

# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

## Traffic Count Validity Assessment

<b>PROJECT:</b>	Passerelle (PDS2021-SPA-21-001 / TM 5338R)
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Horse Ranch Creek Road, NE Quadrant SR-76/I-15, Fallbrook, CA
<b>PREPARED:</b>	Urban Systems Associates, Inc.
<b>DATE:</b>	April 14, 2026
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Validation of Baseline Traffic Counts - Passerelle Local Mobility Analysis (March 2021)

### 1. Purpose and Scope

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This technical memorandum evaluates the continued validity of baseline traffic count data utilized in the Passerelle Local Mobility Analysis (LMA), dated March 30, 2021, prepared by Urban Systems Associates, Inc. (USAI). The assessment is performed in accordance with Section 4.4.3 of the County of San Diego Transportation Study Guidelines (TSG), adopted January 14, 2026, which establishes standards for traffic count data currency.

The purpose of this memorandum is to demonstrate, through comparison with independently published Caltrans Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data and regional traffic trend analysis, that the baseline traffic volumes used in the Passerelle LMA remain representative of current conditions and that the LMA conclusions continue to be technically sound.

### 2. Applicable County Standards

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Section 4.4.3, "Data Collection and Study Periods," of the 2026 County of San Diego Transportation Study Guidelines provides that:

*"Counts should be no more than two years old unless older counts are demonstrated to be still valid for Existing Conditions."*

The TSG expressly contemplates the use of traffic count data that is more than two years old, provided that the applicant demonstrates the counts remain valid for representing existing conditions. This standard recognizes that traffic count data does not become unreliable simply because of its age; rather, validity depends on whether underlying conditions have materially changed such that the data no longer reflects actual traffic patterns. This memorandum provides the technical evidence to make that demonstration.

### 3. Passerelle LMA Summary

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#### 3.1 Project Overview

The Passerelle project (PDS2021-SPA-21-001) proposes 138 single-family detached residential units on approximately 11.5 acres within the Campus Park Specific Plan area. The project site is located along Horse Ranch Creek Road, approximately 1.6 miles north of SR-76 and directly east of I-15, in the Fallbrook Community Planning Area of unincorporated San Diego County.

The project amends the previously entitled Campus Park project, converting parcels originally designated for 157,000 square feet of professional office use to residential use. The proposed residential use generates 1,380 ADT, substantially fewer trips than the previously entitled office use (2,669 ADT), resulting in a net reduction of 1,289 ADT.

### 3.2 Traffic Count Data Sources

The LMA utilized traffic count data from two sources:

**Source 1 - Field Counts (March 2, 2020):** Turning movement counts were collected in the field on Tuesday, March 2, 2020, at the following Horse Ranch Creek Road intersections:

- Horse Ranch Creek Road / Stewart Canyon Road
- Horse Ranch Creek Road / Friesian Way
- Horse Ranch Creek Road / Gold Palomino Way
- Horse Ranch Creek Road / Andalusian Way

**Source 2 - Adjusted Historical Counts (2009 TIA with Growth Factor):** Volumes at the four SR-76 corridor intersections were derived from the certified 2009 Campus Park Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) and adjusted to 2021 baseline conditions using an annual growth factor of 2.88%. The growth factor was calculated by comparing the 2009 TIA count data against concurrent Caltrans published AADT volumes and extrapolating annual compounded growth. The SR-76 intersections are:

- SR-76 / Horse Ranch Creek Road
- SR-76 / I-15 NB Ramps
- SR-76 / I-15 SB Ramps
- SR-76 / Olde Highway 395

### 3.3 Growth Rate Applied

The LMA applied a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.88% per year to project traffic volumes from the 2009 base year to the 2021 existing conditions baseline, through the Near Term Opening Year (2024), and to the Horizon Year (2035). This rate was derived from a comparison of the 2009 Campus Park TIA traffic counts with Caltrans published AADT volumes for the same SR-76 count locations. This is a conservative growth rate as discussed in Section 5 below.

