



Attachment A: Comments Received and Responses on the Supplemental Final EIS

This document is a companion document to the Amended Record of Decision. Metropolitan Council and the United States Department of Transportation - Federal Transit Administration are committed to ensuring that information is available in appropriate alternative formats to meet the requirements of persons who have a disability. If you require an alternative version of this file, please contact FTAWebAccessibility@dot.gov.

To request special accommodations, contact Kaja Vang, Community Outreach Coordinator, by phone at 612-373-3918 or by email at Kaja.Vang@metrotransit.org.



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Appendix A: Original Format Correspondence



James Brown, Resident

Comment

Cancel the whole thing north memorial hospital is in money problem and target in bp is not going to be around long waste of money and not needed like south west line

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (Supplemental Final EIS) for the Metro Blue Line Extension Project (Project). FTA and the Council acknowledge your opposition to the Project. While we understand concerns regarding the future of certain businesses and institutions, the Project is designed to serve a wide range of current and future land use along the Project corridor.

The Preferred Alternative meets the intended purpose of the Project, which is to provide transit service which will satisfy the long-term regional mobility and accessibility needs for businesses and the traveling public. Chapter 1 of the Supplemental Final EIS describes the purpose and need for the Project and its benefits. Meeting federal cost-effectiveness criteria is an essential part of advancing the Project's design and construction. The federal funding process is a multi-year, multi-step process that proposed new or expanded fixed guideway transit must go through to be eligible for and receive discretionary funding from FTA. FTA rates projects from around the country based on a project's cost-effectiveness, mobility improvements, congestion relief, environmental benefits, and economic development effects, and requires an acceptable degree of local financial commitment, including evidence of stable and dependable financing to construct, operate, and maintain the new system. The Project closely aligns with the federal priorities and goals of the competitive grant process.



Mike Brady, Resident

Comment

Please log our disagreement with Blue Line for many reasons

- \$\$\$\$\$\$
 - Cost to construct as proven elsewhere
 - Cost to maintain as proven elsewhere
- Broadway business destruction
- Inability to control Crime as proven elsewhere
- Inability to control drug sales as proven elsewhere
- inability to control illegal drug use as proven elsewhere
- Lack of citizen support. For every 1 support yard sign there are 20+ Stop Light rail signs
- Express buses makes so much more sense for all of the above reasons and more

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your opposition to the Project.

Capital and O&M Costs

Meeting federal cost-effectiveness criteria is an essential part of advancing the Project's design and construction. The federal funding process is a multi-year, multi-step process that proposed new or expanded fixed guideway transit must go through to be eligible for and receive discretionary funding from FTA. FTA rates projects from around the country based on a project's cost-effectiveness, mobility improvements, congestion relief, environmental benefits, and economic development effects, and requires an acceptable degree of local financial commitment, including evidence of stable and dependable financing to construct, operate, and maintain the new system. The Project closely aligns with the federal priorities and goals of the competitive grant process. Chapter 10 in the Supplemental Final EIS provides information on financing the construction and operation of the Project.

Business Loss

The Council is minimizing direct displacement of businesses through design refinements wherever possible, and where avoidance is not possible, will meet the requirements of the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (as amended). The Uniform Act ensures that displaced individuals and businesses are treated fairly and consistently, and that relocation assistance is offered to displaced persons or businesses due to an acquisition needed for the Project. Eligible businesses will be offered relocation assistance that includes expenses related to moving personal property, expenses related to finding a replacement property, and eligible expenses to re-establish the business at a new location.

Crime and Drug Use

The Council is addressing safety and security by designing safe station areas, investing in the community and culture, and the steps that Metro Transit is taking to make travel on the light rail system safer and more welcoming, as described in the [Metro Transit Safety & Security Action Plan \(SSAP\)](#). Chapter 4, Section 4.7 in the Supplemental Final EIS summarizes the actions that have been and will be accomplished, which include increasing the police force and TRIP agents, expanding community partnerships as part of the Transit Rider Intervention Project, and expanding employee training on mental health, de-escalation, and personal safety, among others.



Community Support

The Council received broad support for the Project during the public comment period for the Supplemental Draft EIS. Commenters noted that the Project would be good for mobility, connectivity, and the environment. Commenters also noted their belief that light rail would reduce traffic congestion, provide accessible transportation for individuals with disabilities, support households who cannot afford a car, and benefit working class people in their communities. The Project has advanced under the guidance of advisory committees comprised of citizens and businesses and a robust community engagement program. The Project was also approved through the formal Municipal Consent process in the fall of 2024. Of the 38 elected officials from Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park, and Hennepin County, 33 approved the Project's preliminary design plans.

Other Modes

Hennepin County and the Council undertook an extensive Alternatives Analysis process that considered multiple modes and corridor options and culminated in the selection of LRT and a locally preferred alternative in 2016. The Alternatives Analysis process is summarized in Chapter 2 of the 2016 Final EIS. BRT was eliminated from further consideration because the forecasted total ridership was estimated to be approximately 25 percent lower than LRT, connections from BRT to other transit modes/facilities would be less convenient than LRT, and BRT would not have the capacity to handle event crowds as well as LRT.



Nathan Bakken, Resident

Comment

Was excited to hear that the FTA has formally accepted and published the Supplemental Final EIS. Looking forward to the day that shovels are in the ground and the project is being built. Keep up the great work to better connect our region!

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your support for the Project.



Scott Wilmore, Resident

Comment

When you going to put in a Subway system?

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. A subway system was considered in the Alternatives Analysis process undertaken by Hennepin County and the Council, which culminated in the selection of LRT and a locally preferred alternative in 2016 (https://metro council.org/Transportation/Projects/Light-Rail-Projects/METRO-Blue-Line-Extension/Publications-And-Resources/Environmental/DEIS/Chapters/BLLRT_DEIS_Ch02_Alternatives.aspx). A subway would not be cost effective, due to the high cost of subway construction in relation to the expected transit ridership.



C Fleming, Resident

Comment

Met Council/Hennepin County

- move forward immediately with property acquisitions where residents are ready to relocate now
- work with real estate professionals to identify sites to house dislocated residents who want to return to Minneapolis when construction is complete and new housing is available.
- allow development at 2034 W. Broadway (RFP) for cultural corridor

City of Minneapolis

- Rezone 2114 23rd Ave to accommodate new development with mandatory parking that will highlight the most iconic and cultural area of north Minneapolis and West Broadway and that is "5-Points" RFP and notification to local BIPOC developers
- Planned and inclusive development of City-owned Penn Ave vacant lots (2323 Penn, 2319, 2311 and 2301 Penn Ave N) (2218 Penn Ave N, 2214 Penn, 2106 and 2100 Penn Ave N) lots to be developed as a single project in order to facilitate noticable and relevant transformation

Mandate the use of environmentally --friendly construction products and materials.

I'm excited about the potential, the opportunities and the foundation for building generational wealth in the north Minneapolis BIPOC community.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your support for the Project. Prior to initiating property acquisition, the Project's environmental review must be complete. The process of acquiring property includes multiple steps that will be completed prior to construction. The Council will seek to accommodate all relocations through compliance with the Uniform Act and the resources the Council has committed to providing to facilitate relocations (see Mitigation Table). The Council has committed to ongoing outreach during the Project's final design to reflect cultural placekeeping and public realm improvements in the station area designs. Your recommendations for a cultural corridor are under consideration and your suggestions for development and changes to the zoning code have been shared with the City of Minneapolis. The Council has also committed to incorporating environmentally responsible construction practices and materials where feasible.



Joe Wiatros, Resident

Comment

Please with keep this as a bus corridor! Why?

- 1) Versatility. You can change routes and equipment as the demand needs it.
- 2) Cost. With all the budget shortfalls we as taxpayers cannot maintain a lite rail.
- 3) as a bus user. I am not going to walk 5 blocks just to use the rail system for work or to get someplace.
- 4) Diversity. There is none with rail. Routes can be covered by microbus's for a fraction of the cost.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. BRT was considered in the Alternatives Analysis undertaken by Hennepin County and the Council, which culminated in the selection of LRT and a locally preferred alternative in 2016 (https://metro council.org/Transportation/Projects/Light-Rail-Projects/METRO-Blue-Line-Extension/Publications-And-Resources/Environmental/FEIS/Main/BLRT_FEIS_Chapter_02_Alternatives.aspx). BRT was eliminated from further consideration because the forecast total ridership was estimated to be approximately 25 percent lower than LRT, connections from BRT to other transit connections from BRT to other transit modes/facilities would be less convenient than LRT, and BRT would not have the capacity to handle event crowds as well as LRT. Similarly, microbuses would not provide the capacity needed to support the volume of travelers on the capacity constrained roadways.



C Fleming, Resident

Comment

Blue Line Business Corridor proposal suggestion; attached a copy of a PowerPoint titled "Calvary_Group_Blue_Line_Business_Corridor_Presentation"

Response

Thank you for submitting the Calvary Group Blue Line Business Corridor Presentation. We have shared your presentation with our Hennepin County partners and will be reviewing your recommendations as station area plans are developed during final design. We look forward to your continued participation in upcoming outreach events.



R Swanson, Resident

Comment

From what i have seen in social media, almost no one wants this project.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your opposition to the Project. The Council received broad support for the Project during the public comment period for the Supplemental Draft EIS. Commenters noted that the Project would be good for mobility, connectivity, and the environment. Commenters also noted their belief that light rail would reduce traffic congestion, provide accessible transportation for individuals with disabilities, support households who cannot afford a car, and benefit working class people in their communities. The Project has advanced under the guidance of advisory committees comprised of citizens and businesses and a robust community engagement program. The Project was also approved through the formal Municipal Consent process in the fall of 2024. Of the 38 elected officials from Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park, and Hennepin County, 33 approved the Project's preliminary design plans.



Christopher Perner, Resident

Comment

Take a look at the SW line and look how that turned out? Oh wait, that is still not finished and way OVER budget. Kill this bluelineExt.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your opposition to the Project and the challenges associated with the Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension), including construction delays and budget increases. These lessons have informed the planning and implementation approach for the Blue Line Extension.



Damian Palacios, Resident

Comment

I live in N Minneapolis on Queen Ave N. I want to take a moment to express my full support for the METRO Blue Line Extension and commend the dedicated efforts behind this transformative initiative. Expanding transit access to North Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park is a crucial step in fostering greater mobility, economic opportunity, and equitable transportation for all. This Project will not only improve accessibility and reduce travel times, but also enhance safety, promote sustainable development, and strengthen local communities. Reliable public transit is a foundation for thriving neighborhoods, and the Blue Line Extension represents an investment in a future where more residents can easily connect to jobs, education, and essential services. I appreciate the thoughtful planning and engagement that have gone into this Project, and I look forward to seeing its benefits unfold across the region. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to creating a more connected and accessible transit system. After reviewing the Supplemental Draft EIS, I continue to be fully supportive of the MET Council's efforts to expand the Blue Line. N Minneapolis as a whole needs a Project like this to bring rejuvenation and growth to a historically underserved and underutilized area of the city.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your support for the Project.



Taylorgrace Juhs, Resident

Comment

I am a resident of Robbinsdale and I strongly oppose the proposed metro transit expansion through our area.

Many in our community are concerned about the negative impacts this Project would bring, including increased noise, disruption during construction, potential declines in property value, and changes to the character of our neighborhood.

We support smart transit solutions, but this proposal does not reflect the needs or desires of our residents. Robbinsdale is not a tourist destination - we do not need a line for people to visit "West Broadway Avenue [which] offers a small-town feel with shopping districts, local restaurants, parks, and trails." We are already so close to Minneapolis and want to maintain our small town feel, not expand into the city.

Attached is a screenshot of fellow residents' comments on the matter via the City of Robbinsdale Facebook page.

Response

Thank you for your comment on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your opposition to the Project and the concerns expressed by community members related to construction disruption, neighborhood character, and property values. The effects of the Project have been fully evaluated in Chapter 3, 4, and 5 of the Supplemental Final EIS and FTA has considered all comments received on the Supplemental Draft EIS and Supplemental Final EIS. FTA has determined that the Preferred Alternative together with the measures to mitigate adverse effects listed in the Amended Record of Decision meets the purpose and need for the Project (see Chapter 1).



C Fleming, Resident

Comment

Please include in the Final Report.

3 Additional things Minneapolis doesn't have when it comes to Housing and Development.

1. There is no Anti-Displacement Assessment Tool
2. There is no Minneapolis city ordinance against displacement
3. There's no policy against funding projects that promote displacement

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. The City of Minneapolis sets its own housing and development policies, including whether to adopt formal anti-displacement tools or ordinances; land use regulations fall outside of the Council's authority and that of Hennepin County. However, coordination with the City is an important part of Project implementation, particularly in supporting residents and businesses who may be displaced. As outlined in Chapter 4 of the Supplemental Final EIS, the Metropolitan Council will provide relocation assistance in accordance with the Uniform Act, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for those affected.



C Fleming, Resident

Comment

Edible Public Spaces---along the BlueLine Ext

What is an Edible Street?

Our working definition so far: Edible Streets integrate food production on publicly owned and publicly accessible land on streets, where people live and work by using underused urban areas bordering urban streets. The edible plants are visible by anyone walking in the street, easy to access by occupants of the street for maintenance and harvesting - making it easier to participate in food production. Edible streets can promote mental and physical health and help increase agency over food of marginalised groups. It is a tool for advocacy of how residents interact with their urban landscape and take ownership of it, individually, as a group or as an entire community.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS and your interest in public realm improvements. We have shared your recommendations with our Hennepin County partners and will evaluate the feasibility of implementation as station plans are developed during final design. We look forward to your continued participation in upcoming outreach events.



C Fleming, Resident

Comment

Connecting Neighborhoods and Communities along the Blue Line Ext and Beyond using technology

A "portal" (similar to the one described below) would be a great addition to areas along the Blue Line Extension...and beyond. The "IRIS" technology is available now and can be incorporated into placekeeping opportunities. [https://urldefense.com/v3/https://www.ireland.ie/en/usa/the-portal-connecting-dublin-and-new-york-city-in-real-time/;!!J7wOScoSGA!4z0Lq9bvcZ8QuhIWsnuxf7j6r7cwI8Rx_SLjypwHWD0EZ4w9PlzsDiHGrdonFiOfwzoCNPTwWx0L_kjrbijAQJKaA-Q\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://www.ireland.ie/en/usa/the-portal-connecting-dublin-and-new-york-city-in-real-time/;!!J7wOScoSGA!4z0Lq9bvcZ8QuhIWsnuxf7j6r7cwI8Rx_SLjypwHWD0EZ4w9PlzsDiHGrdonFiOfwzoCNPTwWx0L_kjrbijAQJKaA-Q$)

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS and your interest in public realm improvements. We have shared your recommendations with our Hennepin County partners and will evaluate the feasibility of implementation as station plans are developed during final design. We look forward to your continued participation in upcoming outreach events.



Jan Fernandez-Castillo, Resident

Comment

I have concerns about the new alignment for the extension. I know that the BNSF corridor was the original plan and that it didn't work out, but the alternative route looks to be median-running for the entirety of the route. Looking at the challenges faced on the original Green Line, I'm worried about travel time/speed on this segment. The current segment of the Blue Line has true signal priority along Hiawatha, but the median running segments do not and are limited to incredibly slow speeds at times.

I read through the Route Modification Report and I can't find a single mention of train speed or how the new alignment would be impacted by speed limits and signal priority. Some travel times are posted in a press release from last year, but that doesn't really go into detail.

I utilize the Blue Line currently and it tends to be competitive with driving, but the new segment doesn't look to be that way. I'm also concerned about the potential for delays to cascade over a train missing a signal and having to wait, only to chug along slower than the cars around it, affecting the existing Blue Line segment. This is a project that will be used for decades into the future, so we should get it right the first time around.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. The Project has been designed to integrate the light rail system into the roadway, sidewalk and bicycle lane network in such a way that all modes would be accommodated safely and with optimal flow. The LRT would operate at posted speed limits. As described in Chapter 3 of the Supplemental Final EIS and the Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum (Appendix A-3), the Project includes signal coordination and preemption at key intersections to allow for efficient train movements through median-running segments, including along County Road 81. The signal system design will be refined during final design to ensure that light rail operations are prioritized while minimizing traffic delays for all users.



Jonathan Hansen, Resident

Comment

The sheer number of times and ways that residents and stakeholders have had to learn about this infrastructure project, interact with Project staff, to provide input on the Project, and influence the outcome of this Project is a testament to the Metro Transit's dedication to good faith public outreach and consensus building. The route, number of stations, layout of stations, how the route fits into the existing infrastructure with minimal impacts, etc., have all changed over time due to local public input. Originally, this Project was envisioned as Bus Rapid Transit before the study deemed BRT inadequate for the needs of the nearly 180,000 people who live within proximity of the Project route.

Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park, as well as other nearby cities, have a variety of environmental cleanup sites due to past mistakes. In Robbinsdale alone, we have various environmental issues that are currently being addressed. One example is Crystal Lake, which was dredged in the 1940's to fill in a swamp to create a park. That swamp had been a city dump and the contaminated land was deemed unsuitable for development. Dredging the spring-fed lake broke the seal of the lake bottom, which led to the water level dropping and required that the lake bottom be sealed so that the spring no longer feeds the lake. Later work filled in a portion of the lake for a different park with material that caused Crystal Lake to be declared a "dead lake" in 1967 and the lake is on the list of impaired waters to this very day. Four decades of chemicals dumped in Crystal Lake to reduce the vegetation resulted in the devastation of plant life and now the only thing that seems to thrive there are invasive carp. Cleanup efforts on Crystal Lake have been underway for decades, but since it is now fed solely by storm drains, and PFAS has been detected in the water, people are warned not to swim in the lake or eat the fish. I bring up this example to highlight that the environmental impact of this Project has some risks, but they pale in comparison to what have been done in decades past.

This Project has taken great care to reduce negative impacts to residents, businesses, governments, and animal/plant life. The Project team has stated that any green space removed will be offset by adding green space elsewhere. I find it very responsible that this Project will actually add to Minneapolis Park Board park land and not just add some park land, but will add park land in a location that makes the park land more usable for programming while also making the park safer and reducing right-of-way concerns for the hospital in Robbinsdale. For the station near the hospital in Robbinsdale alone, the Project team developed a variety of options with pros and cons for the public and stakeholders to provide input on. The version selected by the Project decision team differs from what was approved under Municipal Consent last year because the Project team has worked so diligently to problem solve and reduce negative impacts. Metro Transit has demonstrated that they are committed to being a good neighbor.

