



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **THE BANNERS WILL (NEWPORT) WAVE!**

June 25, 2015 (Newport, RI) – Banners will wave in Newport this summer – *Newport Waves* banners, that is. The Newport City Council last night approved the placement of 36 *Newport Waves* street banners over select city travel routes into and around Rhode Island’s City by the Sea.

*Newport Waves* is a new campaign to make the city's streets safer. The proposition is for all road users – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, skateboarders, and others - to acknowledge one another with a simple, intuitive, and friendly gesture. A “Newport Wave.”

Featuring a cast of characters known to many, the campaign is a who’s who of Newport notables walking, biking, and driving. Together, the favorite community police officer, the city’s surfing icon, the Boston Marathon bomb survivor, the state’s Senate President, and the rest of the cast, all elicit smiles, nods of approval, and a readiness to do the wave.

City Councilor Lynn Ceglie attended the community meetings that led to the production of the Newport Waves campaign. “Now I wave all the time,” she shared with her fellow councilors, “and I wait for a response. There’s no question I feel safer.”

“When I saw the video, I immediately showed it to my daughters,” Councilor Naomi Neville reported. “This campaign is amazing and I’m going to vote to support it.”

A positive and entertaining 90-second video is at the heart of the campaign. The video will play widely on web sites, on social media, and on screens citywide. The street banners will greet visitors and residents starting in early July. Posters, postcards, and table tents will begin appearing as businesses join the campaign.

“This is a community project. We all own it,” explained Bari Freeman, executive director of Bike Newport, the organization spearheading the campaign. “We’ll all use the resources we have to reach more and more people. We’ll create a culture shift for safety - with a wave, and a smile.”

Evan Smith, president of Discover Newport, the City's Tourism Board, told a recent crowd that safety is a key element in making a destination popular. "Waving is intuitive. It's positive and it's friendly. And if it can save someone from being hurt, this campaign is so worth it."

"It's all about teaching our kids how to be safe on our roads," shared Colleen Jermain, Superintendent of Schools.

"We're going to do everything we can to make our streets safer for everyone," announced Newport Police Sgt. Jonathan Cortes, another leader of the *Newport Waves* campaign partnership.

Among those community businesses already on board with *Newport Waves* are the Jane Pickens Movie Theater, which will show the video before movies throughout the summer; Newport's Hyatt Regency, which will play the video in all of its 258 guest rooms; and RIPTA, which will run the campaign in 70 busses.

"Safety on the roads is important for our guests and our employees and so we'll do all we can to help get this message out," said (Hyatt employee TBD).

"It's short and it's fun," summed up Jane Pickens owner, Kathy Staab.

There are many other early campaign partners, including the Newport Visitors Center, Newport County YMCA, and the Newport Daily News. Interested businesses and organizations should visit [www.newportwaves.org](http://www.newportwaves.org) for more information. "Raise your hand if you're in!" is the battle cry for Newport Waves.

The campaign was sparked by a federal grant "Safer Streets for All", managed in Rhode Island by RI-HEALTH. The video was produced *pro bono* by Worldways Social Media of Newport. The banners will be funded by a Senate Legislative Grant from Newport native and Senate President Teresa Paiva Weed. The "We Wave!" concept was created by Butler Brothers of Austin, TX. For more information and to see the campaign: visit [www.newportwaves.org](http://www.newportwaves.org).

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*Campaign video and images are available for download at <http://newportwaves.org>, click Share the Wave*