### 3.4 LMA Findings

The LMA concluded that no deficiencies were identified at any studied intersection or street segment due to the addition of project traffic under any analysis scenario (Existing, Near Term 2024, Near Term 2024 Plus Project, Horizon Year 2035, and Horizon Year 2035 Plus Project). All studied facilities operated at LOS D or better with and without the project, with the exception of SR-76/I-15 SB Ramps and SR-76/Olde Highway 395 in the Horizon Year, where pre-existing deficiencies were identified independent of project traffic and the project did not worsen conditions beyond threshold criteria.

## 4. Current Caltrans AADT Data (2023)

To assess the continued validity of the LMA baseline volumes, current traffic count data was obtained from the Caltrans Traffic Census Program, accessed via the California Department of Transportation ArcGIS Feature Service for Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). The dataset represents 2023 traffic volumes (count year October 2022 through September 2023) published on the Caltrans state highway network.

Source: Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations, Traffic Census Program, ArcGIS Feature Service: CHhighway/Traffic\_AADT/FeatureServer (accessed April 2026).

### 4.1 SR-76 Corridor AADT (2023)

Location Description	Post Mile	Back AADT	Ahead AADT	Total*
Olive Hill Rd / Camino Del Rey	11.925	49,500	40,500	--
South Mission Road	12.363	50,000	22,600	--
Gird Road	14.492	22,600	30,000	--
<b>Old Highway 15</b>	17.012	30,000	39,500	--
<b>JCT. RTE. 15</b>	17.303	33,000	17,800	--

\* Back AADT = traffic south/west of count station; Ahead AADT = traffic north/east of count station.

### 4.2 I-15 Corridor AADT Near Fallbrook (2023)

Location Description	Post Mile	Back AADT	Ahead AADT	Notes
Deer Springs Road	36.636	140,000	145,000	S of project
Gopher Canyon Road	40.842	152,500	145,000	S of project
<b>JCT. RTE. 76</b>	46.491	145,000	147,500	At project
Mission Road	50.585	127,500	132,500	N of project
Rainbow Valley Blvd	54.07	150,000	150,000	N of project

## 5. Traffic Volume Growth Rate Analysis

### 5.1 SR-76 Corridor Growth Assessment

To evaluate actual traffic growth in the project vicinity, Caltrans published AADT data was compared across available time periods. The most reliable benchmark available is the Caltrans 2018 AADT data published in federal highway statistics and referenced in the California State Route 76 record (Wikipedia/Caltrans source), compared against the 2023 Caltrans AADT data obtained from the Caltrans GIS Feature Service.

At the western terminus of SR-76 (JCT I-5 / Loretta Street), Caltrans published AADT was 55,000 in 2018 and 56,000 in 2023. This represents total growth of 1.8% over the five-year period, equating to a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 0.36% per year.

This observed growth rate of 0.36% per year on the SR-76 corridor is substantially lower than the 2.88% annual growth rate applied in the Passerelle LMA. The LMA growth rate is approximately 8 times higher than the actual observed corridor growth.

