

### **3.5 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources that would be Involved in the Proposed Project**

Implementation of the project involves the commitment of a range of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources. The commitment of these irretrievable resources for the build alternatives would vary in degree and amount, but are generally similar. Land used in construction of the proposed facility is considered an irreversible commitment during the time period that the land is used for a highway facility; however, if a greater need arises for use of the land or if the highway facility is no longer needed, the land could be converted to another use. At present, there is no reason to believe such a conversion would ever be necessary or desirable.

Considerable amounts of fossil fuels, labor, and highway construction materials, such as cement, aggregate, and bituminous material, are expended for construction of a highway facility. 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 for the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on continued availability of these resources. Any construction would also require a substantial onetime expenditure of state and federal funds, which are not retrievable; however, savings in energy and time, and a reduction in accidents, would offset this commitment of fiscal resources. In addition to the initial costs of construction and ROW, there would be ongoing costs for roadway maintenance, including pavement, roadside litter/sweeping, signs and markers, and electrical and storm maintenance.

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

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