

3.24 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Implementation of either of the build packages would involve short-term uses of the environment as a means to achieve long-term productivity gains and benefits for the regional study area. The uses of the environment and the specific long-term benefits vary between the No-Action Alternative and Packages A and B.

What's in Section 3.24?

3.24 Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of the Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

- 3.24.1 No-Action Alternative
- 3.24.2 Packages A and B

3.24.1 No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would result in minimal anticipated short-term use of the environment because no major transportation improvements associated with this project would be made to the regional study area. The No-Action Alternative would provide no long-term productivity improvements because current deficiencies, as described in **Chapter 1 Purpose and Need**, would continue. In fact, long-term productivity would be expected to decrease because increased traffic would place greater demand and stress on unimproved roads. While the No-Action Alternative would provide the least amount of short-term uses of the environment, it also would impact long-term productivity the most.

3.24.2 Packages A and B

Because the components proposed under Packages A and B would result in similar short-term uses and long-term benefits, they are discussed together in this section. Short-term uses of the environment under Packages A or B would include:

- ▶ Loss of soil through erosion and fugitive dust
- ▶ Temporary disruption of traffic and businesses in the proposed construction areas
- ▶ Temporary visual impacts during construction
- ▶ Temporary noise and vibration impacts
- ▶ Temporary use of land for construction staging and storage of materials

- 1 Either build package would provide similar long-term transportation benefits. Long-term
2 benefits under Packages A or B would include:
- 3 ▶ Improving travel safety within the regional study area
 - 4 ▶ Increasing the efficiency of movement within large and critical transportation corridors
 - 5 ▶ Decreasing the overall travel times throughout the corridor
 - 6 ▶ Improving product and material distribution
 - 7 ▶ Improving access to businesses within the travel corridor
 - 8 ▶ Improving emergency vehicle access
 - 9 ▶ Modernizing existing transportation infrastructure to accommodate future demands
 - 10 ▶ Creating more environmentally sound and aesthetically pleasing transportation corridors
 - 11 ▶ Improving air quality within the corridors by reducing traffic congestion
- 12 The two build packages have some key differences that could alter the way they use
13 resources in the short term and enhance productivity in the long term. Package A would
14 tend to reinforce development and add density in the core cities along the corridor which
15 could help to alleviate development pressure along I-25 and therefore result in less impact
16 to wildlife habitat and farmlands along I-25. This likely pattern of development with Package
17 A would also enhance commercial productivity in the cities which is where it is more likely to
18 be sustainable over the long term.