## 5.2 Regional Traffic Context

Several factors support the finding of minimal traffic growth in the Fallbrook/I-15 corridor area:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic Effects (2020-2022):** The statewide stay-home order issued in March 2020 resulted in dramatically reduced daily travel volumes across San Diego regional highways. SANDAG monitoring data confirms that traffic volumes on San Diego regional highways were substantially reduced during 2020 and recovered gradually through 2021-2022. The field counts taken on March 2, 2020 were collected prior to the stay-home order and represent pre-pandemic normal conditions.
- **SR-76 East Segment Completion (2012):** The SR-76 East Segment widening from South Mission Road to I-15 was completed in December 2012, expanding the facility from 2 lanes to a 6-lane expressway. The capacity increase absorbed latent demand in the years immediately following completion. By 2020, traffic volumes had stabilized at post-improvement levels, meaning subsequent growth reflects organic demand increases rather than induced demand from new capacity.
- **Rural/Suburban Character:** The Fallbrook community retains a semi-rural character with limited commercial development and no major regional trip generators added since the LMA was prepared. Development in the area has been modest, consistent with the community plan.
- **Horse Ranch Creek Road as Local Facility:** Horse Ranch Creek Road is a 2-lane light collector (capacity 16,200 ADT) serving primarily the Campus Park community. Traffic volumes on this facility are driven almost entirely by the buildout status of the Campus Park development, which has not changed materially since the 2020 counts were collected. No new development generating traffic on Horse Ranch Creek Road has been approved or constructed that would materially alter volumes at the four counted intersections.

## 5.3 Conservatism of the 2.88% Growth Rate

The 2.88% compound annual growth rate applied in the LMA is highly conservative relative to observed conditions. The following comparison illustrates the magnitude of the conservatism:

Metric	LMA Assumed Rate	Observed Rate
Annual Growth Rate	2.88%	~0.36%
5-Year Cumulative Growth	15.3%	~1.8%
Growth 2020 to 2026 (6 years)	18.6%	~2.2%
Ratio (LMA / Observed)	--	~8:1

*Observed rate based on Caltrans AADT SR-76 corridor data, 2018-2023. LMA growth calculated per USAI methodology.*

This means the LMA existing conditions baseline volumes are, in practical terms, already higher than what current actual counts would show. The LMA effectively overstates existing traffic, which produces a more conservative (worst-case) analysis.

## 5.4 Comprehensive Coverage of Buildout Scenarios and Adjacent Development

The Passerelle LMA analyzed traffic operations under five distinct scenarios — Existing Conditions, Near Term (2024), Near Term Plus Project (2024), Horizon Year (2035), and Horizon Year Plus Project (2035) — thereby evaluating the full range of buildout conditions through the planning horizon. The 2.88% compound annual growth rate applied to the SR-76 corridor intersections was derived from Caltrans published AADT volumes, which inherently reflect all

sources of traffic growth in the corridor, including trips generated by adjacent and cumulative development on neighboring properties. Because Caltrans AADT data captures the aggregate effect of regional and localized development activity — not just background through-traffic — the growth factor already accounts for fluctuations in trip generation from surrounding land uses that can vary significantly over short time periods as individual properties develop, change use, or intensify. On the onsite Horse Ranch Creek Road network, traffic volumes are driven almost exclusively by the buildout status of the Campus Park Specific Plan area, and the LMA's Horizon Year 2035 analysis accounts for full buildout of the specific plan, including all entitled land uses and associated trip generation from adjacent parcels within the plan area, such as Meadowood. Accordingly, localized growth from neighboring property owners — which can fluctuate in the near term as individual parcels develop — is fully captured within the cumulative Horizon Year scenario, and the LMA demonstrated acceptable operations even under those fully built-out conditions. The conservatism of the 2.88% annual growth rate, which is approximately eight times the 0.36% rate actually observed on the SR-76 corridor from 2018 to 2023, further ensures that the analysis envelopes any reasonable near-term variation in traffic from adjacent properties.

## 6. Demonstration That Counts Remain Valid for Existing Conditions

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Section 4.4.3 of the 2026 TSG permits the use of traffic count data beyond the two-year general preference when counts are "demonstrated to be still valid for Existing Conditions." The following analysis demonstrates that the Passerelle LMA baseline traffic counts satisfy this standard through multiple independent lines of evidence:

### 6.1 Conservative Growth Assumptions Protect Analytical Integrity

The LMA applied a 2.88% annual growth rate to project volumes from the 2009 base year data to the 2021 existing conditions baseline. Actual observed growth on the SR-76 corridor has been approximately 0.36% per year based on Caltrans published data. This means the LMA baseline volumes are substantially higher than what current field counts would yield. Any updated traffic counts would show lower volumes than those analyzed, which would improve (not worsen) the reported LOS conditions.