Residents, governments, and businesses have known about this Project for many years, and that has been factored into decisions to purchase or rent nearby, to invest in improvements, and to invest in new builds. In anticipation of this Project, various housing developments along the Project route are moving forward in Robbinsdale and Minneapolis. If the other high-frequency transit projects in the metro area are any indication, this Project will increase the value and investment within one mile of the route. Light rail handles icy conditions better than wheeled vehicles, so it will provide multi-modal transit that works well in the long harsh winters that the Twin Cities area experiences.

One of the best things about living in Robbinsdale (which is a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis) is how walkable the city is, and this Project will increase the walkability of areas along the route in several ways. Several dangerous intersections that confuse drivers and pedestrians will be reworked, it will be significantly easier to access the Level 1 trauma center hospital in Robbinsdale and the park space nearby, and many people will gain another viable option for traveling.



People who cannot or should not drive due to limitations in vision, motor skills, cognition, or ability will benefit significantly from this Project. Notably, various housing complexes for retirement age people and for people with disabilities are located along the Project route. Light rail will provide a higher level of independence for these individuals.

I have spoken with hundreds and hundreds of people along the Project route about this Project over the past three years. The small number of people who are against the Project are vocal, but when it comes to voting, the candidates who support the Project keep winning. A small number of elected officials have been against the Project over the past five years, but most of them are no longer in office due to a combination of losing reelection or not seeking reelection. That speaks volumes about the level of public support for this Project.

I purchased my house in Robbinsdale on a bus line that I use and nearby one of the upcoming station locations. I look forward to using this transit line when it is operational!

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your support for the Project.



Anna Varney, FHWA MN Division

Comment

The FHWA MN Division Office submits the following comments on the Blue Line Extension Supplemental Final EIS.

Chapter 9:

Table 9-13 Permits and Approvals Required

FHWA has three actions for this Supplemental Final EIS to include in the table

1. Narrowly scoped adoption of the Supplemental Final EIS (currently included in table, but request addition of 'narrowly scoped')
2. FHWA ROD (not included in the table)
3. Interstate Access Modification Request (currently included in table)

Appendix A-3: Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum and Interstate Access Modification Request Process Summary

Introduction

Level of IAR/IAMR

1. This terminology is specific to MN. Suggest to reference the MnDOT TPDP (already referenced by footnote 3).
2. Including the Level 1 description for this Project is optional, as a Level 1 approval is not needed.
3. The last phrase under Level 3 ('as outlined in Step 23 below') should be removed as there is no context in this appendix for that statement.

Project Levels

Level 2

- First bullet – modify the last sentence after the word and: ...the 'existing' eastbound ramp terminal with W Broadway Ave.
- Third bullet – modify the second sentence similar to first bullet comment: ...the 'existing' eastbound ramp terminal

Level 3 – City location is Brooklyn Park, not Crystal

Interstate Access Policy Points

Policy Point 1

1. I-94 at N 21st Ave/W Broadway Ave and Washington Ave N/17th Ave N
Last sentence modify to include safety: ...that would impact mainline I-94 operations 'and safety'
2. I-94/I-694 at Bottineau Boulevard (CSAH 81)
Last sentence modify to include safety: ...not projected to significantly impact mainline operations 'and safety'

Attachments:

1. Please include a title for each figure and indicate that the red squiggle indicates the sphere of influence of the interchange/areas that FHWA will be adopting in the Supplemental Final EIS. For example, I-94/I-694 at Bottineau Boulevard (CSAH 81) for the first figure



2. The second figure is incomplete and only includes the area at N 21st Ave/W Broadway Ave west of I-94. Please also include the area at this location east of I-94, as well as the Washington Ave N/17th Ave N location.

Response

Thank you for your review of the Supplemental Final EIS. The Council acknowledges your suggestions for clarifications on Chapter 9 and the Appendix A-3 Interstate Access Modification Request Summary. Since publication of the Supplemental Final EIS, the Project has continued coordination with FHWA to prepare the draft IAMR. In response to your comments, the Project has documented FHWA's actions in the Amended ROD, Section 4.8 Agency Coordination.

In response to FHWA comments on Appendix A-3: Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum and Interstate Access Modification Request Process Summary, the Project has updated the IAMR Process Summary memo to reflect all comments and figure updates. A revised document is provided in Attachment H of the Amended ROD.

The Project acknowledges that all comments on IAMR must be addressed before FHWA can issue a limited-scope adoption of a Record of Decision and approve IAMR.

The Project looks forward to continuing to work with FHWA.



Lisa Elliot, MnDOT

Comment

Vibration – distances for damage from vibration do not take into account upper range of pile driver energy or variations in soil type. Several bridges are located adjacent to construction within MnDOT right of way and are not mentioned as having potential construction related vibration related impacts, this should be addressed.

Response

Contractors will be required to develop vibration control plans and monitor and report vibration levels caused by construction activities at all sensitive structures, including nearby bridges. The Council will monitor contractor compliance with stringent FTA thresholds established to prevent both cosmetic and structural damage (see Attachment D, *Project Mitigation Measures and Responsible Parties by Environmental and Transportation Category* in the Amended ROD).



Nick Heid, Robbinsdale Climate Collective

Comment

We are writing to support the final environmental review for the Metro Blue Line Extension Project, which will connect Robbinsdale to both downtown Minneapolis and to Brooklyn Park. We believe this Project will be impactful to our ability to reduce local and overall transportation emissions while protecting our land and water resources in Robbinsdale and beyond. We thank metropolitan council staff and researchers for this comprehensive review.

We strongly recommend the public to take time to read this final Environmental Review and inquire further with how infrastructure projects will impact our ability for current and future ecological and environmental stewardship. This process could be repeated for other forms of transportation such as roads for cars and air travel, which all directly impact our air, noise, and emissions.

We know our communities are less natural, less biodiverse, and more dangerous due to the hundreds of thousands of speeding vehicles traveling through Robbinsdale each day. A comprehensive transit system is critical if we are to take on emissions and transportation problems seriously.

Specifically, we appreciated the following important priorities and impacts in the review:

- Concerns related to biodiversity loss and threatened species like the listed pollinators such as the bats (tricolor and others), bees (rusty patched bumble bee), and butterflies (monarchs), along with the Projects' increased attention to Robbinsdale's known Blanding Turtle(s).
- Attention to reducing use of plastic that may sit/soak into the soils like plastic ground nets for soil retention and landscaping and other lasting polluting substances.
- Ensuring that the 13% of Robbinsdale residents without a vehicle at home have reliable, safe, and quick public transportation options. Most Robbinsdale residents will be able to walk to the Robbinsdale BLT station in 10-15 minutes.
- Reducing ~40,000 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per day, allowing some Robbinsdale residents to drive less by 14% as our state transportation climate goals indicate, reducing the vehicle emissions in the city caused by car travel.
- Stakeholder efforts and community input to maintain transparency and collaboration.

We thank the Metropolitan Council for their efforts and express our enthusiasm for the Blue Line in Robbinsdale.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. FTA and the Council acknowledge your support for the Project.



Joe Widing, Metropolitan Council

Comment

See comment letter.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. As you noted, the Supplemental Final EIS relied on the adopted 2040 forecasts of population and employment growth, which were the latest available forecasts at the time of Supplemental Final EIS production. The Project is included in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan, which was adopted in February 2025 concurrent with *Imagine 2050*, the update to the regional development guide. Through our long-range planning process, updates to the City of Robbinsdale and City of Minneapolis Comprehensive Plans will be made for consistency with the minimum density thresholds around station areas established in *Imagine 2050*.

The Council is committed to continued coordination with all Project stakeholders, including the regional park agencies. The Project's final design will detail the visual screening and landscaping to mitigate the adverse visual effect of the OMF on trail users. Visual modeling of proposed concepts will be shared with City of Brooklyn Park, the Three Rivers Park District, and the general public to solicit feedback and develop a context-sensitive design.



Northside Residents Redevelopment Council

Comment

See comment letter.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS and your thoughtful recommendations for preventing displacements in the Blue Line Extension corridor. The policies you suggest would directly benefit the existing residents and businesses in the Project corridor, which is a priority for us and our partners in the State-funded Anti-displacement Community Prosperity Program (ACPP) and the Hennepin County-led Coordinated Action Plan for Anti-Displacement (CAP).

The Project mitigation includes a Community Investment Fund which would be closely coordinated with the ACPP and CAP initiatives. While rental assistance and property improvements may be funded through the program, tax reform and housing policies are outside of the Council's purview and would need to be implemented by partner agencies along the Project Alignment.

The Council anticipates developing eligibility criteria tied closely to hardships faced by area residents and businesses during the Project's four-year construction period. The Council would have responsibility for administering the Community Investment Fund as well as the required relocation services and fair compensation for the Project's direct property acquisition and displacements. The Council has committed to a robust outreach program, including storefronts and an online portal that will connect community members to a full array of information resources (see Attachment D of this Amended ROD).

Safety of the system is our top priority and safety elements are included in the of the Project. The Council will engage community members as station plans are developed during final design to review safety elements and support the design of context-sensitive public realm improvements. Lastly, the Project includes pedestrian crossings near the YMCA and North Commons Park.



Kathleen Mahoney, USFWS

Comment

See email and additional summary table below response.

Response

Thank you for your detailed review of the Supplemental Final EIS. The Council acknowledges your suggestions for clarifications on terminology and commentary. Since publication of the Supplemental Final EIS, the Project has continued coordination with the USFWS, conducted habitat surveys, and prepared reports, and concluded consultation with the USFWS. Biological documentation is presented in Attachment G of the Amended ROD. The Council appreciates the hard work and cooperation of USFWS staff who have been instrumental in developing the Project's mitigation measures and responsible parties that are listed in Attachment D of this Amended ROD. Coordination with USFWS is documented in Section 5.6 of the Amended ROD and revisions to Table 3 of the Amended ROD reflect input from USFWS on the Supplemental Final EIS and coordination that has occurred since its publication. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I for clarifications on published documents where appropriate.



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
1	Updated content Since Publication	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5 Appendix A-5 Biological Environment Documents	Appendix A-5 Biological Environment Documents are outdated since the publication of the Supplemental Final EIS.	Since publication of the Supplemental Final EIS, through ongoing coordination with the USFWS, the Project has completed habitat surveys and concluded consultation on Section 7 with the USFWS. The Chapter 5 the Appendix A-5 <i>Biological Environment Documents</i> are superseded with documents included in Attachment G of the Amended Record of Decision (ROD).
2	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5 Appendix A-5 Biological Technical Report, Executive Summary, Page i	The rusty patched bumble bee (RPBB) has a High Potential Zone and proposed critical habitat overlapping intersecting a portion of the study area and suitable habitat present, necessitating more detailed discussion in Section 2.2.	Section 7 Consultation with USFWS has been concluded through ongoing coordination with USFWS, terminology is applied to the documentation in the Amended ROD, Attachment G.
3	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5 Appendix A-5 Biological Technical Report, Section 2 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences, Subsection 2.1, Page 6	Replace “no” with “limited”	Consultation reflects there is limited natural habitat present from Downtown Minneapolis northwest to TH 610.
4	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection, 2.1.1.1, Page 7	Should “Watchlist” be “Proposed” in this sentence: “Rare species are regulated at the federal level by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the Endangered Species Act and several related laws. The Endangered Species Act classifies species as Endangered, Threatened, or as Watchlist ”	Information presented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G appropriately applies the correct terminology for species.



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
5	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection, 2.1.1.1, Page 7	Expand the definition of “No Effect” per page xvi of the <i>Endangered Species Consultation Handbook Procedures for Conducting Consultation and Conference Activities Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act</i> , U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Marine Fisheries Service, March 1998. Available online at https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf	Comment noted. Consultation on effected species has concluded for the Project and is documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
6	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection, 2.1.1.1, Page 7	Include the word “completely” in this sentence: “Any potential impacts are either beneficial, insignificant, or discountable”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
7	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection, 2.1.1.1, Page 7	Expand the definition of “May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect.” per pages xv- xvi of the <i>Endangered Species Consultation Handbook Procedures for Conducting Consultation and Conference Activities Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act</i> , U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Marine Fisheries Service, March 1998. Available online at https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf	Comment noted. Section 7 Consultation with USFWS has been concluded through ongoing coordination with USFWS, terminology is applied to the documentation in the Amended ROD, Attachment G.
8	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection, 2.1.1.1, Page 7	Expand the definition of “May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect.” per page xv of the <i>Endangered Species Consultation Handbook Procedures for Conducting Consultation and Conference Activities Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act</i> , U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Marine Fisheries Service, March 1998. Available online at https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf	Comment noted. Section 7 Consultation with USFWS has been concluded through ongoing coordination with USFWS, terminology is applied to the documentation in the Amended ROD, Attachment G.



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
9	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Page 7	Provide additional context for “Known hibernacula would not be impacted because of the Project” <i>Why not? Hibernacula not present? Would karst areas that may provide habitat for hibernating bats be impacted?</i>	Section 7 Consultation with USFWS has been concluded through ongoing coordination with USFWS for the Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB). See Attachment G of the Amended ROD. The nearest known hibernaculum is more than 0.5 miles east of the southernmost extent of the study area. No other known hibernaculum was mapped near the study area. Although most of the study area occurs within a carbonate karst feature, the Project will largely be built on existing developed land and no karst openings were observed during habitat assessments conducted in May 2025.
10	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Page 8	Provide documentation for this statement: “Summer habitat (forest remnants) for the tricolored bat is present in the northernmost portion of the study area and the southern part of the project area, where it is known to inhabit culverts/tunnels in Downtown Minneapolis and surrounding area.”	See Errata Sheet in Attachment F. Sentence should state; ...”where it <u>may</u> inhabit culverts/tunnels in Downtown Minneapolis and surrounding area.”
11	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Page 8	Strike the word “likely” from “not likely present”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
12	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Page 8	Strike the word “likely” from “not likely present”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
13	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Page 8	Strike the word “likely” from “not likely present”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
14	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Page 8	With respect to the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (<i>Bombus affinis</i> – federally endangered). Include “ overwintering ” to conditions in the study area.	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
15	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Page 9	Updated status of the <i>Monarch Butterfly (Danaus plexippus – federally candidate species)</i> to “ currently proposed threatened ”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
16	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Table 1 Federally Listed Species, Page 9	Update Status of the Monarch butterfly to “Proposed Threatened”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
17	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.1.1.2, Table 1 Federally Listed Species, Page 9	Update Rusty patched bumble bee Notes “Critical habitat mapped and identified by the USFWS intersects with the study area. Open meadow and wooded areas are present within the study area, suitable for overwintering habitat.”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
18	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.2.1, Page 16	Update terminology in sentence to reflect current status to remove “Watchlist” as no species are currently on the watchlist. Update status of the NLEB from “federally threatened” to “ federally endangered ” and update “candidate species” to “ proposed threatened ” and include the RPBB.	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
19	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.2.1.1, Page 16	Rephrase measures to avoid and minimize impacts to the Northern Long-Eared Bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>) and remove dates from restrictions.	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment D.
20	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.2.1.2, Page 16	Update unavoidable impacts to the Northern Long-Eared Bat statement “The USFWS has commented on the Project and requested a habitat assessment be completed to finalize the determination.”	Text added to Section 5.6 of the Amended ROD
21	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Appendix A-5: Biological Technical Report, Subsection 2.2.1.2, Page 16	Update unavoidable impacts to the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee statement “The USFWS has commented on the Project and requested a habitat assessment be completed to finalize the determination.”	Text added to Section 5.6 of the Amended ROD



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
22	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Table 5-18 Federally Listed Species Documented in the Study Area, Page 5-65	Rephrase “not likely present”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
23	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Table 5-18 Federally Listed Species Documented in the Study Area, Page 5-65	Update Rusty patched bumble bee Notes “Insect: critical habitat mapped and identified by USWFS intersects with the study area.”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
24	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.2.2, Page 5-69	Update the status of the NLEBs from “threatened” to “endangered” in the sentence “Additionally, the notable terrestrial habitats summarized in the table could provide summer roosting habitat for northern long-eared bats (NLEBs), a federally threatened species.”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
25	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.3.1, Page 5-70	Revise sentences to specify overwintering species, correct tricolor spelling and specify “native” milkweed in this sentence and include potential suitable nesting and foraging habitat in the study area; “Habitat suitable for overwintering is present in the study area, overlapping with the NLEB and tricolor bat habitat. The monarch butterfly depends on open meadows where milkweed grows to complete its life cycle.”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
26	Text Addition	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Table 5-21 Page 5-70	Add “Proposed Endangered and Proposed Threatened” to the title of the table.	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
27	Text Addition	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.3.2, Page 5-72	<i>If potential suitable habitat (e.g., trees, meadows) is being permanently converted to unsuitable habitat for species than include these long-term impacts. Removing trees will remove roosting sites for bats and removing floral resources will remove foraging habitat for bees and butterflies.</i>	Section 5.8.3.2 presents migratory birds and noxious weeds, please see Section 5.8.4.2 for discussion related to this comment.
28	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.3.2, Page 5-72	Add “proposed” to this sentence “No critical habitats or known occurrences of threatened or endangered species are located in the vicinity of the Build Alternative, and temporary impacts are not anticipated from construction.”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
29	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.4.2, Page 5-72	Update “Impacts to the NLEB’s summer roosting habitat can be reduced by avoiding tree clearing and grubbing.”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
30	Status update	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.4.2, Page 5-72	Update coordination and consultation status “Coordination and consultation with USFWS are ongoing. USFWS coordination documentation is included in Appendix A-5. The Council will work closely with USFWS to ensure that impacts to NLEB are minimized to the extent practicable.” With current status that, consultation is currently being re-initiated because the action has been modified in a manner that causes an effect to listed species that was not previously considered and there have been new species listed and proposed critical habitat that may be affected by the identified action.	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
31	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.4.2, Page 5-73	Rephrase terminology for Endangered and Threatened Species Tricolored Bat from “guidance” to “technical assistance” in these statements; “As a proposed listing, specific guidance is not published yet. Coordination requirements with USFWS would be determined by the status of the listing, published guidance, and the types of impacts proposed.”	Comment noted. Technical assistance has supported the conclusion of consultation.



Comment Number	Item/Issue	Location	Comment	Response
32	Text Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.4.2, Page 5-73	Revise Endangered and Threatened Species minimization to rusty patched bumble bee impacts by striking this sentence “Impacts to the rusty patched bumble bee can be avoided by minimizing ground disturbance under wooded or forest habitats over winter.” and rewording this sentence “Avoiding ground disturbance in these habitats from October 11 through April 14 will minimize impacts to overwintering bees.” And remove dates from restrictions.	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
33	Terminology Revision	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.4.2, Page 5-73	Include potential suitable nesting and foraging habitat in the study area in discussion in for Endangered and Threatened Species rusty patched bumble bee statement “Coordination with USFWS is ongoing, including a habitat assessment and likelihood of presence of the overwintering habitat for the bees.”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.
34	Species Status Update	Supplemental Final EIS, Chapter 5, Subsection 5.8.4.2, Page 5-73	Update status for the Monarch Butterfly to replace “candidate” with “proposed threatened” and strike content about candidate species in the statement “As a candidate species (animal or plant species for which USFWS has sufficient information to propose listing them as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act), specific guidance has not been provided, and there are no requirements to coordinate with USFWS”	Comment noted. Consultation has concluded for the Project and impacts are documented in the Amended ROD and Attachment G.



