

3.17 The Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of the Human Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

Implementation of any of the build alternatives would result in attainment of short-term and long-term transportation and economic objectives (gains) at the expense of some long-term social, biological, farmland, and parkland impacts (losses), depending on the alternative selected.

3.17.1 Alternative A

The no build alternative would not provide any of the gains or result in the losses listed above. It would, however, not resolve worsening congestion in the project vicinity and region.

3.17.2 Alternatives B, C, D, and E

The four build alternatives would generally have similar benefits and losses. Short-term economic losses would result primarily from economic losses experienced by businesses affected by relocation. These businesses may experience temporary closures while they relocate to new facilities. Additional short-term construction impacts would result, such as noise, air quality, and traffic delays or detours. The build alternatives would result in short-term benefits associated with increased jobs and revenue generated during construction of the project.

Each of the build alternatives would result in long-term losses associated with the permanent loss of plant and wildlife resources, farmlands, residential units and commercial/industrial structures, and construction materials and energy. In addition, Alternative E would result in the long-term loss of local parkland.

Long-term gains resulting from the build alternatives would include the improvement of the transportation network of the region and the project vicinity; reduction of congestion on local streets and highways; and enhanced multimodal transportation options. The project would provide an integrated and continuous route for local north-south trips between Vacaville, Fairfield, Suisun City, and unincorporated areas of central Solano County as an alternative to using I-80. In addition, the project would provide local traffic a safe, convenient route between Vacaville, Fairfield, Suisun City, and unincorporated areas of central Solano County. Multimodal transportation options would increase, including the provision of a safe, convenient bicycle and pedestrian path and options for transit use in the area.

The project is based on local and regional comprehensive planning that considers the need for present and future traffic requirements within the context of present and future land use development. The project is proposed at this time because of the extensive social costs attributable to existing and expected future congestion. Thus, the short-term and long-term losses of the build alternatives are consistent with the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity for the region.

3.18 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Implementation of any of the four build alternatives would involve the commitment of a range of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources. Land used in the construction of the proposed roadway widenings and extension is considered an irreversible commitment during the time period that the land is used for a roadway facility. However, if a greater need arises for use of the land or if the roadway facility is no longer needed, the land can be converted to another use. At present, there is no reason to believe such a conversion would ever be necessary or desirable. Impacts to habitat and farmlands would also be irreversible and irretrievable. Replacement of these resources is provided as mitigation.

Considerable amounts of fossil fuels, labor, and roadway construction materials such as cement, aggregate, and bituminous material would be expended to construct the roadway improvements. Additionally, large amounts of labor and natural resources are used in the making of construction materials. These materials are generally not retrievable. However, they are not in short supply and their use would not have an adverse effect upon continued availability of these resources.

Any construction of roadway improvements would also require a substantial one-time expenditure of both State and federal funds, which are not retrievable. However, savings in energy and time associated with reduced congestion and a reduction in accidents would offset this expenditure. In addition to construction and right-of-way costs, the widened roadway would increase costs for roadway maintenance, including pavement, roadside, litter/sweeping, signs and markers, electrical, and storm maintenance.

The commitment of these resources is based on the concept that residents in the immediate area, region, and State would benefit from the improved quality of the transportation system. These benefits would consist of improved accessibility and safety, which are expected to outweigh the commitment of these resources.