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Press Release

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The City of Modesto Activates New HAWK Beacon to Enhance Pedestrian Safety

Modesto, CA, April 16, 2025 – The City of Modesto has activated a new traffic beacon to make popular crossings safer for pedestrians and drivers alike. The High Intensity Activated Crosswalk, (HAWK) beacon has been installed on 16th and H Street and I Street near the Modesto Farmers Market location. The HAWK beacon helps pedestrians safely cross busy city streets.

The Federal Highway Administration data shows the HAWK system makes a major difference for pedestrian and driver safety. Studies show a nearly 70% reduction in pedestrian crashes and almost a 30% drop in all crashes. This system is the first of its kind in Modesto, and with its proximity to the Modesto Farmers Market, the HAWK beacon will add another layer of safety for pedestrians taking visiting the Famers Market.

How the HAWK beacon works:

For pedestrians, the system is the same as a traffic signal crosswalk, but drivers should pay extra attention to an indication pattern for the HAWK beacon and what each indication means.

The HAWK beacon is pedestrian activated. Pedestrians push the crosswalk button to activate the beacon which flashes yellow lights before turning red. A driver's perspective will be of the new three-indication configuration which will flash yellow to alert the driver of beacon activation, then will be solid yellow for drivers to slow down and prepare to stop. When the lights turn solid red, the driver stops, and the pedestrians can proceed to cross the road. When the beacon flashes red lights, drivers can proceed with caution if no *pedestrians* are in the roadway. If the HAWK beacon is not activated, the lights remain dark, and drivers may proceed.

“The city is creating safer streets for everyone,” said Mayor Sue Zwalen. “The Hawk beacon will be instrumental in reducing pedestrian incidents in our community.”

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