John Sutter, City of Crystal

Comment

See comment letter.

Response

The Council acknowledges your frustration over how your traffic and safety concerns were addressed in the Supplemental Final EIS and the Project will continue coordination with the City to follow up about each of your remaining concerns. Each of your comments was responded to in the Supplemental Final EIS Appendix CR – *Responses to Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS* and the responses below are provided to more fully address your specific concerns.

SDEIS Comment 1(b) Shift in Traffic from Bottineau Boulevard to West Broadway in the No Build Condition

As indicated in our response in the Supplemental Final EIS Appendix CR *Responses to Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS*, the *Traffic Operations Technical Report* was updated to reflect 2050 conditions and included in the Supplemental Final EIS as Appendix A-3 *Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum*. The traffic analysis does not identify traffic operations issues on West Broadway that warrant detailed presentation in the memo, or impacts that require mitigation by the Project.

SDEIS Comment 1(d) Queuing North of 47th Street

The southbound queueing at CR 81 and 47th Avenue does not meet criteria for mitigation, as current and projected 2050 traffic conditions rarely exceed storage capacity. While occasional long queues have been observed during AM peak period, they are infrequent and not considered a significant problem for traffic operation at this intersection. MnDOT cites a lack of crash concerns or blockages to through traffic at the southbound TH-100 and to the preceding signalized intersection as rationale for not making (proposing) modifications. Evaluations of a potential choice lane showed limited benefits to overall traffic flow and increased safety risks, therefore MnDOT did not support further pursuit of this option.

The Project will share details of the analysis with the City as part of the design review.

SDEIS Comment 7 Public Safety and Lack of Estimate of Impact on City Forces

The Supplemental Final EIS provided a detailed response to your Supplemental Draft EIS comment by describing the measures underway by Metro Transit to reduce crime and the need for emergency response on transit property. The response also describes the establishment of the Metro Transit Joint Labor Management Safety Committee charged with evaluating safety data and risks and recommending mitigations and strategies for continuous improvement. Through this response, the Council is acknowledging the continued need for coordination with local responders and the measures that are being implemented to improve safety throughout Metro Transit's system. The impact of new stations on local safety forces would be difficult to quantify given the number of variables that affect safety in general, and the fluctuations that have occurred during the pandemic and the post-pandemic recovery. Through the Metro Transit Safety Plan and the Joint Labor Management Safety Committee, the Council is implementing effective measures to provide a safe travel experience for transit riders and communities we serve and these measures will be applied to the Project.

Federal NEPA guidelines do not provide methodologies for safety and security impact assessments or requirements for quantified impacts on local municipality operating budgets. Emergency response plans would be developed in close coordination with the City of Crystal as the Project advances. The Project is coordinating with Metro Transit Police Department to gather incident response information for planning purposes.



R. Michael Martens, Resident

Background

West Broadway Avenue is a major east-west thoroughfare through North Minneapolis. It is one of the main streets of North Minneapolis. It is heavily used for people going to Broadway businesses, to nearby residences, to access I 94 and is the most direct route to North Memorial Hospital, one of the 1st two Level One Trauma Hospitals in Minneapolis. Level One Trauma Hospitals can reduce mortality by 25% compared to other hospitals. Time is life in emergency situations. Survival rates for heart attacks increases significantly if a patient reaches the emergency room of a hospital in less than 1 hour. The same principle applies to victims of car accidents and violent crimes. It also applies to response times to fires.

Currently W. Broadway is 2 traffic lane and a parking lane in each direction for a total of 6 lanes.

The median income of North Minneapolis is below the median income of black people nationally. Median income in North Minneapolis is less than half of the median income for the city of Minneapolis as a whole. Clear proof that North Minneapolis is economically depressed is the lack of big box stores and even regional chains (ex. Lunds and Byerlys, Caribou Coffee, new car dealerships, Dominos Pizza etc.) in North Minneapolis today.

North Minneapolis has been designated as a national Promise and Opportunity Zones and Green zone. To qualify as a Promise and Opportunity Zones, North Minneapolis must be an area of concentrated poverty.

Comments

Displaced Businesses won't be replaced because North Minneapolis is an economically depressed area.(See lack of big box stores and and regional chains) Because North Minneapolis is economically depressed there is no incentive for national, regional and local chain stores to locate new stores in North Minneapolis either before or after the Blue Line Extension LRT is built

When the green line was built between Minneapolis and St Paul, 300 small businesses went out of business. The project manager for the Blue Line Extension LRT wasn't concerned about this because other businesses replaced them. Many of the new businesses were apartments that were owned by people living in the suburbs or in other states which took money out of the local economy instead of recycling it like was done when the 300 small business was were located there.

Switching from two traffic lanes plus parking in each direction to only one traffic lane and no parking in each direction will severely slow emergency vehicles. There is no way for cars to get out of the way of emergency vehicles if there is only one traffic lane and no parking lines. Are emergency vehicles expected to drive on the sidewalk or LRT tracks to avoid cars? (Sarcasm)

Since West Broadway is one of the main routes to the level 1 trauma hospital North Memorial it is very very important that emergency vehicles be able to quickly and efficiently travel down West Broadway to North Memorial.

The project manager for the blue line extension had an opportunity at presentations before the Hennipen County Commissioners and a Committee of the City of Minneapolis to explain why having only 1 traffic lane and no parking lane, wouldn't be a problem, but he refused to provide an explanation of why it wouldn't be a problem for emergency vehicles.

Eliminating on street parking will force small businesses that cannot afford to provide off street parking to go out of business and lay their employees off



Going from two traffic lanes to one traffic lane will certainly increase the level of air pollution from auto exhaust in North Minneapolis. North Minneapolis already has elevated levels of asthma and other respiratory diseases

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. The Council, Hennepin County, and its partners are committed to mitigating the impacts of the Project. Mitigation measures to Project corridor businesses, including those in North Minneapolis, include relocation assistance to displaced businesses, business support during construction, public realm improvements, community investment, and workforce development programs which would lower impacts to nearby businesses. In addition to Project efforts, the ACPP is working in parallel to advance community prosperity and minimize displacement. Additional information about the ACPP can be found online at <https://yourblueline.org/acpp-board>. See Chapter 9 of the Supplemental Final EIS for additional details about engagement and outreach in North Minneapolis.

While the loss of on-street parking would reduce convenient vehicular access to businesses, businesses would benefit from the increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the station areas.

To mitigate the loss of on-street parking in the Project area, the Council will:

- Provide public parking at Penn Ave/Broadway for patrons of nearby businesses.
- Continue to refine the Project design to reduce parking impacts.



Kelsey Fogt, City of Minneapolis

Comment

See comment letter.

Response

Thank you for your detailed review of the Supplemental Final EIS. The Council acknowledges your suggestions for improving the readability of the document, factual corrections, and the comments related to ongoing design coordination. As noted, design coordination since the development of the Supplemental Final EIS is ongoing and the Council will continue to coordinate with the City as the design advances.

The Council has prepared an Errata Sheet to address factual corrections, which is included as Attachment I to this Amended ROD. The Council appreciates the hard work and cooperation of the dedicated city staff who have been instrumental in developing the Project's design and the mitigation commitments that are listed in Attachment D of this Amended ROD. We look forward to working with you through final design and permitting processes, and into construction. Responses to your comments are provided below.

Executive Summary

1. Summary of change of impacts table sometimes quantifies and sometimes doesn't quantify change (e.g. noise and vibration impact not quantified now, but was in 2016); recommend being consistent.

The table summarizes the important differences in environmental findings between 2016 and today. For example, compared to the 2016 Alignment, the Project would impact different types of sensitive noise receptors for different reasons and a comparison of quantities could be misleading. The Project would result in far fewer moderate and severe noise impacts compared to the 2016 Alignment. The table captures the key differences of the noise findings with: "Fewer moderate and severe noise impacts, but ones that cannot be mitigated through Quiet Zones, noise barriers, or noise control plans."

2. Describes changes in Minneapolis inconsistently - a bike/ped mall vs transit mall for 21st Ave N vs 10th Ave; should be consistent.

Noted. Bike/ped mall and transit mall were used interchangeably in the document.

Chapter 1 Purpose and Need

3. Page 1-6: Reference to 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP); should update to 2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP).

The Supplement Final EIS was prepared prior to the adoption of the 2050 TPP; the analyses relied on the adopted 2040 forecasts of population and employment growth and the 2040 TPP. The citation is correct in the published document.

4. Page 1-8: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP Ave N in Section 1.2.1.

See response to comment 3.



5. Page 1-15: Why are areas of MPLS predicted for job loss?

The job loss shown in the graphic reflects the Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) 2020-2040 forecasts prepared by the Council with input from the City of Minneapolis found online at: <https://gisdata.mn.gov/dataset/us-mn-state-metc-trans-analysis-zones>.

6. Page 1-16: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP.

See response to comment 3.

7. Page 1-25: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP.

See response to comment 3.

Chapter 2 Alternatives

8. Page 2-9: 3rd St N connection around North Loop Parking Garage/Redwell/Twin Cities International School is no longer included in design plans.

The Council will continue coordinating with the City during the design review process.

9. Page 2-12: Transit/pedestrian/bicycle mall on 10th Ave is only between Washington Ave and 4th St N, not 5th St N.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

10. Page 2-12: Table 2-5 could use a map.

Noted. The text refers readers to the design drawings in Appendix A-E to support an understanding of the roadway and sidewalk changes described in the table.

11. Page 2-13: 3rd St N extends from the existing cul-de-sac to 12th Ave N.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

12. Page 2-14: Include extension of 8th Ave N to 7th St N.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

13. Page 2-14: Notes on the 8th Ave N improvements include description of providing ADA improvements. Will these types of improvements (e.g., ADA-compliant pedestrian curb ramps) be provided with the other improvements noted in Table 2-5)?

Yes, ADA-compliant pedestrian curb ramps are required for all improvements constructed or reconstructed as part of this Project. These improvements will continue to be coordinated with the City of Minneapolis to ensure compliance with applicable accessibility standards.

14. Page 2-14: 8th Ave at Washington Ave should include a traffic signal.

A signal is included in the design and shown on Sheet 29 in Supplemental Final EIS Appendix A-E Conceptual Engineering Drawings.

15. Page 2-17: Roadway and tracks over Basset Creek tunnel will also be considered a structure.

Noted.



Chapter 3 Transportation

16. Table 3-1: Mitigation table omits 8th Ave extension in the North Loop.

The 8th Avenue extension is included in the project design as mitigation. This extension will improve circulation and connectivity in the North Loop area and offset the loss of access between 4th Avenue N and Washington Avenue.

17. Page 3-8: Table 3-4: Confirm ridership numbers for W Broadway and Lyndale stations, may have been flipped?

Lyndale and West Broadway station boardings are incorrect in the table. See the Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

18. Page 3-8: Transit Impacts Minimization: Plan for "bus bridge" transit stops and operations during LRT maintenance or service disruptions.

Operations plans for LRT maintenance or service disruptions, including bus bridge transit stops and operations, are developed on a case-by-case basis. These plans are designed to minimize impacts to transit service and will be coordinated by Metro Transit as needed.

19. Page 3-25: Note the need in Section 3.3 for additional bike parking facilities at and near stations to accommodate additional bicycle trips to and from transit.

Noted. The Project will include bicycle parking facilities at LRT stations in accordance with LRT design guidelines.

20. Page 3-27: Table 3-20 does not show the traffic calming devices and retrofit bikeway on North 2nd Street from Plymouth Ave to Hennepin Ave that is included in the project and shown in Appendix13_A-E.

Noted. Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

21. Page 3-41: Note the need in Section 3.4 to discuss ongoing traffic modeling and design coordination on the North 7th Street and Olson Memorial Highway intersection area.

Noted. Ongoing collaboration will help ensure that the final design reflects local priorities and addresses traffic operational needs.

22. Page 3-41: Note the need in Section 3.4 to discuss need for traffic calming, such as speed bumps and traffic circles, on neighborhood streets near Lowry Station area with updated design that disconnects the Parkway from Lowry. This may increase traffic in the neighborhood on 29th Ave, Thomas Ave, Upton Ave, and Vincent Ave.

Noted. Coordination with the City will continue via the design review process.

23. Page 3-48: Table 3-39: Continue design coordination on allowing alleyway access to North 10th Ave bikeway.

Access improvements will be discussed in ongoing design reviews.

24. Page 3-48: Table 3-39: Does not discuss new 8th Ave extension between 3rd St and 5th S The new 8th Avenue extension between 3rd Street and 5th Street is a planned Project improvement intended to enhance connectivity and circulation in the area.

Noted. The 8th Avenue extensions are part of the Project and shown on the Conceptual Engineering Drawings in Appendix A-E on Sheet 28.

25. Page 3-54: Between 29th Ave and Irving Ave, parking bays were added to three quadrants of the- Penn Ave intersection, and just north of the Newton Ave intersection (in front of 2005 W Broadway). Please list number of parking spots added.



The Project will continue to coordinate with the City of Minneapolis on parking opportunities through the design process.

26. Page 3-54: Table 3-43: Parking is maintained on Washburn Ave in the southbound direction and continues to be refined through ongoing design coordination.

Noted.

27. Page 3-54L Table 3-43: Parking bays were added in the northbound direction on Washington Ave near 18th Ave N and continues to be refined through ongoing design coordination.

Noted.

28. Page 3-59: Penn/Broadway parking mitigation: The surface parking lot is a short-term mitigation. The City will continue to work with the project partners on solutions that meet the long-term goal in replacing surface parking lot with Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).

Noted.

29. Page 3-49: Note the need in Section 3.5 to discuss ongoing design coordination on parking zone designations for short term parking, disability parking, metered parking, loading zones, and electric vehicle charging locations.

Noted.

Appendix 15_A-3 Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum and Interstate Access Modification Request Process Summary

30. Page 27, 42: No Build scenario assumes North 7th St reconstruction will include a four-lane to a three-lane conversion. The North 7th St project cross-section was not determined at time of modeling. Traffic modeling and design coordination on the North 7th Street and Olson Memorial Highway intersection area is ongoing.

Noted.

31. Page 49: There is a median island at W Broadway Ave & Bryant Ave making this intersection right-in, right-out only.

Noted.

32. Page 108: Intersection 56: CSAH 153 (N Lowry Ave)/N Washburn Ave intersection – Note that the current design includes bidirectional traffic on Washburn Ave.

Noted.

33. Page 113: Intersection 77: Note that the current design does not include a dedicated right turn lane at West Broadway/Lyndale Ave intersection.

Noted.

34. Page 116: Intersection 93: Note that the eastbound to northbound dedicated right turn lane at Plymouth Ave/Washington Ave has been removed in the current design.

Noted.



35. Page 116: Intersection 94: Does not show mitigated build configuration at Plymouth Ave/North2nd Street.

Noted. The mitigation is detailed in Table 6.1 and in Attachment D of this Amended ROD.

Chapter 4 Community and Social Analysis

36. Staff will continue to participate in Section 106 consulting parties meetings on behalf of the Minneapolis HPC and may provide comments in the future through this avenue.

Noted.

37. Page 2: Cultural Resources table in one column lists adverse effects to 2 HPs and 4 HDs, but in the next column says the 2 HPs include 1 one building and 1 district. This doesn't add up.

The 2016 FEIS/ROD identified adverse effects to two historic properties and four historic districts, for a total of six adverse effects to historic properties. The current Project would have adverse effects on two historic properties – one building and one historic district – which are different resources than the ones affected in 2016.

38. Page 21: Last sentence in first paragraph of Minneapolis section refers to a gate crossing at an intersection - unclear which intersection.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

39. Page 22: Need to clarify who is constructing parking, City-owned lots are short-term.

The parking referenced on page 22 pertains to parking constructed as part of the Project. It does not refer to City-owned lots.

40. Page 4-19: The City is interested in the relationship of the proposed operating-phase mitigation measures for the identified corridor-wide effects, and its effects on advancing the desired outcomes identified in the Anti-Displacement Workgroup (ADWG) Recommendations Report (May 2023), and the coordination of strategies identified in the Coordinated Action Plan for Anti-displacement (August 2024). In order to get the cumulative benefits of these discrete and separate programs - they must be administered in a coordinated way that facilitates desired material and social outcomes.

Noted. The Council anticipates working closely with City of Minneapolis representatives involved in the State-funded ACPP and the Hennepin County-led Coordinated Action Plan to maximize the intended outcomes of the anti-displacement programs.

41. Page 4-22 to 4-23: The City is supportive of the identified operating-phase mitigation measures. It will be important for the Project Office to develop clear implementation steps with accountability measures in Partnership with the City and community stakeholders to ensure the successful administration of these measures-including ongoing support and follow-up with beneficiaries of these programs and how the programs support the mitigation goals. The City is supportive of the identified construction-phase mitigation measures. We would like the Project Office to develop clear implementation steps with accountability measures in Partnership with the City and community stakeholders to ensure the successful administration of these measures-including ongoing support and follow-up with beneficiaries of these programs and how the programs support the mitigation goals.

Noted. The Council anticipates working closely with the community stakeholders and City of Minneapolis representatives involved in the State-funded ACPP and the Hennepin County-led Coordinated Action Plan to maximize the intended outcomes of the anti-displacement programs.



42. Page 4-27: Table 4-15. Staff note the permanent easement impact of 22.5 Acres in Minneapolis needed to deliver the Project, and accommodate the lines, lanes, and stations. We understand the long-term benefits that comes with this opportunity to accommodate space for a high-quality ROW that includes sidewalks, greening and trees, streetlighting, and designing for safe and active modes of transportation.

Noted.

43. Page 4-28: Staff note that the Project Office will need to address operating-phase (long-term impacts) impacted property acquisitions and the resulting displacement of businesses, households, and tenants in accordance with the Uniform Act. We would like to recommend that the Project Office develop a comprehensive implementation approach that goes above the minimum and employs best practices to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach so that stakeholders who are impacted can understand all available resources and options that are available from local agencies and Project Partners that they are eligible for.

The Council has committed to communication resources to support residents and businesses displaced by the Project. Please see the mitigation commitments listed in Attachment D.

