

Section 4.19

Commitment of Resources

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BRT.....	Bus Rapid Transit
EIS.....	Environmental Impact Statement
LRT.....	Light Rail Transit

4.19 COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

This section discusses natural and human-made resources that would be irretrievably committed during construction or operation of the Project, becoming unavailable for future use. An irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources results in the permanent loss of a resource for future uses (or alternative purposes) as the resources cannot be replaced or recovered.

Typically, for a major development project such as the Project, irreversibly and irretrievably committed resources include land, energy, construction materials, and human effort (*i.e.*, time and labor). Some of these resources generally are irreversible and irretrievable for the life of the Project, such as land and building materials (even if they may eventually become available again). Other resources are irretrievable beyond the Project's lifespan, such as energy and human effort. This section also compares the short-term uses of the environment (that is, effects during construction) with long-term benefits over the operational lifetime of the Project.

4.19.1 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

Natural and human-made resources would be expended in the construction and operation of the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative. These natural resources include the use of land, mature trees, and energy. Human-made resources include the effort required to develop, construct, and operate the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative; building materials; financial funding; and motor vehicle use. These resources are considered irretrievably committed for the life of the Project or beyond.

The use of land is the most basic of irretrievably committed resources, as the development of both the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative requires the commitment of land for new physical elements related to the Project. However, the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative would use land already used for urban development and transportation right-of-way and thus would not be further committing land resources to these uses.

The LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative would result in irreversible clearing and grading of vegetation within the Project alignment and other directly affected areas as well as modification to topography. The loss of vegetation is considered an irreversible commitment of resources, though replacement vegetation would be included in the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative. Soil or rock removed during tunneling or used to modify the grade of the Project alignment or other directly affected areas would be irretrievably committed for the lifetime of the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative.

Building materials used in the construction of the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative (steel, concrete, glass, etc.), and energy in the form of gas and electricity consumed during their construction and operation, would also be irretrievably committed for the life of the Project or beyond.

None of these irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources are considered significant.

4.19.2 Short-Term Effects/Long-Term Benefits

In some locations within the Project study area, short-term construction-related effects of the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative, as discussed in Section 4.17, “Construction Effects,” would include temporary parking loss, easements for staging areas and construction access, temporary lane or road closures, and temporary property access restrictions, including disruption to existing businesses and residents. Metro would provide local business owners with notification of traffic and parking interruptions and descriptions of alternative routes. Furthermore, attempts would be made to minimize the duration of disruptions.

A community education and outreach plan will be developed for the Project to help reduce construction impacts. As part of this plan, Metro will work with local businesses to develop a communications strategy to alert the public to the availability of these local businesses during periods of construction. A summary of anticipated temporary economic construction impacts and associated mitigation measures are provided in Section 4.17, “Construction Effects”.

In addition, short-term visual effects, localized airborne dust and emissions, elevated noise and vibration levels, utility interruptions, and temporary disturbances to habitat, wetlands, and soils also are anticipated in some locations during the construction of the LRT Build Alternative and the BRT Build Alternative. However, the short-term use of human, socioeconomic, cultural, and natural resources would contribute to the long-term benefits that the Project is intended to provide, as described in this Draft EIS.