taking a full-scale approach to make Miami one of the safest places in the United States," Green said.

The DDA said it plans to continue offering self-defense classes approximately once every three months as part of its long-term commitment to public safety.