44. Page 4-28: In the event tenants of residential and non-residential displacements do not have funds to incur upfront expenses related to moving and/or re-establishing their business/use-the Project Office should identify monies that can be expended in place of a reimbursement process to support facilitating the relocation of displaced tenants and/or businesses.

Moving costs and re-establishment expenses are covered under the Uniform Act for property owners and tenants displaced by projects that receive federal funds.

Chapter 5 Physical and Environmental Analysis

45. Page 5-9: Utility map for Minneapolis is difficult to read since there are many overlapping utilities in the project corridor.

The Project design team will continue to coordinate utility locations with the City of Minneapolis through plan reviews at design milestones. Specific utility coordination details will be further refined and addressed during future stages of design development.

46. Page 5-9: Utilities along roadways that will be reconstructed or impacted by the project are not noted in the map and following text, such as the utilities on West Broadway between the James Ave station and Lyndale Ave N.

Utility relocation identification is ongoing and will continue to be coordinated with the City of Minneapolis and private utility owners as the Project advances. Utilities along reconstructed or impacted roadways, such as West Broadway between the James Avenue Station and Lyndale Avenue N, will be addressed through this coordination process.

47. Page 5-10: The existing text reads: "Water mains under LRT track alignments should be inspected annually by City staff." City of Minneapolis Public Works disagrees with this. It should state "Water mains under or adjacent to LRT track alignments shall be tested for stray current and maintained by The Metropolitan Council. Test reporting and corrective measures shall be communicated with the respective Utility."

Ongoing coordination with the City and the Metropolitan Council will continue to clarify future maintenance responsibilities, test reporting, and ownership of utilities.



48. Page 5-10: Consider whether overhead utilities need to be undergrounded to allow for fire access needs, especially along 10th Ave N and 21st Ave N.

Coordination with private utility owners for access requirements will continue in final design.

49. Page 5-11: There are additional utilities in Minneapolis that will be impacted by the project that are not noted in 5.1.3.1 Build Alternative such as the 48" water main near Lowry Ave and West Broadway/CR81.

Coordination with the City of Minneapolis to identify utility impacts will continue in final design.

50. Noise and vibration from the LRT operations and construction must be mitigated; cost effectiveness should not be a determining factor in whether noise and vibration impacts will be mitigated by the project.

Cost effectiveness is a standard factor in mitigation policies for noise and vibration at transit agencies and highway departments and a criteria under federal guidelines.

51. Page 5-28: Were residential units at 900 N 4th St (Salvation Army) and 9013rdSt N included as residential properties in the noise and vibration analysis?

The front portion of 901 3rd St N is a business. The residential portion of the building is approximately 200 feet from track location. There would be no noise impacts at that distance. The property at 900 N 4th Street was identified as a thrift store and donation center, based on field surveys and Google Earth. If there are residential units above the thrift store, an assessment of the noise and vibration indicates that there would be no impacts at this location.

52. Pages 5-6 to 5-11: Consider additional strategies such as backup power during outages, utility service audits, or guaranteed access to cooling/heating. A more inclusive solution could be to have a public education campaign on upgraded infrastructure, water/sewer protections, and whom to contact during or post-construction.

Service outages are expected to be short-term since new infrastructure would be built while existing service is maintained. Contractors will be required to notify building occupants of switch-over outages well in advance and outages will be scheduled at a convenient time when possible.

53. Pages 5-13 to 5-36: Consider co-locating flood mitigation areas with areas intended for public benefit such as public greenspace, stormwater gardens, etc. to address public comments and City goals on open space, habitat and ecological design, and promote long-term groundwater health.

Mitigation for the Project's floodplain impacts in the northern cities of the Project Alignment (there are no floodplains in the City of Minneapolis study area) will be developed during the permitting process. Green stormwater infrastructure will be considered (see Chapter 5, Section 5.9.4.1).

54. Pages 5-36 to 5-45: Mitigation strategies outline requirements for proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials during construction.

Mitigation measures for hazardous materials are listed in Attachment D in this Amended ROD.

55. Pages 5-46 to 5-59: Does not include mitigation for outdoor noise exposure, such as green buffer installation. Consider installing dense native plantings as green sound barriers along constrained corridors. Consider incorporating community respite areas like pocket parks or outdoor pavilions to mitigate constant ambient noise stress. Including quiet zones, plantings, or alternative materials could strengthen outcomes.

While mature vegetation can provide visual barriers depending on the season and species, it would not be effective noise attenuation due to the limited depth of areas available for planting. Planned mitigation includes designing and installing spring-rail frogs at crossover locations where mitigation is warranted and determine effectiveness of sound



insulation to mitigate interior noise impacts in the residential buildings and churches where other measures would be ineffective.

56. Pages 5-59 to 5-63: No long-term building health checks or community supports if damage occurs. Consider adding retrofit support or post-construction assessments and building condition surveys post-construction to address long-term maintenance if vibration worsens structural health of buildings.

Contractors will be required to develop vibration control and monitoring plans and adhere to established criteria to prevent cosmetic and structural damage at adjacent structures. Building owners will be provided with information about the contractor damage claims process and post-construction surveys would be performed as necessary.

57. Pages 5-63 to 5-74: Consider identifying and installing pollinator corridors along the alignment using native plants, prioritizing and planting trees in under-canopied areas, and seeking community input on replanting.

Landscaping plans will be shared with community members and affected stakeholders. Native species will be considered.

58. Pages 5-74 to 5-79: Public comments identified a desire to have spaces for amenities to the community. Consider creating stormwater gardens like pocket parks and other destination spaces that people can use while serving stormwater function.

The Council has committed to developing context-sensitive station plans during final design that reflect community priorities (see Attachment D).

59. Pages 5-80 to 5-84: Consider additional tree planting to improve air quality and provide shade and comfort, especially along 21st Avenue. Consider expanding tree canopy along the corridor, especially in low-canopy areas, to filter air pollutants, mitigate heat, and create long-term public health and environmental benefits.

See responses to comments 57 and 58.

Appendix 23_A-5_03_Noise and Vibration Technical Report

60. Page 60: Cost effectiveness should not be a determining factor for whether noise and vibration impacts are mitigated.

See response to comment 50.

Chapter 6 Cumulative Potential Effects (perMNRules§4410), Reasonably Foreseeable Trends and Future Plans

61. Page 6-7: The time frame for analysis should be 2050, in alignment with Imagine 2050.

See response to comment 3.

62. Page 6-11: The time frame for analysis should be 2050, in alignment with Imagine 2050.

See response to comment 3.

63. Page 6-12: The time frame for analysis should be 2050, in alignment with Imagine 2050.

See response to comment 3.



Chapter 7 Chapter Analysis Removed per Federal Policy Guidance 2025

64. While Federal Executive Orders 14148 and 14173 rescinded consideration of Environmental Justice analyses and resulted in the removal of this chapter, the City remains committed to working with the Project Office to ensure this project serves the needs of those most impacted by its construction. At a minimum, this includes continuing the work and detailing strategies on anti-displacement, relocation assistance, construction management and cultural placekeeping.

Noted.

Chapter 8 4(f) and 6(f) Resources and Appendix A-8 Draft Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Evaluation

65. City of Minneapolis staff have reviewed sections related to MPRB property. We have not identified major issues, but defer to MPRB for determinations related to MPRB property in this report and in Appendix 8.

Noted.

Chapter 9 Consultation and Coordination

66. Page 9-1: Should spell out BCW for Hennepin County in section 9.1.2.

Abbreviations are spelled out in full the first time they appear in the document.

67. Page 9-1: Should spell out ADWG and ACPP - hard for others to know what these are.

See response to comment 66.

68. Page 9-2: Should include DRTs as well as IRTs.

Noted.

69. Page 9-7: First sentence in the second paragraph should be in the past tense to make it clear this work already happened.

Noted – this phase of work is complete.

70. Page 9-17: Many more engagement events have happened - DREAM series, etc.

The DREAM series is referenced in Chapter 9.1. A corresponding footnote directs readers to the official website, where additional information about the initiative is available.

71. In general, seems like engagement stats show a point in time. Engagement is still ongoing so this should be clear.

Ongoing engagement is noted on page 9-18 (2nd paragraph).

72. Municipal consent engagement activities are not included generally in this chapter.

The municipal consent process is described in Chapter 9, Section 9.1.3.4 and Section 9.1.4 (Table 9-6), and Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3.



Chapter 10 Financial Analysis

73. Page 10-1: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP.

See response to comment 3.

Chapter 11 Evaluation of Alternatives

74. Please update the evaluation summaries in Chapter 11 to reflect comments on the individual chapters provided by this letter.

Attachment I of this Amended ROD includes an Errata Sheet that reflects the factual corrections that address your comments. The Errata Sheet together with your comments and the Council's responses are part of the NEPA Administrative Record.

Appendix 12_A_CR Responses to Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS

75. Page 1: Bullet points reference wrong sections (A.1-A.4) of appendix.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

76. Page 6: FRC 9: Project will acquire lot at Penn-Broadway for parking. The City will continue to work with the project partners on solutions that meet the long-term goal in replacing surface parking lot with Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).

Noted.

77. Page 18: Chapter 2 response: "No modifications or expansion of the W Broadway Bridges are proposed as part of the Project." This is no longer the case in the new design of the Lowry Station area.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

78. Page 21: Chapter 2 response: One City comment regarding loss of parking as a concern of business coalition was not included in the Supplemental Final EIS.

Response to your comment on clarifying the stakeholder position are provided in Appendix CR. Chapter 2 was not revised because your comment referred to a sentence that had been deleted in the final document because the final document focused only on the Preferred Alternative. Community and business feedback related to parking for the Build Alternative was included in Chapter 3.5.

79. Page 22: Chapter 2 response: Four City comments requesting additional narrative on alignment considerations and benefits were not included in Supplemental Final EIS.

Responses to your comments on alignment considerations are provided in Appendix CR. Changes to the chapter were not made because the final document focused only on the Preferred Alternative.

80. Page 27: Chapter 3 response: "Bicycle racks will be provided at LRT stations for Project." Please continue to work with the City on the design and placement of bike racks and mobility hub amenities near stations.

The Project will continue to work with the City of Minneapolis on station design through the Design Resolution Team Process.



81. Page 35: Chapter 3 response to MPRB comment: References prior design with automatic gate arms. New Lowry design offers grade separation for the Parkway from the LRT tracks and will not include gate arms.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

82. Page 41: Chapter 3 response: "Buses will use the street on a daily basis" in reference to the 10th Ave Transit mall. This is counter to ongoing design discussions with the Project Office. No buses should access 10th Ave transit mall, neither for regular route service or trips to/from garage facilities.

Noted. See Errata Sheet in Attachment I.

83. Page 88: Chapter 5 response: "Utilities in City/County ROW will follow respective Utility Accommodation policies/practices" Please reference regulations applicable in the City of Minneapolis.

In cooperation with MnDOT, the Council will use MnDOT's Notice and Order process to enforce utility relocations the City of Minneapolis regulations Title 17, Chapter 451 – Use of City Managed Public Right of Way and Title 17, Chapter 430 – Right of Way Permits for all work affecting utilities in the City of Minneapolis.

84. Page 93: Chapter 5 response only discusses Bassett Creek Tunnel impacts and mitigations for 10th Ave crossing. It should also discuss the access plan for maintenance on the tunnel underneath the Metro Transit North Loop Garage. Bassett Creek Tunnel impacts should also be mitigated underneath 5th Street, 4th Street, and new 8th Ave extension, including new bridge designation of 8th Ave over Bassett Creek Tunnel and associated load rating.

The Council will develop an access plan for maintenance of the tunnel beneath the North Loop Garage and mitigation measures for all crossing impacts at the Bassett Creek Tunnel.

Appendix A-E Construction Engineering Drawings

85. Some design elements are not shown that were already public in February 2025. For example, elimination of dedicated right turn lanes at Broadway/Lyndale intersection, and center median at Broadway/Bryant intersection. Ongoing design coordination may change exact layouts and construction limits through DRT meetings and 60% and 90% plan set reviews.

Noted. The Council will continue to work with the City of Minneapolis through the design review process.



Krystle McClain, EPA

Comment

See comment letter.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. The Council acknowledges your suggestions for improving the readability of the document Supplemental Final EIS. Figure 7-1 in the Supplemental Final EIS identifies locations where sound insulation will be evaluated to mitigate moderate and severe noise impacts. The text explains that moderate noise impacts at the five single-family residences along West Broadway Avenue in Brooklyn Park will be mitigated by special trackwork. Figure 7-1 is correct in the published document.

Your recommendations for strengthening the Council's mitigation commitments have also been considered and are reflected in Attachment D, which includes the list of air quality BMPs that will be adhered to by all contractors. The Council commits to working with each city to develop tree replacement plans.

The Council has planned for two centrally located storefronts to supplement the relocation advisory services required by the Uniform Act. The number and location of these storefronts is based on the number and geographic distribution of the businesses and residents that will be displaced. The Project requires 35 relocations, with 28 relocations occurring in the City of Minneapolis. At this time, the Council believes that additional storefront locations would be inefficient, however, the outreach program will continue to be evaluated as construction sequencing and timing is defined during final design.

As required by the Uniform Act, a Relocation Counselor will be assigned to work with each property owner and tenant in the program throughout the relocation process. The Relocation Counselors will conduct interviews to understand the unique challenges of businesses and residents in the program and provide a comprehensive explanation of the benefits available under the Uniform Act. This will include information on rental assistance payments that would cover increased cost of comparable replacement housing for up to 42 months and details on expenses, incidental costs, and payment options. The Relocation Counselor will ensure that translation services and any other special support service is provided.

The two centrally located storefronts, staffed with Outreach Coordinators, will supplement the support provided by the Relocation Counselors. Outreach Coordinators will be the conduits between the public and the Project Team, Contractors, Relocation Counselors, and regional support providers.

The Business Assistance Program is currently under development. Eligibility requirements and selection criteria will be communicated to businesses when available.

The noise analysis and process for evaluating noise mitigation identified in the Supplemental Final EIS follows the standard procedures outlined in FTA's Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Guidance. Noise monitoring and analysis is performed prior to operation of the light rail system so that mitigation measures can be designed and implemented as part of the Project. FTA's methodology for estimating noise and vibration effects of transit systems is conservative. The Council has established procedures to address public concerns related to its operating systems and noise complaints would be handled promptly by Metro Transit's response team.



Chris Green, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Comment

See comment letter.

Response

Thank you for commenting on the Supplemental Final EIS. The design modifications that mitigate the traffic impacts identified in the 2024 Traffic Report and the Supplemental Final EIS have been incorporated into the current design and will be implemented. As indicated in Attachment D, the Council will continue to coordinate with the Project cities during final design and construction to minimize the Project's effects on traffic.

The Supplemental Final EIS comprehensively addresses the potential air quality effects of the Project with regard to the NAAQS criteria pollutants, MSATs, and greenhouse gases (see Appendix A-5 Section 5.10.1). The Supplemental Final EIS also reviews the strategies available to reduce emissions from on-road and off-road diesel equipment (see Supplemental Final EIS Section 5.10.4.2). Appendix A-5 explains why only qualitative analyses are appropriate given the scope of Project improvements, EPA requirements, and FHWA screening methodology for MSATs.

The Project area is in attainment for the criteria pollutants of concern for this Project, namely CO and PM. The 20-year maintenance period for CO ended in November 2019 and the 20-year maintenance period for PM ended in September 2022. As a result, quantitative hot-spot analyses of operational and construction CO and PM emissions are not required.

The Project is not expected to induce development in the region; it would indirectly support higher density land use near proposed stations and result in reduced VMT and associated air quality benefits in the region. While construction can result in fugitive dust and engine exhaust emissions from various types of activities including roadway detours, construction emissions are considered temporary impacts with little potential to result in exceedances of air quality standards. EPA requires hot-spot modeling for CO and PM in non-attainment and maintenance areas if construction would last more than five years at any individual site (40 CFR 93.123(c)(5)). As indicated above, the Project area is in attainment of the CO and PM standards. Furthermore, construction effects in any given location would occur for a period much shorter than 5 years, as the entire Project (spanning approximately 12 miles) would be completed in approximately four years.

The Council has committed to implementing cost-effective measures to reduce construction emissions to the extent practical (see Attachment D). These measures will be included in the contract specifications and the Council will monitor contractor compliance during construction. In addition, the Council will encourage contractor use of clean diesel equipment, including Tier 4 engines and use of emissions control technologies on older equipment. During final design and through industry outreach, the Council will evaluate the costs and benefits associated with implementing clean diesel requirements in the contract specifications.



Appendix A: Original Format Correspondence

Litsey, Meghan

From: James Brown <jimrikub@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2025 3:51 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cancel the whole thing north memorial hospital is in money problem and target in bp is not going to be around long waste of money and not needed like south west line

Litsey, Meghan

From: Mike Brady <mtriodev@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2025 4:15 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No blue line, EXPRESS BUS SERVICE!

Please log our disagreement with Blue Line for many reasons

- \$\$\$\$\$\$
- Cost to construct as proven elsewhere
- Cost to maintain as proven elsewhere
- Broadway business destruction
- Inability to control Crime as proven elsewhere
- Inability to control drug sales as proven elsewhere
- inability to control illegal drug use as proven elsewhere
- Lack of citizen support. For every 1 support yard sign there are 20+ Stop Light rail signs
- Express buses makes so much more sense for all of the above reasons and more

Thank you

Mike Brady
612.327.2932

Litsey, Meghan

From: Nathan Bakken <bakken.nathan@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2025 4:17 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SFEIS Comment

Hello,

Was excited to hear that the FTA has formally accepted and published the SFEIS. Looking forward to the day that shovels are in the ground and the project is being built. Keep up the great work to better connect our region!

Thanks!
Nathan Bakken

Litsey, Meghan

From: Scott H. Wilmore <scotthwilmore@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2025 7:39 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

When you going to put in a Subway system?

Litsey, Meghan

From: C Fleming <cefleming14@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 5:59 AM
To: BlueLineExt
Cc: C Fleming
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SFEIS Comments and other recommendations

Met Council/Hennepin County

- move forward immediately with property acquisitions where residents are ready to relocate now
- work with real estate professionals to identify sites to house dislocated residents who want to return to Minneapolis when construction is complete and new housing is available.
- allow development at 2034 W. Broadway (RFP) for cultural corridor

City of Minneapolis

- Rezone 2114 23rd Ave to accommodate new development with mandatory parking that will highlight the most iconic and cultural area of north Minneapolis and West Broadway and that is "5-Points" RFP and notification to local BIPOC developers
- Planned and inclusive development of City-owned Penn Ave vacant lots (2323 Penn, 2319, 2311 and 2301 Penn Ave N) (2218 Penn Ave N, 2214 Penn, 2106 and 2100 Penn Ave N) lots to be developed as a single project in order to facilitate noticable and relevant transformation

Mandate the use of environmentally --friendly construction products and materials.

