

NEW PROVIDENCE LAUNCHES STREET SMART PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Street Smart NJ targets speed, distraction and safety awareness for motorists and pedestrians



Pictured from left to right: Zenobia Fields, Director, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Department of Planning, Stephen Drown, Sergeant New Providence Police Department, Dan Callas, President of TransOptions, Anthony D. Buccelli, Jr., Chief, New Providence Police Department, Hon. Al Morgan, Mayor of New Providence, Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski, Freeholder Vice Chairman, Union County, Hon. Angel G. Estrada, Freeholder, Union County, Chair of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Board of Trustees. Photo courtesy TransOptions.

(New Providence, NJ)- Union County is home to the latest efforts in the statewide Street Smart campaign. The Borough of New Providence, the New Providence Police Department, TransOptions, county and state representatives and other advocates launched the campaign Monday night at the borough’s municipal building ahead of a regularly scheduled council meeting. Street Smart is a statewide public awareness campaign that combines educational outreach and high-visibility law enforcement to change behaviors as they relate to pedestrian safety. Street Smart New Providence coincides with Distracted Driving Awareness month.

“We have a long history of working with New Providence through our Safe Routes to School programming and we are looking forward to partnering on another proven safety effort with the Borough,” said TransOptions President, Dan Callas. “Reducing pedestrian crashes and fatalities on our roadways is no easy task and working together on programs such as Street Smart is a great way to drive those numbers down in New Providence and New Jersey as a whole.”

“New Providence Police Department is pleased to be participating in the Street Smart campaign,” said Chief Anthony D. Buccelli, Jr. of the New Providence Police Department. “Officers will be concentrating their efforts on pedestrian safety at high risk crosswalks, and will be observing vehicles who fail to stop for pedestrians, distracted drivers as well as pedestrian violators. The goal is to educate the public, raise awareness and enforce pedestrian laws.”

Street Smart’s “check your vital signs” slogan emphasizes safe travel roles and responsibilities to both pedestrians and motorists alike. The vital signs are displayed on tip cards, posters, banners and street signs throughout the community and in local businesses during the campaign as a visual reminder for drivers and pedestrians.

TransOptions, a non-profit transportation organization, is leading the Street Smart effort in New Providence, after successfully completing similar campaigns across northwestern New Jersey.

“TransOptions will handle the education portion of the campaign, and pairing that outreach with surveys and observational analysis of pedestrian behavior in New Providence,” said Laura Cerutti, TransOptions’ Street Smart project manager. “New Providence has shown that they care about walking and driving safety. By partnering with a proactive community like New Providence, we can work together to accomplish the statewide goal of preventing crashes involving pedestrians and change the common risky behaviors we see on our roadways”

“We are very appreciative of the support provided by TransOptions in helping to educate our residents, visitors, motorists, and pedestrians regarding this very important safety issue,” said Mayor of New Providence, Al Morgan.

The New Providence Police Department secured funding for overtime enforcement through a Federal Highway Safety Grant awarded by the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (NJDHTS).

From 2014 to 2016, there were 13 pedestrian-related crashes in New Providence. Pedestrian safety is an ongoing challenge in New Jersey. In 2017, 187 pedestrians died as a result of pedestrian-vehicle crashes, according to the most recent data available from the New Jersey State Police. From 2013 through 2017, 828 pedestrians were killed on New Jersey’s roads and more than 17,000 were injured, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. That translates into one death every 2.4 days and 11 injuries daily. ¹ On an annual basis, nearly 5,000 pedestrians are injured and 150 killed in motor vehicle crashes statewide. New Jersey’s pedestrian fatality rate (30.2 percent in 2015) is double the national average (15 percent). ²

New Jersey ranked 17th in the nation in pedestrian fatalities in 2016, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The federal government has designated New Jersey a “focus” state – placing an extra emphasis on aiding the state in combating its higher-than-average pedestrian fatality rate and providing funding for this campaign.

For more information on Street Smart, visit TransOptions.org/street-smart, or call TransOptions at [\(973\) 267-7600](tel:973-267-7600). A non-profit organization, TransOptions is the transportation management association for northwest New Jersey that delivers programs to improve mobility, environment and overall quality of life of all residents and commuters.

Other Sources: <http://www.njsp.org/info/fatalacc/index.shtml>
<https://cait.rutgers.edu/>

¹ 2014 Plan4Safety, Rutgers Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation

² 2015 Traffic Safety Facts, NHTSA