

### 3.24 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Implementing any of the alternatives would require a commitment of natural, human, and fiscal resources. In all of these categories, irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources would occur. Commitments would increase considerably from the No Action Alternative to the action alternatives, with Alternative 4 requiring the greatest commitment of resources overall. The Preferred Alternative would require a lower level of commitments than Alternative 4, but a greater level than the No Action Alternative and Alternatives 1, 2, and 3.

The proposed transportation facilities would involve a long-term conversion of land resources, potentially including residential, commercial, and farm lands, to provide right-of-way to accommodate new freeway improvements, transit facilities, arterial widening, and stormwater treatment and detention facilities. Although these facilities conceivably could be converted to other land uses at some time in the future, there is no reason to expect that such a conversion would be necessary or desirable. Thus, such land conversion is considered to be an irreversible and irretrievable commitment.

Fossil fuels (diesel and gasoline), electricity (and the resources used to generate it), lubricants, and construction materials, such as steel, aluminum, cement, aggregate, and bituminous material, would be used in varying amounts for construction and operation of all alternatives. These materials are generally in sufficient supply, and their commitment to the I-405 Corridor Program improvements would not have an adverse effect on their continued availability. Although construction materials are not generally retrievable, there is a market for recyclable metals and use of recycled concrete is growing. Requirements for aggregate and fill material would use resources located at existing and potentially new sites in the region. Available resources at some of these sites could be expended; however, specific locations and quantities have not been identified at this stage in the planning process. Subsequent environmental analysis, documentation, and review for these sites will be conducted as needed.

Some biological resources would be irreversibly and irretrievably converted to transportation use with construction of the proposed facilities. Wetlands would be filled, aquifer recharge areas would be reduced, and areas of wildlife habitat would be lost. However, wetland losses that cannot be avoided or further minimized could be offset by compensatory mitigation at other locations within the corridor.

In terms of human resources, large amounts of labor would be used in preparation, fabrication, and construction of the I-405 corridor improvements. Labor is generally not considered to be a resource in short supply, and commitment to the project would not have an adverse effect on continued availability. Facility construction would require a substantial expenditure of public funds. Funds devoted to the I-405 corridor improvements would not be available to other competing public or private uses.

The proposed commitment of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources is based on the purpose and need for the I-405 Corridor Program, which recognizes that businesses, employees, and residents in the I-405 corridor and region would benefit substantially from additional transportation choices and improved mobility in the I-405 corridor. These benefits would include greater accessibility, improved reliability and safety of the transportation system, and travel time and fuel savings, as well as provisions for improvement of air quality and protection or enhancement of water quality and fish-bearing streams. These benefits are anticipated to outweigh the commitment of resources to construct and operate the transportation improvements.

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