I'm excited about the potential, the opportunities and the foundation for building generational wealth in the north Minneapolis BIPOC community.

Litsey, Meghan

From: Joe Wiatros <jjwiatros@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 7:40 AM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Blue Line Comment

Good Morning,

Please with keep this as a bus corridor! Why?

- 1) Versatility. You can change routes and equipment as the demand needs it.
- 2) Cost. With all the budget shortfalls we as taxpayers cannot maintain a lite rail.
- 3) as a bus user. I am not going to walk 5 blocks just to use the rail system for work or to get someplace.
- 4) Diversity. There is none with rail. Routes can be covered by microbus's for a fraction of the cost.

Respectfully,
Joe

Joe Wiatros
Brooklyn Park, MN

Sent from my iPhone

Litsey, Meghan

From: C Fleming <cefleming14@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 10:25 AM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Blue Line Business Corridor proposal suggestion
Attachments: Calvary_Group_Blue_Line_Business_Corridor_Presentation.pptx

Business Corridor Proposal

Blue Line Light Rail Extension
Presented by The Calvary Group

1

Executive Summary

- Establish inclusive business corridor along Blue Line Light Rail.
- Includes Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park, and more.
- Supports small businesses, workforce growth, and equitable development.

2

Project Background

- Blue Line Extension enhances regional transit connectivity.
- Opportunity to spark revitalization in diverse communities.

3

Objectives

- Formalize business nodes.
- Integrate existing businesses.
- Promote equitable, sustainable commercial growth.
- Implement placemaking and workforce strategies.

4

Corridor Geography & Zones

- Minneapolis: Cultural and industrial zones.
- Robbinsdale: Food, wellness, downtown infill.
- Crystal: Mixed-use development near transit.
- Brooklyn Park: Tech and ethnic retail hubs.
- Fifth city TBD based on planning.

5

Stakeholder Engagement

- Governments, chambers of commerce, and planners.
- Community groups and anchor institutions.
- Residents, youth, and local business owners.

6

Proposed Activities

- Feasibility studies and advisory council.
- Brand identity, corridor portal, and business incubators.
- Markets, art fairs, and streetscape improvements.
- “Adopt a Station” activities

7

Timeline

- Phase I (0–6 mo): Feasibility and engagement.
- Phase II (6–18 mo): Zoning, branding, fundraising.
- Phase III (18–36 mo): Rollout and support.

8

Funding & Investment

- Transit-aligned public investment.
- Federal and state development grants.
- Opportunity Zones and philanthropic partners.
- CDFIs and revolving loan funds.

9

Impact Metrics

- New businesses and job creation.
- Reduced commercial vacancy rates.
- Increased MWBE participation.
- Community engagement and use.
- Sustain current businesses
- Promote a cohesive and reciprocal approach to business development and sustainability across the corridor alignment

10

Conclusion

- Strategic, cross-city corridor to ensure prosperity.
- The Calvary Group leads inclusive, lasting economic growth.

Litsey, Meghan

From: r swanson <rlsafl@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 7:31 AM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Blue line

from what i have seen in social media, almost no one wants this project.
Sent from my iPhone

Litsey, Meghan

From: Christopher Perner <clperner.3@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 4:24 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Say NO to the blue line - add buss routes instead

Take a look at the SW line and look how that turned out? Oh wait, that is still not finished and way OVER budget. Kill this bluelineExt.

Litsey, Meghan

From: Damian Palacios <damian.j.palacios@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 12:29 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Blue Line

Dear Blue Line Extension Project Team,

I live in N Minneapolis on Queen Ave N. I want to take a moment to express my full support for the METRO Blue Line Extension and commend the dedicated efforts behind this transformative initiative. Expanding transit access to North Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park is a crucial step in fostering greater mobility, economic opportunity, and equitable transportation for all. This project will not only improve accessibility and reduce travel times, but also enhance safety, promote sustainable development, and strengthen local communities. Reliable public transit is a foundation for thriving neighborhoods, and the Blue Line Extension represents an investment in a future where more residents can easily connect to jobs, education, and essential services. I appreciate the thoughtful planning and engagement that have gone into this project, and I look forward to seeing its benefits unfold across the region. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to creating a more connected and accessible transit system. After reviewing the SDEIS, I continue to be fully supportive of the MET Council's efforts to expand the Blue Line. N Minneapolis as a whole needs a project like this to bring rejuvenation and growth to a historically underserved and under utilized area of the city.

--

Science is not a body of facts. Science is a method for deciding whether what we choose to believe has a basis in the laws of nature or not. -Marcia McNutt

God's merely an imaginary figure created by humans.

Respect and enjoy the peace.

Litsey, Meghan

From: Taylorgrace Jurhs <tgjurhs@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 11:27 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment

Dear Metropolitan Council and the Federal Transit Administration,

I am a resident of Robbinsdale and I strongly oppose the proposed metro transit expansion through our area.

Many in our community are concerned about the negative impacts this project would bring, including increased noise, disruption during construction, potential declines in property value, and changes to the character of our neighborhood.

We support smart transit solutions, but this proposal does not reflect the needs or desires of our residents. Robbinsdale is not a tourist destination - we do not need a line for people to visit "West Broadway Avenue [which] offers a small-town feel with shopping districts, local restaurants, parks, and trails." We are already so close to Minneapolis and want to maintain our small town feel, not expand into the city.

Attached is a screenshot of fellow residents' comments on the matter via the City of Robbinsdale Facebook page.

Thank you,

-TG

 Share



4



10  

7

10



5

3 

256.698.4726 | tgjurhs@gmail.com

Litsey, Meghan

From: C Fleming <cefleming14@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 3:06 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: 3 additional things Minneapolis doesn't have when it comes to Housing and Displacement

Please include in the Final Report

----- Forwarded message -----

From: C Fleming <cefleming14@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Jun 2, 2025 at 8:21 AM
Subject: 3 additional things Minneapolis doesn't have when it comes to Housing and Displacement
To:

1. There is no Anti-Displacement Assessment Tool
2. There is no Minneapolis city ordinance against displacement
3. There's no policy against funding projects that promote displacement

['Anti-Displacement Tool' to Direct City Funding to Projects that Won't Price Out Residents — Shelterforce Shelterforce](#)

[ANTI-DISPLACEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL](#)

[§ 169.04 DISPLACEMENT ASSESSMENT.](#)

Litsey, Meghan

From: C Fleming <cefleming14@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 8:20 AM
To: BlueLineExt
Cc: C Fleming
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Edible Public Spaces---along the BlueLine Ext

What is an Edible Street?

Our working definition so far: Edible Streets integrate food production on publicly owned and publicly accessible land on streets, where people live and work by using underused urban areas bordering urban streets. The edible plants are visible by anyone walking in the street, easy to access by occupants of the street for maintenance and harvesting - making it easier to participate in food production. Edible streets can promote mental and physical health and help increase agency over food of marginalised groups. It is a tool for advocacy of how residents interact with their urban landscape and take ownership of it, individually, as a group or as an entire community.

Litsey, Meghan

From: C Fleming <cefleming14@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 9:22 PM
To: Gunderson, Anna Beth; BlueLineExt; gbeizon@aol.com; julioth@gmail.com; angelsimmons694@gmail.com; Marlina Gonzalez; chango.cummings@juxtaposition.org; Kubly Family; ilan.gordon@gmail.com; inverse3k@gmail.com; Felicia Perry; devasreem@yahoo.com; Ange Hwang; C Fleming
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Connecting Neighborhoods and Communities along the Blue Line Ext and Beyond using technology

A "portal" (similar to the one described below) would be a great addition to areas along the Blue Line Extension...and beyond. The "IRIS" technology is available now and can be incorporated into placekeeping opportunities.

[The Portal: Connecting Dublin And New York City | Ireland In The USA | Ireland.ie | Ireland.ie](#)

The Portal: Connecting Dublin and New York City in real time

- [Innovation](#)
- [Global citizens](#)
- [USA](#)

New York City and Dublin are now one step closer together thanks to the launch of two ground breaking public technology sculptures: Dublin Portal and NYC Portal, collectively called [The Portal](#).

The two sculptures feature a 24/7 livestream from the Portal in the other city, creating a visual bridge between the two iconic cities. Conceived as a testament to the power of art to transcend physical barriers, The Portal allows real time interaction between Dubliners, New Yorkers and visitors to each city through the livestreams.

Visiting The Portal in Dublin and New York

You can visit Dublin's Portal facing the capital's main street, O'Connell Street, capturing the vista of both Dublin's General Post Office (GPO) building and the Spire together. [Dublin City Council](#) has delivered the sculpture as part of its designation as the [European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024](#).



New York's Portal is located on the Flatiron South Public Plaza at Broadway, Fifth Avenue and 23rd Street, next to the famous Flatiron Building. It is presented by the [Flatiron NoMad Partnership](#) in collaboration with the [Simons Foundation](#), and the [New York City Department of Transportation Art Program \(NYC DOT Art\)](#).

Meet above borders and differences

Speaking about the art concept, Benediktas Gylys, Lithuanian artist and founder of The Portal, says: "Portals are an invitation to meet people above borders and differences and to experience our world as it really is—united and one. The livestream provides a window between distant locations, allowing people to meet outside of their social circles and cultures, transcend geographical boundaries, and embrace the beauty of global interconnectedness."



2. The following information is required for the purpose of the research.

The Portal was launched on 8 May 2024, and the connection between Dublin and New York City will run through to August 2024. It was unveiled in Dublin with a performance by the Liberties Majorettes, a nod to our New York connection.

Launching the Dublin Portal, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Daithí de Róiste says: “We are delighted to connect Dublin with New York which we share a deep historical and cultural bond with. I would encourage Dubliners and visitors to the City to come and interact with the sculpture and extend an Irish welcome and kindness to cities all over the world.”

Facilitating connections

Science and technology are facilitating connection across the Atlantic Ocean, providing a captivating installation and global interconnectedness for visitors.



New York City Chief Public Realm Officer Ya-Ting Liu, says: “Two amazing global cities, connected in real-time and space. That is something you do not see every day. We are so excited to have The Portal as a public interactive art installation, showcasing the vibrancy of our city streets and providing a new point for human connection between New Yorkers and Dubliners.”

Scheduled programming

Through the summer, there will be scheduled programming, including cultural performances at each city’s Portal that will be enjoyed by people in the other city via the livestream. Programming will kick-off in mid-May with a visual program to celebrate [New York Design Week Festival](#).

Litsey, Meghan

From: jan fernandez <jjfcpr@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 15, 2025 2:04 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Extension Speed

Hi,

I have concerns about the new alignment for the extension. I know that the BNSF corridor was the original plan and that it didn't work out, but the alternative route looks to be median-running for the entirety of the route. Looking at the challenges faced on the original Green Line, I'm worried about travel time/speed on this segment. The current segment of the Blue Line has true signal priority along Hiawatha, but the median running segments do not and are limited to incredibly slow speeds at times.

I read through the Route Modification Report and I can't find a single mention of train speed or how the new alignment would be impacted by speed limits and signal priority. Some travel times are posted in a press release from last year, but that doesn't really go into detail.

I utilize the Blue Line currently and it tends to be competitive with driving, but the new segment doesn't look to be that way. I'm also concerned about the potential for delays to cascade over a train missing a signal and having to wait, only to chug along slower than the cars around it, affecting the existing Blue Line segment. This is a project that will be used for decades into the future, so we should get it right the first time around.

Thanks,
Jan Fernandez-Castillo

Litsey, Meghan

From: Jonathan Hansen <jonathanhealy@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2025 1:20 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on the Blue Line Extension SFEIS

Greetings,

The sheer number of times and ways that residents and stakeholders have had to learn about this infrastructure project, interact with project staff, to provide input on the project, and influence the outcome of this project is a testament to the Metro Transit's dedication to good faith public outreach and consensus building. The route, number of stations, layout of stations, how the route fits into the existing infrastructure with minimal impacts, etc., have all changed over time due to local public input. Originally, this project was envisioned as Bus Rapid Transit before the study deemed BRT inadequate for the needs of the nearly 180,000 people who live within proximity of the project route.

Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park, as well as other nearby cities, have a variety of environmental cleanup sites due to past mistakes. In Robbinsdale alone, we have various environmental issues that are currently being addressed. One example is Crystal Lake, which was dredged in the 1940's to fill in a swamp to create a park. That swamp had been a city dump and the contaminated land was deemed unsuitable for development. Dredging the spring-fed lake broke the seal of the lake bottom, which led to the water level dropping and required that the lake bottom be sealed so that the spring no longer feeds the lake. Later work filled in a portion of the lake for a different park with material that caused Crystal Lake to be declared a "dead lake" in 1967 and the lake is on the list of impaired waters to this very day. Four decades of chemicals dumped in Crystal Lake to reduce the vegetation resulted in the devastation of plant life and now the only thing that seems to thrive there are invasive carp. Cleanup efforts on Crystal Lake have been underway for decades, but since it is now fed solely by storm drains, and PFAS has been detected in the water, people are warned not to swim in the lake or eat the fish. I bring up this example to highlight that the environmental impact of this light rail project has some risks, but they pale in comparison to what have been done in decades past.

This project has taken great care to reduce negative impacts to residents, businesses, governments, and animal/plant life. The project team has stated that any green space removed will be offset by adding green space elsewhere. I find it very responsible that this project will actually add to Minneapolis Park Board park land and not just add some park land, but will add park land in a location that makes the park land more usable for programming while also making the park safer and reducing right-of-way concerns for the hospital in Robbinsdale. For the station near the hospital in Robbinsdale alone, the project team developed a variety of options with pros and cons for the public and stakeholders to provide input on. The version selected by the project decision team differs from what was approved under Municipal Consent last year because the project team has worked so diligently to problem solve and reduce negative impacts. Metro Transit has demonstrated that they are committed to being a good neighbor.

Residents, governments, and businesses have known about this transit project for many years, and that has been factored into decisions to purchase or rent nearby, to invest in improvements, and to invest in new builds. In anticipation of this project, various housing developments along the project route are moving forward in Robbinsdale and Minneapolis. If the other high-frequency transit projects in the metro area are any indication, this project will increase the value and investment within one mile of the route.

Light rail handles icy conditions better than wheeled vehicles, so it will provide multi-modal transit that works well in the long harsh winters that the Twin Cities area experiences.

One of the best things about living in Robbinsdale (which is a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis) is how walkable the city is, and this project will increase the walkability of areas along the route in several ways. Several dangerous intersections that confuse drivers and pedestrians will be reworked, it will be significantly easier to access the Level 1 trauma center hospital in Robbinsdale and the park space nearby, and many people will gain another viable option for traveling.

People who cannot or should not drive due to limitations in vision, motor skills, cognition, or ability will benefit significantly from this project. Notably, various housing complexes for retirement age people and for people with disabilities are located along the project route. Light rail will provide a higher level of independence for these individuals.

I have spoken with hundreds and hundreds of people along the project route about this project over the past three years. The small number of people who are against the project are vocal, but when it comes to voting, the candidates who support the project keep winning. A small number of elected officials have been against the project over the past five years, but most of them are no longer in office due to a combination of losing reelection or not seeking reelection. That speaks volumes about the level of public support for this project.

I purchased my house in Robbinsdale on a bus line that I use and nearby one of the upcoming station locations. I look forward to using this transit line when it is operational!

Thank you,
Jonathan Hansen
Robbinsdale resident

Litsey, Meghan

From: Varney, Anna (FHWA) <anna.varney@dot.gov>
Sent: Friday, June 20, 2025 4:35 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Cc: Lohr, William (FHWA); Forst, Phil (FHWA); Elliott, Lisa (DOT)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FHWA MN Division Comments on Blue Line Extension SFEIS

The FHWA MN Division Office submits the following comments on the Blue Line Extension SFEIS.

Chapter 9:

Table 9-13 Permits and Approvals Required

FHWA has three actions for this SFEIS to include in the table

1. Narrowly scoped adoption of the SFEIS (currently included in table, but request addition of 'narrowly scoped')
2. FHWA ROD (not included in the table)
3. Interstate Access Modification Request (currently included in table)

Appendix A-3: Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum and Interstate Access Modification Request Process Summary

Introduction

Level of IAR/IAMR

1. This terminology is specific to MN. Suggest to reference the MnDOT TPDP (already referenced by footnote 3).
2. Including the Level 1 description for this project is optional, as a Level 1 approval is not needed.
3. The last phrase under Level 3 ('as outlined in Step 23 below') should be removed as there is no context in this appendix for that statement.

Project Levels

Level 2

First bullet – modify the last sentence after the word and: ...the 'existing' eastbound ramp terminal with W Broadway Ave.

Third bullet – modify the second sentence similar to first bullet comment: ...the 'existing' eastbound ramp terminal

Level 3 – City location is Brooklyn Park, not Crystal

Interstate Access Policy Points

Policy Point 1

1. I-94 at N 21st Ave/W Broadway Ave and Washington Ave N/17th Ave N

Last sentence modify to include safety: ...that would impact mainline I-94 operations 'and safety'

2. I-94/I-694 at Bottineau Boulevard (CSAH 81)

Last sentence modify to include safety: ...not projected to significantly impact mainline operations 'and safety'

Attachments:

1. Please include a title for each figure and indicate that the red squiggle indicates the sphere of influence of the interchange/areas that FHWA will be adopting in the SFEIS. For example, I-94/I-694 at Bottineau Boulevard (CSAH 81) for the first figure
2. The second figure is incomplete and only includes the area at N 21st Ave/W Broadway Ave west of I-94. Please also include the area at this location east of I-94, as well as the Washington Ave N/17th Ave N location.

Thank you,
Anna



Anna M. Varney, P.E.

Senior Transportation/Operations Engineer

FHWA | Minnesota Division Office

180 Fifth Street East, Suite 930 | St. Paul, MN 55101-1857

651.291.6117 | anna.varney@dot.gov

Litsey, Meghan

From: Elliott, Lisa (DOT) <Lisa.Elliott@state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, June 20, 2025 4:44 PM
To: Young, Kelcie; Pflaum, Sara; BlueLineExt
Cc: Varney, Anna (FHWA)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Sorry should have included the official blueline email. See question below.

From: Elliott, Lisa (DOT)
Sent: Friday, June 20, 2025 4:43 PM
To: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>; Pflaum, Sara (DOT) <Sara.Pflaum@state.mn.us>
Cc: Varney, Anna (FHWA) <anna.varney@dot.gov>
Subject: RE: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Thanks. Do you know if Natalie R's comment on the vibration section was resolved?

