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NEW PLAYFUL PUBLIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN AIMS TO STOP DISTRACTED PEDESTRIANS IN DOWNTOWN

* Technology Plays an Interesting Role
* Grim Reaper Seen Drumming Up New Business Downtown

Downtown Pittsburgh, PA - Concerned about the safety of all Downtown users, the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership in collaboration with the Port Authority is working with the Allegheny County Health Department to launch a multi-faceted safety campaign called LOOK ALIVE. Designed to catch the attention of pedestrians and encourage less distracted behavior on our streets and sidewalks, LOOK ALIVE will combine traditional advertising methods along with unique interventions and modern technology to change the habits of distracted pedestrians.

"We all get distracted. Whether it's talking on your phone, responding to an email or text, or just carrying on a conversation with people you're with, we all need a reminder sometimes to pay attention to what we're doing and where we are," said Allegheny County Executive Fitzgerald. "Seeing the Grim Reaper on the street can absolutely be that reminder, but we also hope that this campaign that reminds us of skills we learned as a child - look left, look right - makes all of us more aware and our streets safer."

One of the most interesting and fun aspects of the campaign are interventions that will be on-going throughout the month of October. During this time improv actors dressed as the Grim Reaper will frequent sidewalks around particularly busy intersections and engage pedestrians in playful banter. Imagine having your head buried in your phone as you approach an intersection and the Grim Reaper good-humoredly asks, “Are you flirting with me??!”

Anyone having an encounter with our characters will be given a “Get out of Death Free” card encouraging the pedestrian to “Look Alive” and to visit the Look Alive website to become a safer, more engaged pedestrian. Today, the campaign released a teaser video of the Grim Reaper interactions. It is available to watch at: www.lookalivepgh.com.
"It's so important for people to pay closer attention to where they're walking and driving," said Port Authority CEO Ellen McLean. "We hope this campaign reaches people and gets them to think about their safety and the safety of those around them."

Throughout Downtown, transit shelter advertising will be replaced by a stark white panel displaying the message “We’re keeping this space blank. So you can keep your eyes on the road.” Coupled with sidewalk chalk stencils encouraging people to “Look Left, Look Right, Look Alive!” these messages will hopefully result in more aware pedestrians. Signage on the back of 50 Port Authority buses will encourage drivers to “Look Alive!” when behind the wheel, and bus riders will be greeted with on bus signage utilizing similar safety messages.

In addition to engaging people on the streets, geo-fencing perimeters will be established at heavily trafficked intersections that will use pop-up advertisements on cell phones that encourage users to “Look Alive.” “We have all been guilty of being a distracted driver or pedestrian, likely even today. We look forward to using the very technology that is distracting to promote our safety awareness efforts and encourage people to keep their attention where it is needed, in their surroundings” said Jeremy Waldrup, President and CEO of the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership.

In a recent study conducted by the PEW Research Center, more than half of all cell phone owners have reported being on the giving or receiving end of a distracted walking encounter. Additionally, injuries to pedestrians using their phones has increased by more than double since 2014. One only needs to spend a few moments observing a busy Downtown intersection to encounter pedestrians buried deep in their phones, oblivious to their surroundings. This creates a public safety issue for all users of Downtown, including pedestrians, public transit users, bikers and drivers. This campaign aims to decrease the potential for accidents and unsafe behavior of all Downtown users.
In addition to the Grim Reaper, additional creative interventions are planned for Downtown sidewalks in the coming weeks, along with more videos and information. To stay up-to-date with the campaign, please visit lookalivepgh.com regularly.

**About the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership**
Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is a dynamic, nonprofit organization comprised of business and community leaders, property owners, civic organizations, foundations and residents who provide energy, vision and advocacy for Downtown Pittsburgh. Working collaboratively with its partners, the PDP strives to create a positive Downtown experience for residents, workers and visitors alike. The PDP’s strategic initiatives include clean and safe services, transportation, and economic development and advocacy. For more information, visit www.DowntownPittsburgh.com, follow us on Twitter @downtownpitt and “like” us on Facebook.

**About Port Authority**
Port Authority provides bus, light rail and paratransit service to more than 200,000 riders daily throughout Allegheny County. Customer information is available online at PortAuthority.org or by calling 412-442-2000.