

CH. 8 OTHER IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS



Chapter 8 discusses the irretrievable and irreversible commitment of resources should the project be constructed, and the relationship between short-term impacts and long-term benefits that would be realized with the project.

8.1 IRRETRIEVABLE AND IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Implementation of any of the Detailed Study Alternatives (DSA) would involve a commitment of a range of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources. Land used for the 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 can be converted to another use. At present, there is no reason to believe such a conversion will be necessary or desirable.

Considerable amounts of fossil fuels, labor, and highway construction materials such as cement, aggregate, and bituminous material would be expended. Additionally, large amounts of labor and natural resources would be used in the fabrication and preparation of construction materials. These materials are generally not retrievable. However, they are not in short supply and their use will not have an adverse effect upon continued availability of these resources. Any construction also would require a substantial one-time expenditure of both state and federal funds, which are not retrievable.

The commitment of these resources is based on the concept that residents in the immediate area, region, and state will benefit by the improved quality of the transportation system. These benefits will consist of improved accessibility and connectivity, savings in time, and greater availability of quality services which are anticipated to outweigh the commitment of these resources.

8.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM IMPACTS AND LONG-TERM BENEFITS

The most disruptive local short-term impacts associated with the proposed project would occur during land acquisition and project construction. However, these short-term uses of human, physical, socioeconomic, cultural, and natural resources would contribute to the long-term productivity of the Project Study Area.

The local, short-term impacts and use of resources by implementation of any of the DSAs would be consistent with the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity. Construction of the proposed Gaston East-West Connector would add a vital link to the long range transportation system for the region. It is anticipated that the proposed project would enhance long-term access and connectivity opportunities in Gaston County and Mecklenburg County, and would support local and regional commitments to transportation improvement and economic viability.

The project is consistent with the long range transportation goals and objectives of the NCDOT *2009-2015 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*, the Gaston Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GUAMPO) *2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*, and the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) *2030 LRTP*. It should be noted that the DSAs are generally consistent with the project description (freeway) and project length included in both LRTPs, but are not consistent with the assumption that the project is a non-toll facility. However, in September 2000, the GUAMPO passed a resolution stating it supports the use of alternative funding methods for the project, including methods that would require the payment of a toll.