Vibration – distances for damage from vibration do not take into account upper range of pile driver energy or variations in soil type. Several bridges are located adjacent to construction within MnDOT right of way and are not mentioned as having potential construction related vibration related impacts, this should be addressed.

From: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>
Sent: Friday, June 20, 2025 3:36 PM
To: Elliott, Lisa (DOT) <Lisa.Elliott@state.mn.us>; Pflaum, Sara (DOT) <sara.pflaum@state.mn.us>
Cc: Varney, Anna (FHWA) <anna.varney@dot.gov>
Subject: RE: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Hi Lisa,

Please see attached for what we have for a comment log.

BPO has also been in coordination with FHWA on the draft IAMR – the technical/design review items have been under coordination as well, so it's my understanding the design specific review comments either have been resolved there, or will be via FHWA's review of the draft IAMR.

The SFEIS also includes an updated IAMR process memo:

[Blue Line Extension Appendix A-3. Chapter 3: Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum and Interstate Access Modification Request Process Summary](#)

Thank you, have a good weekend!

Kelcie Young, AICP
Pronouns: she/her/hers
Environmental Manager
Metro Transit

From: Elliott, Lisa (DOT) <Lisa.Elliott@state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, June 20, 2025 3:07 PM
To: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>; Pflaum, Sara <sara.pflaum@state.mn.us>

Cc: Varney, Anna (FHWA) <anna.varney@dot.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Hi Kelcie,

Is there a comment resolution log or anything so we can see how the comments were addressed?

Lisa

From: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>

Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 9:40 AM

To: Singh, Anshu (FTA) <anshu.singh1@dot.gov>; Philip Forst <phil.forst@dot.gov>; Varney, Anna (FHWA) <anna.varney@dot.gov>; Elliott, Lisa (DOT) <Lisa.Elliott@state.mn.us>; chad.konickson@usace.army.mil; Castaldi, Duane <Duane.Castaldi@fema.dhs.gov>; Toth, Joseph S CIV USARMY (USA) <joseph.toth@usace.army.mil>; melissa.jenny@faa.gov; Twin Cities, FW3 <twincities@fws.gov>; R5NEPA@epa.gov; MN_ADM_ENV Review SHPO <ENReviewSHPO@state.mn.us>

Cc: BPODMC <BPODMC@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: FW: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

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Dear Cooperating and Participating agencies on the Blue Line Extension Project,

On behalf of FTA, we are notifying you that the Supplemental Final EIS is available at BlueLineExt.org. Please see the notice below.

If you require assistance or have questions please contact me, or the FTA contact Anshu Singh.

Thank you,

Kelcie Young, AICP
Pronouns: she/her/hers
Environmental Manager
Metro Transit

From: Metropolitan Council <METC@public.govdelivery.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2025 3:46 PM

To: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>

Subject: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

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METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

The Metropolitan Council (Council) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have published a Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) and Amended Draft Section 4(f) and 6(f) Evaluation for the METRO Blue Line Extension Project. This is a significant project milestone that sets the stage for final environmental approvals, design, and construction.

Following the review period and consideration of comments received, a Federal Amended Record of Decision and Minnesota Adequacy Determination are anticipated. These steps will document the Council's and FTA's final decision regarding the environmental phase of the Project, prior to proceeding with final design, property acquisitions, and permitting.

This SFEIS follows the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) that was published for community input in June 2024. The SFEIS identifies impacts and benefits of the Project, including measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate these impacts.

The SFEIS documents the following:

- Purpose and need for the proposed Blue Line Extension project
- Alternatives considered
- Anticipated impacts that will result from implementing the project, including avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures
- Description of the proposed Blue Line Extension project's public involvement and agency coordination
- Section 106 assessment of effects on historic and cultural resources
- Responses to comments received during the SDEIS comment period

The publication of the SFEIS includes the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation that discusses effects on parks and historic properties. Final Section 4(f) determinations will be presented in a Final Section 4(f) Evaluation after the public review period.

FTA intends to publish the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation with the Amended Record of Decision.

Comment Now

Public comments on the SFEIS, including the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation and Section 106 information, will be accepted through June 22, 2025.

- Email BlueLineExt@metrotransit.org
- Written comments will also be accepted by project staff at events listed on the website at BlueLineExt.org

Personal information, if provided, may be published in environmental documents that are publicly circulated.

The SFEIS is available on the project website at BlueLineExt.org and printed to view at the following locations:

- Blue Line Extension Project Office, 6465 Wayzata Blvd., Suite 600, St. Louis Park, MN 55426
- Brooklyn Park Library, 8500 W Broadway, Brooklyn Park, MN 55445
- Rockford Road Library, 6401 N 42nd Ave., Crystal, MN 55427
- North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave. N, Minneapolis, MN 55411

To request special accommodations, contact Kaja Vang at 612-373-3918 or Kaja.Vang@metrotransit.org at least ten days prior to the end of the comment period.

BROOKLYN PARK | CRYSTAL | ROBBINSDALE | MINNEAPOLIS

20250522



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This email was sent to kelcie.young@metrotransit.org using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: Metropolitan Council · 390
Robert St. North · Saint Paul, MN 55101-1805 · 651-602-1000



Litsey, Meghan

From: Nick <robbinsdaleclimate@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 22, 2025 10:17 PM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Environmental Review Letter of Support RCC
Attachments: ER comment RCC.pdf

Hello,
Attached is our letter of support.

Thank you!
Robbinsdale Climate Collective
Nick Heid

To Metropolitan Council
Comment for Environmental Review by Robbinsdale Climate Collective (RCC)

We are writing to support the final environmental review for the Metro Blue Line Extension project, which will connect Robbinsdale to both downtown Minneapolis and to Brooklyn Park. We believe this project will be impactful to our ability to reduce local and overall transportation emissions while protecting our land and water resources in Robbinsdale and beyond. We thank metropolitan council staff and researchers for this comprehensive review.

We strongly recommend the public to take time to read this final Environmental Review and inquire further with how infrastructure projects will impact our ability for current and future ecological and environmental stewardship. This process could be repeated for other forms of transportation such as roads for cars and air travel, which all directly impact our air, noise, and emissions.

We know our communities are less natural, less biodiverse, and more dangerous due to the hundreds of thousands of speeding vehicles traveling through Robbinsdale each day. A comprehensive transit system is critical if we are to take on emissions and transportation problems seriously.

Specifically, we appreciated the following important priorities and impacts in the review:

- Concerns related to biodiversity loss and threatened species like the listed pollinators such as the bats (tricolor and others), bees (rusty patched bumble bee), and butterflies (monarchs), along with the projects' increased attention to Robbinsdale's known Blanding Turtle(s).
- Attention to reducing use of plastic that may sit/soak into the soils like plastic ground nets for soil retention and landscaping and other lasting polluting substances.
- Ensuring that the 13% of Robbinsdale residents without a vehicle at home have reliable, safe, and quick public transportation options. Most Robbinsdale residents will be able to walk to the Robbinsdale BLT station in 10-15 minutes.

- Reducing ~40,000 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per day, allowing some Robbinsdale residents to drive less by 14% as our state transportation climate goals indicate, reducing the vehicle emissions in the city caused by car travel.
- Stakeholder efforts and community input to maintain transparency and collaboration.

We thank the Metropolitan Council for their efforts and express our enthusiasm for the Blue Line in Robbinsdale.

Robbinsdale Climate Collective (RCC)

Nick Heid



INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 20, 2025

TO: Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager
Capital Programs

CC: Councilmembers Reva Chamblis (2), Yassin Osman (7), Anjuli Cameron (8), Sector Representative Amber Turnquest

FROM: Joe Widing, Senior Transportation Planner
Multimodal Planning, Metropolitan Transportation Services

SUBJECT: METRO Blue Line Light Rail Extension Project Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) Internal Review Comments
Review File #22981-2

Greetings.

Below is a summary of technical comments received by various technical reviewers at the Met Council. Please review these comments and contact me if there are any questions.

Metropolitan Transportation Services (Joe Widing, 651-602-1822)

- 2050 Transportation Policy Plan
The Blue Line Extension final transitway alignment and projected funding needs found in the SFEIS are in the process of being amended into the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan. This item is going to the Met Council's Transportation Committee to be released for public comment at its June 23, 2025, meeting.

Metropolitan Environmental Services (Roger Janzig, 651-602-1121)

- The METRO Blue Line Extension may have an impact on multiple Metropolitan Council Interceptors in multiple locations along the proposed alignment. To assess the potential impacts to our interceptor system; prior to initiating the project, preliminary plans should be sent to Tim Wedin, Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager (651-602-4571 / timothy.wedin@metc.state.mn.us) at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services.

Regional Parks (Colin Kelly, 651-602-1361)

- There are multiple existing units of the Regional Parks and Trails System in the vicinity of the LRT extension project, all of which are regional trails or have park land associated with a regional trail. These include Cedar Lake, Theodore Wirth/Victory Memorial Parkway, Crystal Lake, Twin Lakes, and Rush Creek regional trails. The Supplemental Final EIS (SFEIS) acknowledges each of these trails and associated park land, as well as the two regional park implementing agencies that own and operate these trails; Minneapolis Park and Recreation

Board (MPRB) and Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) (SFEIS, Table ES-4 Uses of Section 4(f) Properties (Build Alternative), pgs. 23-24; pg. 4-17).

- The SFEIS acknowledges the construction of the LRT extension project would have a temporary occupancy impact on Twin Lakes Boat Launch Park (TRPD), Crystal Lake Regional Trail (TRPD), and park property adjacent to Rush Creek Regional Trail (TRPD). The SFEIS also acknowledges that the project would have a de minimis use impact on Wirth/Victory Memorial Parkway Regional Trail (MPRB) (SFEIS, Table ES-4 Uses of Section 4(f) Properties (Build Alternative), pgs. 23-24). “For parks/recreational areas, a de minimis use is one that would not adversely affect the features, attributes, or activities qualifying the property for protection under Section 4(f)” (SFEIS, pg. 8-2).
- In addition, the SFEIS acknowledges that the character and quality of visual change from Key Viewpoint 1 – that is, the view to the southwest toward the proposed Operations and Maintenance Facility from the Rush Creek Regional Trail – will be substantially altered, resulting in an adverse level of impact (SFEIS, pg. 4-51).
- While the SFEIS suggests the project is likely to have many positive outcomes – for example, “the addition of a bridge across I-94 at N 21st Avenue would provide transit, pedestrian, and bicycling mode options, and connectivity across I-94 would promote community cohesion and access to the Mississippi River and regional trails” (SFEIS, pg. 4-21) – the potential for users of the Rush Creek Regional Trail to perceive the visual quality and character of the area near the proposed Operations and Maintenance Facility as “substantially altered” is concerning to Met Council Parks and Trails staff.
- Prior to any construction activities, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and/or Met Council should coordinate with the regional park implementing agencies whose trail corridors and associated park land have the potential to be impacted, including MPRB (Cedar Lake, Theodore Wirth/Victory Memorial parkways) and Three Rivers Park District (Crystal Lake, Twin Lakes, and Rush Creek). Such coordination should include (but should not be limited to) communication of construction timelines, avoidance or mitigation of potential impacts, and public awareness efforts regarding construction, detours, and any other impacts, including the use of temporary signage and the communication of closures and detours online. Because of the potential for adverse visual impact to Rush Creek Regional Trail, coordination with Three Rivers Park District should be considered a high priority.

Forecasts (Todd Graham, 651-602-1322)

- In the SFEIS document, several map figures (pp 2.13 – 2.15) that represent forecasted growth have a source line “Source: Metropolitan Council Annual Population Estimates.” The actual sources are Metropolitan Council, forecasts by community, published here [https://metrocouncil.org/Data-and-Maps/Publications-And-Resources/Files-and-reports/Thrive-MSP-2040-Local-Forecasts-\(FINAL-UPDATE\)-\(1\).aspx](https://metrocouncil.org/Data-and-Maps/Publications-And-Resources/Files-and-reports/Thrive-MSP-2040-Local-Forecasts-(FINAL-UPDATE)-(1).aspx) ; and forecasts by Transportation Analysis Zone (version December 2020), published here <https://gisdata.mn.gov/dataset/us-mnstate-metc-trans-anlys-zones-offical-curent>
- The SFEIS makes use of Thrive MSP 2040 forecasts and (adopted) City Comprehensive Plan forecasts – both city-level and transportation zone-level – that were prepared during 2015-2020.
- In February 2025, Metropolitan Council adopted new forecasts for the 2050 planning cycle. These were not available in time for the SFEIS.

Land Use (Amber Turnquest, 651-602-1576)

- City of Robbinsdale
 - The City’s adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan recognized existing and planned transitways that are part of the Current Revenue Scenario of the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP). The TPP directs Urban Center communities with planned light rail transit

- (LRT) to guide average minimum residential densities within the station area (area within 10-minute walk or 1/2 mile).
 - Planned densities for areas identified for redevelopment near station areas along transit routes are generally consistent with the minimum density required in the TPP. However, with the realignment of the METRO Blue line extension and addition of a new station, Lowry Ave, which serves both Robbinsdale and Minneapolis, the City should review, and where necessary, amend its comprehensive plan to be consistent with the regional development guide and the TPP for minimum planned densities around station areas.
- City of Minneapolis
 - The City's adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan recognized existing and planned transitways that are part of the Current Revenue Scenario of the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP). The TPP directs Urban Center communities with planned light rail transit (LRT) to guide average minimum residential densities within the station area (area within 10-minute walk or 1/2 mile).
 - Planned densities for areas identified for redevelopment near station areas along transit routes are generally consistent with the minimum density required in the TPP. However, with the realignment of the METRO Blue line extension and addition of new stations, Lowry Avenue, which serves both Minneapolis and Robbinsdale; Penn Avenue; James Avenue, Lyndale Avenue; West Broadway; and Plymouth Avenue; the City should review and where necessary, amend its comprehensive plan to be consistent with the regional development guide and the TPP for minimum planned densities around station areas.



Northside Residents Redevelopment Council
1303 Golden Valley Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411
(612) 335-5924
contactus@nrrc.org

The creation of a Community Investment Fund, as described in section 4.2.4.1. is an essential mitigation program. The Community Investment Fund should be used for the following purposes:

- Property tax freeze for 5 years for homeowners in North Minneapolis. For homeowners who are low income or have lived in their home for at least 15 years, the property tax freeze would be extended for an additional 5 years. We look to the Invest Atlanta Anti-Displacement Tax Relief Fund Program as a model.
- Rent freeze from 2026-2036 for residents living in the corridor
- Down payment assistance for residents who currently rent in the corridor to purchase homes in the corridor
- Home improvement forgivable loans
- Eviction prevention
- Foreclosure prevention

When providing relocation assistance to residents who have been displaced by the project, information regarding community organizations that have been awarded Community Investment Funds needs to be included.

Small businesses need support before, during, and after construction. Small business support needs to be expanded from a maximum of \$30,000 per business and \$5 million total to \$30,000 before & during construction and \$30,000 after construction, for a total of \$60,000 per business and \$10 million total.

Community members need to design plans to address public safety issues at stations and funds need to be designated for implementation of the plans. Also, we need an additional pedestrian crossing determined by the input of residents living on West Broadway across from the YMCA, in order to facilitate the safe crossing of children going to the YMCA and North Commons Park.

Sincerely,

The Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, NRRC

Litsey, Meghan

From: Young, Kelcie
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 3:32 PM
Cc: BPODMC; BlueLineExt
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] FW: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
Attachments: 11_Chapter-05_FWSComments05292025.pdf; 33_Appendix-A-5-Biological-Environment-Technical-Report_FWSComments05292025.pdf; 34_Appendix-A-5-Biological-Environment-Documents_FWSComments05292025.pdf

From: Mahoney, Kathleen R <kathleen_mahoney@fws.gov>
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 3:21 PM
To: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] FW: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Hi Kelcie,

Attached are comments and revisions related to federally listed species. Let me know if you have any questions.

Kathleen

Kathleen Mahoney
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
MN-WI Ecological Services Field Office
3815 American Blvd. E.
Bloomington, MN 55425
(612) 979-8659

From: Twin Cities, FW3 <TwinCities@fws.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 9:13 AM
To: Mahoney, Kathleen R <kathleen_mahoney@fws.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] FW: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office*
3815 American Boulevard East
Bloomington, MN 55425

*f/k/a Twin Cities Ecological Services Field Office

(952) 858-0793

From: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>

Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 9:40 AM

To: Singh, Anshu (FTA) <anshu.singh1@dot.gov>; Forst, Phil (FHWA) <Phil.Forst@dot.gov>; Varney, Anna (FHWA) <anna.varney@dot.gov>; Elliott, Lisa (DOT) <lisa.elliott@state.mn.us>; chad.konickson@usace.army.mil <chad.konickson@usace.army.mil>; Castaldi, Duane <Duane.Castaldi@fema.dhs.gov>; Toth, Joseph S CIV USARMY (USA) <joseph.toth@usace.army.mil>; melissa.jenny@faa.gov <melissa.jenny@faa.gov>; Twin Cities, FW3 <TwinCities@fws.gov>; R5NEPA@epa.gov <R5NEPA@epa.gov>; MN_ADM_ENV Review SHPO <ENReviewSHPO@state.mn.us>

Cc: BPODMC <BPODMC@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Dear Cooperating and Participating agencies on the Blue Line Extension Project,
On behalf of FTA, we are notifying you that the Supplemental Final EIS is available at BlueLineExt.org. Please see the notice below.

If you require assistance or have questions please contact me, or the FTA contact Anshu Singh.

Thank you,

Kelcie Young, AICP
Pronouns: she/her/hers
Environmental Manager
Metro Transit

From: Metropolitan Council <METC@public.govdelivery.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2025 3:46 PM

To: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>

Subject: Notice: METRO Blue Line Extension Publishes Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)



4141 Douglas Drive North • Crystal, Minnesota 55422-1696

Tel: (763) 531-1000 • Fax: (763) 531-1188 • www.crystalmn.gov

June 23, 2025

Alicia Vap
Project Director
METRO Blue Line Extension
6465 Wayzata Blvd #500
St Louis Park, MN 55426

Subject: City of Crystal comments on Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement for the METRO Blue Line Extension

Dear Ms. Vap:

Thank you for the opportunity to formally comment on the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement ("SFEIS") for the METRO Blue Line Extension ("the project").

The city appreciates that several items from the city's Aug. 2, 2024, comment letter regarding the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("SDEIS") were specifically addressed.

However, the city is disappointed that the following three items from the city's Aug. 2, 2024, comment letter were not addressed in the SFEIS:

Vehicular Traffic - SDEIS comment 1(b)

City SDEIS comment from Aug. 2, 2024:

"The SDEIS does not specifically evaluate the traffic shift from Bottineau Blvd. to West Broadway due to the lane reduction on Bottineau.

