

FRESNO ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

TEMPORARY DEMONSTRATION POP-UP: TRAFFIC GARDEN

Event Summary



On Wednesday, September 14, the City of Fresno hosted a Pop-Up Traffic Garden as part of the City's Active Transportation Plan effort. The event took place at the Pinedale Community Center from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. The event welcomed dozens of children ranging from ages three to 13, along with few of their families, to experience this hands-on learning environment and practice safe biking and walking behaviors through play. The traffic garden offered children and families a fun, hands-on way to learn and practice safe biking and walking behaviors in a car-free, educational setting. The design created a miniature streetscape that simulated real-world roadway conditions and encouraged participants to explore how to move safely through their communities.

The temporary installation was constructed using tape to define lanes and roadway structures, chalk to create block patterns and pavement markings, and miniature traffic signs to replicate real-life street features. Together, these materials created an engaging and visually clear environment that effectively guided participants through the simulated streetscape.

The traffic garden included a two-way stop, a traffic signal-controlled intersection, a roundabout, and a mix of two-way and one-way streets. These elements gave children the chance to practice fundamental skills such as stopping at stop bars, yielding to pedestrians and traffic, and using crosswalks correctly. Project and City staff were stationed at intersections throughout the event to help guide participants, reinforce safe behaviors, and ensure that everyone could ride safely through the course. Most children quickly caught on and demonstrated how to follow the rules as both bicyclists and pedestrians, showing noticeable improvement in awareness and confidence. A few participants were more interested in riding freely through the course rather than following structured rules, which provided a valuable reminder of the importance of ongoing, play-based safety education.



To complement the activity, the event also featured two engagement boards; one for children and one for caregivers. The children's board introduced the meanings of various traffic signs and signals and encouraged safe behavior through visuals and simple explanations. The caregivers' board provided safety tips and ideas for modeling responsible behavior and fostering a culture of care on the road. While both boards offered helpful educational materials, they were used less frequently than anticipated, as most children were excited to begin riding through the traffic garden right away.



Overall, the pop-up event was a success, drawing strong participation and positive behavior from participants. The activity demonstrated how an interactive, hands-on environment can help children understand and practice road safety in a fun and memorable way.

The key highlights of the event included strong community engagement, enthusiastic participation from children, and effective staff involvement in reinforcing safe biking and walking behaviors. The design of the pop-up also showcased how creative, temporary installations can make traffic safety education accessible and engaging for families.

Lessons learned from the event emphasized the value of active learning; children responded best when safety concepts were integrated directly into the riding experience. Providing short, clear instructions before riding and offering on-course guidance from staff were particularly effective strategies. Additionally, future events could explore ways to better integrate educational materials into the activity itself to capture participants' attention and reinforce learning in real time.

