

3.19 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

Construction of SR 167 between SR 161 and SR 509 involves commitment of a range of natural, human, and fiscal resources. Land required for highway ROW will be irreversibly committed during the functional life of the highway. All of the lands to be acquired are designated for commercial, residential, or industrial uses, but some are currently in agricultural production. The conversion of these agricultural lands will be irreversible after the project is constructed. While it is possible for land to revert to non-highway uses (right-of-way vacation), the likelihood of such an occurrence for a freeway facility is very small. It is more likely that in the long term, the land would continue as a transportation right-of-way, but incorporate other or additional travel modes such as high speed public transit.

Natural materials used in highway construction include fossil fuels (diesel and gasoline), lubricants, cement, aggregate, soils, and bituminous pavement. Steel and aluminum are also used in large quantities. There is a large amount of labor and energy used in the fabrication and preparation of construction materials. These materials are not generally retrievable, although there is a growing market for recyclable metals, and recycled pavement has been successfully used in some localities. These construction materials are not in short supply and their use in this project would not have a major effect on their continued availability.

Project construction would require a substantial expenditure of state and possibly federal funds that are not retrievable and would then not be available for other uses.

The commitment of resources to this project is based on the concept that residents in the immediate area, region, and state will derive long-term benefits from improved transportation services. These benefits consist of improved accessibility and mobility, travel time and fuel savings, and greater safety, and are anticipated to outweigh the commitment of resources to construct and operate the project.

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