- *This need is supported by the future diversion of 1,000 AADT from Bottineau Blvd. to the parallel segment of West Broadway in the no-build forecast.*
- *This diversion would likely be greater due to the project and its reduction of lanes on Bottineau Blvd. from six lanes to four.*

- *The city is concerned about diversion of traffic from an existing high-speed limited access road to a low-speed road of substandard condition and configuration, as described in the City Council's July 16, 2024, letter to the project.*
- *The traffic shift needs to be specifically evaluated in the revised forecast, model, and simulation. Only then can the project's impact on West Broadway be correctly evaluated."*

City comment regarding the SFEIS released May 23, 2025:

The SFEIS does not acknowledge or discuss the traffic shift to West Broadway (CSAH 8). If the project did complete the evaluation specifically requested by the city on Aug. 2, 2024, the project has failed to include it in the SFEIS or provide it separately for city review and comment. If such an evaluation exists, then it should have been included in the SFEIS so the city could use the 30-day comment period to review and comment on the substance of the analysis. Instead, the project's failure to include it in the SFEIS has relegated the city to use the 30-day comment period to call out this omission from the SFEIS.

The June 23, 2025 email from the project stating that "the amount of additional traffic did not change traffic operation on CSAH 8" is unsatisfactorily vague and completely sidesteps the city's primary concern - that the project would divert traffic from a modern roadway (CSAH 81) to a substandard roadway (CSAH 8) with many deficiencies, most importantly a lack of accommodations for non-motorized travel. The June 23 email further states that "CSAH 8 will be the responsibility of Hennepin County," which is an inappropriately blithe response because evaluating the impact of Metro Transit's project and potential mitigation measures is the responsibility of Metro Transit.

Vehicular Traffic - SDEIS comment 1(d)

City SDEIS comment from Aug. 2, 2024:

"The SDEIS does not specifically evaluate the impact of the lane reduction on the existing southbound queuing problem north of the 47th Avenue signal.

- *Existing backups during the a.m. peak typically extend to 50th Avenue and occasionally extend through the Corvallis intersection. And this is with three southbound lanes.*
- *The project proposes to eliminate the third southbound lane except for a short segment from Lakeside to 47th Avenue, which is approximately half the length of the existing a.m. peak queue.*
- *It is a reasonable assumption that the project's significant reduction of road space will cause the southbound queues to extend further north and occur more frequently than in the existing condition.*

- *Due to the proposed interchange at Bass Lake Road, southbound traffic will be transitioning from a wide-open, freeway-style, 1½ mile long segment south of 63rd Ave. to traffic signals with congestion and queues.*
- *Southbound traffic would be cresting the bridge over the CPKC when it would first see the slowed or stopped queue, with little time to react. Having a third lane start just 1,000 feet north of 47th does not address this real-world traffic safety problem.*
- *The SDEIS must specifically evaluate the southbound queuing problem. Only then can the project's impact on traffic movement and safety be correctly evaluated."*

City comment regarding the SFEIS released May 23, 2025:

The SFEIS does not acknowledge or discuss the impact of the lane reduction on the existing southbound queuing problem north of the 47th Avenue signal. If the project did complete the evaluation specifically requested by the city on Aug. 2, 2024, the project has failed to include it in the SFEIS or provide it separately for city review and comment. If such an evaluation exists, then it should have been included in the SFEIS so the city could use the 30-day comment period to review and comment on the substance of the analysis. Instead, the project's failure to include it in the SFEIS has relegated the city to use the 30-day comment period to call out this omission from the SFEIS.

The June 23, 2025 email from the project stating that "the queuing concern occurs for a short period of time in the morning and that including the choice lane could create safety issues for the drivers" is unsatisfactory for at least two reasons: (1) it is dismissive of the anticipated impact of the project on a known, existing, real-world traffic problem, and (2) it rules out one potential mitigation measure without including the analysis to support that conclusion.

Public Safety - SDEIS comment 7

City SDEIS comment from Aug. 2, 2024:

"The SDEIS does not evaluate the impact of the project on public safety in general and local law enforcement agencies in particular. The SDEIS merely lists those agencies and the broad categories or services they provide.

- *The city is likely to see increased demand for police services based on the known reality of what happens at LRT stations in other jurisdictions.*
- *Even a fully-staffed Metro Transit Police Dept. would frequently be delayed and sometimes totally unavailable, causing the Crystal Police Dept. to be the first responding agency at the Bass Lake Road station.*
- *The SDEIS needs to evaluate the public safety impacts, including the increased demand for services from local first responders. Only then can the impacts on public safety be correctly evaluated."*

City comment regarding the SFEIS released May 23, 2025:

The SFEIS does not evaluate the increased demand for services from local first responders such as city police departments. This concern has been brought up by the Crystal City Council, city staff, and community members repeatedly in various settings for some time. While it is worthwhile and essential to design the project with public safety in mind, this is no substitute for estimating the increased demands on local law enforcement as a result of the project.

The city does not understand why this analysis was not included in the SFEIS, as 9-1-1 call data and police reports should be available for the project to estimate the percentage of calls to which Metro Transit Police are the first responders on scene versus local police departments. Because the primary purpose of the EIS process is to identify impacts and propose mitigations, this analysis should have been included in the SFEIS so the city could use the 30-day comment period to review and comment on the substance of the analysis. Instead, the project's failure to include it in the SFEIS has relegated the city to use the 30-day comment period to call out this omission from the SFEIS

Also, while SFEIS describes plans for a Metro Transit Police substation at the Downtown Robbinsdale station, two miles from the Bass Lake Road station, there is no discussion of a commitment by Metro Transit Police to staff the station at any particular level. The existence of a police substation does little to reduce the project's burden on local police departments if the substation ends up being an empty office most of the time. And because there is no estimate of the impacts of the project on local police departments and other first responders, there is no way to evaluate whether the police substation would actually mitigate those impacts.

The city appreciates this opportunity to formally comment on the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement. The city also appreciates the commitment, stated in the June 23, 2025, email from the project, "to work with City staff on including appropriate amount of detail to respond in the AROD." Please feel free to contact me at 763.531.1140 or adam.bell@crystalmn.gov with any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Adam R. Bell
City Manager

cc: Charlie Zelle, Chair, Corridor Management Committee, METRO Blue Line Extension
Commissioner Jeff Lunde, Hennepin County Board, District 1
Council Member Anjuli Cameron, Metropolitan Council, District 8

Litsey, Meghan

From: rmmartens cfrmoney.net <rmmartens@cfrmoney.net>
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2025 1:46 AM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: [EXTERNAL] comments Blue Line Extension LRT

Greetings

These are my comments

Background

West Broadway Avenue is a major east-west thoroughfare through North Minneapolis. It is one of the main streets of North Minneapolis. It is heavily used for people going to Broadway businesses, to nearby residences, to access I 94 and is the most direct route to North Memorial Hospital, one of the 1st two Level One Trauma Hospitals in Minneapolis. Level One Trauma Hospitals can reduce mortality by 25% compared to other hospitals. Time is life in emergency situations. Survival rates for heart attacks increases significantly if a patient reaches the emergency room of a hospital in less than 1 hour. The same principle applies to victims of car accidents and violent crimes. It also applies to response times to fires.

Currently W. Broadway is 2 traffic lane and a parking lane in each direction for a total of 6 lanes.

The median income of North Minneapolis is below the median income of black people nationally. Median income in North Minneapolis is less than half of the median income for the city of Minneapolis as a whole. Clear proof that North Minneapolis is economically depressed is the lack of big box stores and even regional chains(ex. Lunds and Byerlys, Caribou Coffee, new car dealerships, Dominos Pizza etc.) in North Minneapolis today.

North Minneapolis has been designated as a national Promise and Opportunity Zones and Green zone. To qualify as a Promise and Opportunity Zones, North Minneapolis must be an area of concentrated poverty.

Comments

Displaced Businesses won't be replaced because North Minneapolis is an economically depressed area.(See lack of big box stores and and regional chains) Because North Minneapolis is economically depressed there is no incentive for national, regional and local chain stores to locate new stores in North Minneapolis either before or after the Blue Line Extension LRT is built

When the green line was built between Minneapolis and St Paul, 300 small businesses went out of business. The project manager for the Blue Line Extension LRT wasn't concerned about this because other businesses replaced them. Many of the new businesses were apartments that were owned by people living in the suburbs or in other states which took money out of the local economy instead of recycling it like was done when the 300 small business was were located there.

Switching from two traffic lanes plus parking in each direction to only one traffic lane and no parking in each direction will severely slow emergency vehicles. There is no way for cars to get out of the way of emergency vehicles if there is only one traffic lane and no parking lines. Are emergency vehicles expected to drive on the sidewalk or LRT tracks to avoid cars? (Sarcasm)

Since West Broadway is one of the main routes to the level 1 trauma hospital North Memorial it is very very important that emergency vehicles be able to quickly and efficiently travel down West Broadway to North Memorial.

The project manager for the blue line extension had an opportunity at presentations before the Hennipen County Commissioners and a Committee of the City of Minneapolis to explain why having only 1 traffic lane and no parking lane, wouldn't be a problem, but he refused to provide an explanation of why it wouldn't be a problem for emergency vehicles.

Eliminating on street parking will force small businesses that cannot afford to provide off street parking to go out of business and lay their employees off

Going from two traffic lanes to one traffic lane will certainly increase the level of air pollution from auto exhaust in North Minneapolis. North Minneapolis already has elevated levels of asthma and other respiratory diseases

R. Michael Martens
612.747.7096
rmmartens@cfrmoney.net

You are either part the problem of the political devisions in US today or part of the solution. Please choose wisely for sake of your children and grandchildren

Litsey, Meghan

From: Young, Kelcie
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2025 7:47 AM
To: BlueLineExt
Subject: FW: City of Minneapolis SFEIS comments
Attachments: SFEIS_DetailedComments_Attachment_06122025_LIMS.pdf

From: Fogt, Kelsey N <kelsey.fogt@minneapolismn.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 23, 2025 10:26 PM
To: Young, Kelcie <kelcie.young@metrotransit.org>
Cc: Schukking, Menno <menno.schukking@minneapolismn.gov>; Mayell, Kathleen <kathleen.mayell@minneapolismn.gov>; Sengsoulichanh, Rattana (he/him/his) <Rattana.Sengsoulichanh@Minneapolismn.gov>; Voll, James <James.Voll@minneapolismn.gov>; Mouta, Madel <Madel.Mouta@minneapolismn.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] City of Minneapolis SFEIS comments

Hi Kelcie,

The City of Minneapolis' comments on the METRO Blue Line Extension Supplement Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) are attached and posted here: [SFEIS Detailed Comments Attachment](#). Currently, these are in Mayoral Review but we anticipate they will be approved and published as written.

Please let me know if you need the final city action and I can forward that to you once published. The legislative file link is here: [2025-00626 - Blue Line LRT Extension SFEIS comments](#).

A cover letter that is not intended to be submitted with or included as part of our official SFEIS comments will be forthcoming.

Thank you,
Kelsey

Kelsey Fogt
Senior Transportation Planner
Pronouns*: she/her

City of Minneapolis – Department of Public Works
505 4th Avenue South, Room 410
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Work Cell: 612-790-7132
kelsey.fogt@minneapolismn.gov

[*Why this matters](#)

METRO Blue Line Extension

Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement Comments

June 12, 2025

The City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development and Public Works departments have compiled comments on the Blue Line Extension Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS). The SFEIS identifies anticipated benefits and potential impacts of the project, describes specific measures that will be taken to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential negative effects of the project and incorporates City comments on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Statement (SDEIS) that were approved by the City Council in July 2024 (<https://lims.minneapolismn.gov/file/2024-00761>). Additional background and a description of the SFEIS is included in the accompanying Request for Council Action (RCA).

As part of the SFEIS, the Project Office has responded to City staff comments on the SDEIS. Staff acknowledges and appreciates these responses. Staff also appreciate the efforts led by the Project Office and project partners in continuing to advance and address City comments that are outside the scope of the environmental documentation that were submitted in July 2024 as part of the SDEIS comment period, in October 2024 as part of the Municipal Consent process and through reoccurring coordination meetings. These ongoing parallel efforts to address comments includes engineering and design, construction planning, anti-displacement, relocation assistance and cultural placekeeping. City staff appreciate the opportunity to comment on the SFEIS and look forward to continuing to refine designs and related programs with the Project Office to address community needs and advance shared goals through the completion of the Blue Line Extension project.

Detailed Technical Comments

Comments refer to page, figure, and table numbers as shown in the courtesy DRAFT version of the SFEIS shared with the City on May 15, 2025. Some page, figure, and table number references may differ from the SFEIS shared publicly on May 23, 2025.

Executive Summary

1. Summary of change of impacts table sometimes quantifies and sometimes doesn't quantify change (e.g. noise and vibration impacts not quantified now, but was in 2016); recommend being consistent.
2. Describes changes in Minneapolis inconsistently - a bike/ped mall vs transit mall for 21st Ave N vs 10th Ave; should be consistent.

Chapter 1 Purpose and Need

3. Page 1-6: Reference to 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP); should update to 2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP).
4. Page 1-8: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP Ave N in Section 1.2.1.
5. Page 1-15: Why are areas of MPLS predicted for job loss?
6. Page 1-16: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP.
7. Page 1-25: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP.

Chapter 2 Alternatives

8. Page 2-9: 3rd St N connection around North Loop Parking Garage/Redwell/Twin Cities International School is no longer included in design plans.
9. Page 2-12: Transit/pedestrian/bicycle mall on 10th Ave is only between Washington Ave and 4th St N, not 5th St N.
10. Page 2-12: Table 2-5 could use a map.
11. Page 2-13: 3rd St N extends from the existing cul-de-sac to 12th Ave N.
12. Page 2-14: Include extension of 8th Ave N to 7th St N.
13. Page 2-14: Notes on the 8th Ave N improvements include description of providing ADA improvements. Will these types of improvements (e.g., ADA-compliant pedestrian curb ramps) be provided with the other improvements noted in Table 2-5?
14. Page 2-14: 8th Ave at Washington Ave should include a traffic signal.
15. Page 2-17: Roadway and tracks over Basset Creek tunnel will also be considered a structure.

Chapter 3 Transportation

16. Table 3-1: Mitigation table omits 8th Ave extension in the North Loop.
17. Page 3-8: Table 3-4: Confirm ridership numbers for W Broadway and Lyndale stations, may have been flipped?
18. Page 3-8: Transit Impacts Minimization: Plan for "bus bridge" transit stops and operations during LRT maintenance or service disruptions.
19. Page 3-25: Note the need in Section 3.3 for additional bike parking facilities at and near stations to accommodate additional bicycle trips to and from transit.
20. Page 3-27: Table 3-20 does not show the traffic calming devices and retrofit bikeway on North 2nd Street from Plymouth Ave to Hennepin Ave that is included in the project and shown in Appendix 13_A-E.
21. Page 3-41: Note the need in Section 3.4 to discuss ongoing traffic modeling and design coordination on the North 7th Street and Olson Memorial Highway intersection area.
22. Page 3-41: Note the need in Section 3.4 to discuss need for traffic calming, such as speed bumps and traffic circles, on neighborhood streets near Lowry Station area with updated design that disconnects the Parkway from Lowry. This may increase traffic in the neighborhood on 29th Ave, Thomas Ave, Upton Ave, and Vincent Ave.
23. Page 3-48: Table 3-39: Continue design coordination on allowing alleyway access to North 10th Ave bikeway.
24. Page 3-48: Table 3-39: Does not discuss new 8th Ave extension between 3rd St and 5th St.
25. Page 3-54: Between 29th Ave and Irving Ave, parking bays were added to three quadrants of the Penn Ave intersection, and just north of the Newton Ave intersection (in front of 2005 W Broadway). Please list number of parking spots added.
26. Page 3-54: Table 3-43: Parking is maintained on Washburn Ave in the southbound direction and continues to be refined through ongoing design coordination.
27. Page 3-54L Table 3-43: Parking bays were added in the northbound direction on Washington Ave near 18th Ave N and continues to be refined through ongoing design coordination.
28. Page 3-59: Penn/Broadway parking mitigation: The surface parking lot is a short-term mitigation. The City will continue to work with the project partners on solutions that meet the long-term goal in replacing surface parking lot with Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).

29. Page 3-49: Note the need in Section 3.5 to discuss ongoing design coordination on parking zone designations for short term parking, disability parking, metered parking, loading zones, and electric vehicle charging locations.

Appendix 15_A-3 Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum and Interstate Access

Modification Request Process Summary

30. Page 27, 42: No Build scenario assumes North 7th St reconstruction will include a four-lane to a three-lane conversion. The North 7th St project cross-section was not determined at time of modeling. Traffic modeling and design coordination on the North 7th Street and Olson Memorial Highway intersection area is ongoing.
31. Page 49: There is a median island at W Broadway Ave & Bryant Ave making this intersection right-in, right-out only.
32. Page 108: Intersection 56: CSAH 153 (N Lowry Ave)/N Washburn Ave intersection – Note that the current design includes bidirectional traffic on Washburn Ave.
33. Page 113: Intersection 77: Note that the current design does not include a dedicated right turn lane at West Broadway/Lyndale Ave intersection.
34. Page 116: Intersection 93: Note that the eastbound to northbound dedicated right turn lane at Plymouth Ave/Washington Ave has been removed in the current design.
35. Page 116: Intersection 94: Does not show mitigated build configuration at Plymouth Ave/North 2nd Street.

Chapter 4 Community and Social Analysis

The purpose of the SFEIS is to identify anticipated environmental benefits and potential impacts of the project and describes specific measures that will be taken to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential negative environmental effects of the project. In addition to the SFEIS and in response to community feedback, project partners have been working on identifying actions, policies and funding options to support community residents and businesses through anti-displacement and cultural placekeeping strategies. These comments are shared during the SFEIS comment period but City staff acknowledge that addressing them is a concurrent and parallel planning and programming process done in partnership, led by Hennepin County.

36. Staff will continue to participate in Section 106 consulting parties meetings on behalf of the Minneapolis HPC and may provide comments in the future through this avenue.
37. Page 2: Cultural Resources table in one column lists adverse effects to 2 HPs and 4 HDs, but in the next column says the 2 HPs include 1 one building and 1 district. This doesn't add up.
38. Page 21: Last sentence in first paragraph of Minneapolis section refers to a gate crossing at an intersection - unclear which intersection.
39. Page 22: Need to clarify who is constructing parking, City-owned lots are short-term.
40. Page 4-19: The City is interested in the relationship of the proposed operating-phase mitigation measures for the identified corridor-wide effects, and its effects on advancing the desired outcomes identified in the Anti-Displacement Workgroup (ADWG) Recommendations Report (May 2023), and the coordination of strategies identified in the Coordinated Action Plan for Anti-displacement (August 2024). In order to get the cumulative benefits of these discrete and separate programs - they must be administered in a coordinated way that facilitates desired material and social outcomes.