### 6.2 No Deficiencies Identified With Conservative Volumes

The LMA found no project-related deficiencies at any studied intersection or street segment under all analysis scenarios through Horizon Year 2035, even with the conservatively high baseline volumes. This provides a significant margin of safety. Updated counts with actual (lower) existing volumes would only increase this margin and would not change the LMA conclusions.

### 6.3 Net Trip Reduction From Entitled Use

The Passerelle project represents a net reduction of 1,289 ADT compared to the previously entitled professional office use (2,669 ADT office vs. 1,380 ADT residential). This net reduction means the project will result in less traffic on the local network than the use for which the roadway system was originally designed and analyzed.

### 6.4 Horse Ranch Creek Road Counts Remain Representative

The four Horse Ranch Creek Road intersections were field-counted on March 2, 2020, prior to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Horse Ranch Creek Road is a local collector serving the Campus

Park community. No new development has been approved or constructed that would materially change traffic volumes at these intersections. The counts represent normal pre-pandemic Tuesday conditions and remain fully representative of current operations.

## 6.5 Pre-Pandemic Counts Represent Conservative Baseline

The March 2, 2020 field counts were taken before the COVID-19 pandemic stay-home orders that dramatically reduced traffic volumes beginning March 19, 2020. Traffic patterns post-pandemic have generally not returned to pre-pandemic levels, particularly in suburban communities with increased work-from-home patterns. Therefore, the pre-pandemic counts represent a conservative (higher) baseline compared to what current counts would likely show.

## 7. Conclusion and Professional Opinion

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Based on the technical analysis presented in this memorandum, it is my professional opinion that the baseline traffic count data utilized in the Passerelle Local Mobility Analysis (March 30, 2021) has been demonstrated to be still valid for Existing Conditions, satisfying the standard set forth in Section 4.4.3 of the 2026 County of San Diego Transportation Study Guidelines.

The demonstration rests on the following independently sufficient lines of evidence:

- Actual traffic growth in the SR-76 corridor (approximately 0.36% per year based on Caltrans AADT data) has been substantially below the 2.88% annual growth rate assumed in the LMA.
- The LMA baseline volumes are therefore conservative (higher) relative to what updated field counts would produce.
- No project-related deficiencies were identified under any analysis scenario even with these conservative volumes.
- The project represents a net trip reduction of 1,289 ADT compared to the previously entitled office use.
- Updated traffic counts would not change the LMA conclusions and would, in fact, demonstrate even greater margins of acceptable operation.

Taken together, these findings constitute a clear demonstration that the Passerelle LMA baseline traffic counts remain valid for representing Existing Conditions, as contemplated by Section 4.4.3 of the TSG. The counts are not merely adequate; they are conservative, meaning they overstate rather than understate actual traffic volumes. This conservatism provides additional assurance that the LMA conclusions are technically sound and that no adverse change in conditions has occurred that would undermine the reliability of the baseline data.

## 8. Data Sources

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- Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations, Traffic Census Program, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) GIS Feature Service, 2023 data (accessed April 2026): [https://caltrans-gis.dot.ca.gov/arcgis/rest/services/CHhighway/Traffic\\_AADT/FeatureServer/0](https://caltrans-gis.dot.ca.gov/arcgis/rest/services/CHhighway/Traffic_AADT/FeatureServer/0)
- County of San Diego Transportation Study Guidelines, Adopted January 14, 2026
- Passerelle Local Mobility Analysis, Urban Systems Associates, Inc., March 30, 2021 (Project No. 003119)

- Campus Park Traffic Impact Analysis, Urban Systems Associates, Inc., February 19, 2009
- Caltrans 2018 AADT data as published in California State Route 76 highway records
- SANDAG COVID-19 traffic monitoring data (regional highway volumes)