41. Page 4-22 to 4-23: The City is supportive of the identified operating-phase mitigation measures. It will be important for the Project Office to develop clear implementation steps with accountability measures in Partnership with the City and community stakeholders to ensure the successful administration of these measures - including ongoing support and follow-up with beneficiaries of these programs and how the programs support the mitigation goals. The City is supportive of the identified construction-phase mitigation measures. We would like the Project Office to develop clear implementation steps with accountability measures in Partnership with the City and community stakeholders to ensure the successful administration of these measures - including ongoing support and follow-up with beneficiaries of these programs and how the programs support the mitigation goals.
42. Page 4-27: Table 4-15. Staff note the permanent easement impact of 22.5 Acres in Minneapolis needed to deliver the Project, and accommodate the lines, lanes, and stations. We understand the long-term benefits that comes with this opportunity to accommodate space for a high-quality ROW that includes sidewalks, greening and trees, street lighting, and designing for safe and active modes of transportation.
43. Page 4-28: Staff note that the Project Office will need to address operating-phase (long-term impacts) impacted property acquisitions and the resulting displacement of businesses, households, and tenants in accordance with the Uniform Act. We would like to recommend that the Project Office develop a comprehensive implementation approach that goes above the minimum and employs best practices to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach so that stakeholders who are impacted can understand all available resources and options that are available from local agencies and Project Partners that they are eligible for.
44. Page 4-28: In the event of tenants of residential and non-residential displacements do not have funds to incur upfront expenses related to moving and/or re-establishing their business/use - the Project Office should identify monies that can be expended in place of a reimbursement process to support facilitating the relocation of displaced tenants and/or businesses.

Chapter 5 Physical and Environmental Analysis

45. Page 5-9: Utility map for Minneapolis is difficult to read since there are many overlapping utilities in the project corridor.
46. Page 5-9: Utilities along roadways that will be reconstructed or impacted by the project are not noted in the map and following text, such as the utilities on West Broadway between the James Ave station and Lyndale Ave N.
47. Page 5-10: The existing text reads: "Water mains under LRT track alignments should be inspected annually by City staff." City of Minneapolis Public Works disagrees with this. It should state "Water mains under or adjacent to LRT track alignments shall be tested for stray current and maintained by The Metropolitan Council. Test reporting and corrective measures shall be communicated with the respective Utility."
48. Page 5-10: Consider whether overhead utilities need to be undergrounded to allow for fire access needs, especially along 10th Ave N and 21st Ave N.
49. Page 5-11: There are additional utilities in Minneapolis that will be impacted by the project that are not noted in 5.1.3.1 Build Alternative such as the 48" water main near Lowry Ave and West Broadway/CR81.
50. Noise and vibration from the LRT operations and construction must be mitigated; cost effectiveness should not be a determining factor in whether noise and vibration impacts will be mitigated by the project.

51. Page 5-28: Were residential units at 900 N 4th St (Salvation Army) and 901 3rd St N included as residential properties in the noise and vibration analysis?
52. Pages 5-6 to 5-11: Consider additional strategies such as backup power during outages, utility service audits, or guaranteed access to cooling/heating. A more inclusive solution could be to have a public education campaign on upgraded infrastructure, water/sewer protections, and whom to contact during or post-construction.
53. Pages 5-13 to 5-36: Consider co-locating flood mitigation areas with areas intended for public benefit such as public greenspace, stormwater gardens, etc. to address public comments and City goals on open space, habitat and ecological design, and promote long-term groundwater health.
54. Pages 5-36 to 5-45: Mitigation strategies outline requirements for proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials during construction.
55. Pages 5-46 to 5-59: Does not include mitigation for outdoor noise exposure, such as green buffer installation. Consider installing dense native plantings as green sound barriers along constrained corridors. Consider incorporating community respite areas like pocket parks or outdoor pavilions to mitigate constant ambient noise stress. Including quiet zones, plantings, or alternative materials could strengthen outcomes.
56. Pages 5-59 to 5-63: No long-term building health checks or community supports if damage occurs. Consider adding retrofit support or post-construction assessments and building condition surveys post-construction to address long-term maintenance if vibration worsens structural health of buildings.
57. Pages 5-63 to 5-74: Consider identifying and installing pollinator corridors along the alignment using native plants, prioritizing and planting trees in under-canopied areas, and seeking community input on replanting.
58. Pages 5-74 to 5-79: Public comments identified a desire to have spaces for amenities to the community. Consider creating stormwater gardens like pocket parks and other destination spaces that people can use while serving stormwater function.
59. Pages 5-80 to 5-84: Consider additional tree planting to improve air quality and provide shade and comfort, especially along 21st Avenue. Consider expanding tree canopy along the corridor, especially in low-canopy areas, to filter air pollutants, mitigate heat, and create long-term public health and environmental benefits.

Appendix 23_A-5_03_Noise and Vibration Technical Report

60. Page 60: Cost effectiveness should not be a determining factor for whether noise and vibration impacts are mitigated.

Chapter 6 Cumulative Potential Effects (per MN Rules § 4410), Reasonably Foreseeable Trends and Future Plans

61. Page 6-7: The time frame for analysis should be 2050, in alignment with Imagine 2050.
62. Page 6-11: The time frame for analysis should be 2050, in alignment with Imagine 2050.
63. Page 6-12: The time frame for analysis should be 2050, in alignment with Imagine 2050.

Chapter 7 Chapter Analysis Removed per Federal Policy Guidance 2025

64. While Federal Executive Orders 14148 and 14173 rescinded consideration of Environmental Justice analyses and resulted in the removal of this chapter, the City remains committed to working with the Project Office to ensure this project serves the needs of those most impacted by its

construction. At a minimum, this includes continuing the work and detailing strategies on anti-displacement, relocation assistance, construction management and cultural placekeeping.

Chapter 8 4(f) and 6(f) Resources and Appendix A-8 Draft Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Evaluation

65. City of Minneapolis staff have reviewed sections related to MPRB property. We have not identified major issues, but defer to MPRB for determinations related to MPRB property in this report and in Appendix 8.

Chapter 9 Consultation and Coordination

66. Page 9-1: Should spell out BCW for Hennepin County in section 9.1.2.
67. Page 9-1: Should spell out ADWG and ACPP - hard for others to know what these are.
68. Page 9-2: Should include DRTs as well as IRTs.
69. Page 9-7: First sentence in the second paragraph should be in the past tense to make it clear this work already happened.
70. Page 9-17: Many more engagement events have happened - DREAM series, etc.
71. In general, seems like engagement stats show a point in time. Engagement is still ongoing so this should be clear.
72. Municipal consent engagement activities are not included generally in this chapter.

Chapter 10 Financial Analysis

73. Page 10-1: Reference to 2040 TPP; should update to 2050 TPP.

Chapter 11 Evaluation of Alternatives

74. Please update the evaluation summaries in Chapter 11 to reflect comments on the individual chapters provided by this letter.

Appendix 12_A_CR Responses to Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS

75. Page 1: Bullet points reference wrong sections (A.1-A.4) of appendix.
76. Page 6: FRC 9: Project will acquire lot at Penn-Broadway for parking. The City will continue to work with the project partners on solutions that meet the long-term goal in replacing surface parking lot with Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).
77. Page 18: Chapter 2 response: "No modifications or expansion of the W Broadway Bridges are proposed as part of the Project." This is no longer the case in the new design of the Lowry Station area.
78. Page 21: Chapter 2 response: One City comment regarding loss of parking as a concern of business coalition was not included in the SFEIS.
79. Page 22: Chapter 2 response: Four City comments requesting additional narrative on alignment considerations and benefits were not included in SFEIS.
80. Page 27: Chapter 3 response: "Bicycle racks will be provided at LRT stations for Project." Please continue to work with the City on the design and placement of bike racks and mobility hub amenities near stations.
81. Page 35: Chapter 3 response to MPRB comment: References prior design with automatic gate arms. New Lowry design offers grade separation for the Parkway from the LRT tracks and will not include gate arms.
82. Page 41: Chapter 3 response: "Buses will use the street on a daily basis" in reference to the 10th Ave Transit mall. This is counter to ongoing design discussions with the Project Office. No buses

should access 10th Ave transit mall, neither for regular route service or trips to/from garage facilities.

83. Page 88: Chapter 5 response: "Utilities in City/County ROW will follow respective Utility Accommodation policies/practices" Please reference regulations applicable in the City of Minneapolis.
84. Page 93: Chapter 5 response only discusses Bassett Creek Tunnel impacts and mitigations for 10th Ave crossing. It should also discuss the access plan for maintenance on the tunnel underneath the Metro Transit North Loop Garage. Bassett Creek Tunnel impacts should also be mitigated underneath 5th Street, 4th Street, and new 8th Ave extension, including new bridge designation of 8th Ave over Bassett Creek Tunnel and associated load rating.

Appendix A-E Construction Engineering Drawings

85. Some design elements are not shown that were already public in February 2025. For example, elimination of dedicated right turn lanes at Broadway/Lyndale intersection, and center median at Broadway/Bryant intersection. Ongoing design coordination may change exact layouts and construction limits through DRT meetings and 60% and 90% plan set reviews.



REGION 5

CHICAGO, IL 60604

June 20, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Anthony W. Greep, Director
Office of Planning & Program Development
Federal Transit Administration
200 West Adams Street
Chicago, Illinois 60608

Re: EPA Comments – Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Metro Blue Line Extension, Hennepin County, Minnesota – CEQ No. 20250063

Dear Mr. Greep:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Federal Transit Administration's Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) dated May 2025, concerning the above-mentioned project. FTA, the lead Federal agency, and the Metropolitan Council (Council), prepared the SFEIS for the proposed Metro Blue Line Extension (hereinafter, Project). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The CAA Section 309 role is unique to EPA. It requires EPA to review and comment on the environmental impact on any proposed federal action subject to NEPA's environmental impact statement requirements and to make its comments public.

The purpose of the proposed Project is to effectively address long-term regional transit mobility and local accessibility needs while providing efficient, travel-time-competitive transit service that supports economic development goals and objectives of local, regional, and statewide plans. The purpose and need for the Project remains unchanged from 2016.

The 2016 Project alignment¹ included an approximately 13.5 mile double-track extension of the METRO Blue Line with 11 new light rail transit (LRT) stations, approximately 1,670 park-and-ride spaces, accommodations for drop-off and bicycle and pedestrian access, and one operations and

¹ Publication of a Final EIS/Section 4(f) Evaluation and Record of Decision dated 2016.

maintenance facility. The METRO Blue Line would extend northwest from Target Field Station in Downtown Minneapolis, connecting the region's northwest suburbs – the cities of Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park – with the region's system of transitways.² The Project was designed to help reduce regional disparities and provide benefits to current and future residents of the project area by providing access to healthcare, education, jobs, and recreation in the area.

Approximately 8 miles of the 2016 Project Alignment was located in freight rail right-of-way within the Monticello subdivision located between Olson Memorial Trunk Highway 55 in the City of Minneapolis and 73rd Ave N in the City of Brooklyn Park. Negotiations to secure the necessary right-of-way to allow construction of the Project in the freight rail right-of-way were unsuccessful.

Consequently, in 2020 it was determined that a modified alignment that would avoid use of the freight rail rights-of-way needed to be identified. FTA and the Council determined that design changes resulting from a modified alignment would result in new impacts and warranted analysis in a supplemental EIS.

The SDEIS evaluated anticipated effects from two alternatives:

- No Build Alternative, and
- Proposed project alignment which would be center running along County Road 81 south of 73rd Ave N in the City of Brooklyn Park and transition to N 21st Ave east of Knox Ave, crossing I-94 on a new N 21st Ave bridge, and traversing Washington Ave, 10th Ave, and 7th Ave to Target Field Station. The proposed build alternative organized by each of the four Project-area cities includes the following:

City	Alignment	Stations	Other Features
Brooklyn Park	Center running along W Broadway Ave from north of TH 610 to about 73rd Ave N, then transitioning to the median of CR 81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oak Grove Pkwy • 93rd Ave N • 85th Ave N • Brooklyn Blvd • 63rd Ave N 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMF north of Oak Grove Pkwy Station • Park-and-ride facility at Oak Grove Pkwy Station • Bridge from W Broadway Ave to CR 81 • Pedestrian bridge at 63rd Ave N Station
Crystal	Center running along CR 81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bass Lake Rd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interchange at Bass Lake Rd with four through lanes • Park-and-ride facility adjacent to station

² The region's system of transitways consist of existing LRT on the METRO Blue Line and METRO Green Line; bus rapid transit on the METRO Red Line (Cedar Ave), METRO Orange Line (Interstate 35W [I-35W]), METRO C Line, and METRO D Line; the Northstar Commuter Rail; and express bus routes, as well as planned BRT transitways (Gold and Purple Lines) and planned arterial BRT transitways (B, E, and F Lines).

Robbinsdale	Center running along CR 81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Robbinsdale (either north or south of 40th Ave N) • Lowry Ave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park-and-ride facility in Downtown Robbinsdale (U.S. Bank site) • Relocated Robbinsdale Transit Center
Minneapolis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center running along CR 81 between Lowry Ave and Knox Ave N • Transitions to N 21st Ave east of Knox Ave N; tracks on the south side of N 21st Ave • Crosses I-94 on a new N 21st Ave bridge • Turns south to be center running along Washington Ave • Turns southwest to follow 10th Ave, then turns southeast on 7th Ave to Target Field Station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penn Ave • James Ave • Lyndale Ave • Plymouth Ave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction of W Broadway Ave between Knox Ave N and Lyndale Ave N • Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along cross streets connecting W Broadway Ave and N 21st Ave • New bridge connecting N 21st Ave across I-94 • Transit/pedestrian/bicycle mall on 10th Ave between Washington Ave and N 5th St

Comments received on the SDEIS and during the Municipal Consent process³ with the Cities of Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Robbinsdale, and Minneapolis, led to the refinement of the Build Alternative studied in this Supplemental Final EIS. Changes since the publication of the SDEIS include:

- Increased the number of light rail transit stations⁴ and shifted the location of several stations based on stakeholder feedback;
- Increased number of acquisitions/displacements;
- Increased relocation support services;
- Decreased number of park-and-ride spaces in Robbinsdale and Oak Grove Parkway;
- Increased loss of on-street parking spaces with off-street parking proposed near Penn Avenue/West Broadway Avenue;
- Decreased effect to historic properties;
- Decreased effect to forested land;
- Included context-sensitive, culturally-relevant design commitments to mitigate visual effects;
- Included additional noise and vibration mitigation;
- Included reconstruction of two bridges, modifications to one bridge, and construction of two new bridges to achieve grade separation;⁵

³ For light rail transit projects, Minnesota law requires the Metropolitan Council send the physical design components of the preliminary design plans to the effected cities and county(s) for their review. The cities and county must vote to either approve the physical design components of the LRT in their city (e.g., track and station locations) or disapprove and offer a design amendment. This process is often referred to as municipal consent.

⁴ Added one station in Minneapolis.

⁵ To maintain parkway continuity without gated crossings, nine different station area concepts were studied. Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, and

- Included reconstruction of several city streets as well as sidewalk and bikeway improvements throughout the study area; and
- Added one traction power substation.

EPA offers the following recommendations to FTA to consider before finalizing the Record of Decision (ROD). EPA's detailed comments on the SFEIS are enclosed with this letter and focus on project design; community and social analysis; air quality; energy efficiency and environmental best practices; construction effects; and noise and vibration. We look forward to seeing the mitigation commitments included in the project's forthcoming Record of Decision for easy reference by stakeholders, agencies, and contractors.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the SFEIS. When the Record of Decision is released, please notify our office electronically at R5NEPA@epa.gov. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the lead NEPA Reviewer, Kathy Kowal, via email at kowal.kathleen@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

**KRYSTLE
MCCLAIN**

Digitally signed by
KRYSTLE MCCLAIN

Date: 2025.06.20
12:54:59 -05'00'

Krystle Z. McClain, P.E.
NEPA Program Supervisor

Enclosures:
EPA's Detailed Comments

the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board asked that the Project continue to study alternative options that maintain parkway continuity without gated crossings. In response, the Metropolitan Council, in collaboration with stakeholders and municipal partners, studied nine different station area concepts to address the comments received. A consensus emerged in favor of a design that separates the LRT tracks from vehicle traffic and trails while maintaining an at-grade station.

EPA's Detailed Comments
Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement for the
Metro Blue Line Extension
June 20, 2025

1. PROJECT DESIGN

- A. Include additional exhibits to help reviewers understand uncommon Project components (e.g., flyover bridges, enhanced pedestrian bridges, vehicle slip lanes, elevated stations, etc.).

Recommendations before finalizing NEPA documentation:

1. Acknowledging the information included in Appendix B: Intersection Layout Tables,⁶ consider including exhibits, links to the Project website or links to Federal Highway Administration websites, as appropriate, to provide reviewers with a general idea of what atypical project components would look like.

2. COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS

- A. The SFEIS indicated relocation advisory services would be available at two centrally-located storefronts in the corridor and an online portal.

Recommendations before finalizing NEPA documentation:

1. Consider providing relocation advisory services at two centrally located storefronts in each of the four cities in the study area, as well as online portals. Arranging for additional storefronts would provide easy access to services for residents with mobility concerns. In addition to using centrally-located storefronts, considering arranging stand-alone events (e.g., pop-up events, community events, etc.).
2. Consider providing information regarding outreach coordinators at storefronts, as well as online portals. Presenting coordinator information at storefronts would provide easy access to this information for residents who may not be familiar with online resources.
3. Consider providing community outreach coordinators to act as liaisons between residents⁷ and contractors, similar to the community outreach coordinators that will act as liaisons between the business community and contractors.
The SFEIS indicated other reimbursable/incidental expenses related to relocation may also be provided to residents and businesses if determined to be actual, reasonable, and necessary.⁷ Clarify by providing examples of actual, reasonable, and necessary expenses will provide clarity to stakeholders.

⁶ Appendix A-3: Traffic Operations Technical Memorandum and Interstate Access Modification Request Process Summary

⁷ E.g., property owners and renters

- B. Chapter 4, Community and Social Analysis, addresses the loss of private residential property and relocation assistance in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Act.

Recommendations before finalizing NEPA documentation:

1. Acknowledging information found in the SFEIS regarding offering translation/interpretation services for displaced tenants and owner occupants to become aware of relocation advisory services, consider committing to working with community leaders to ensure linguistically-isolated community members are continually informed about relocations, mitigation opportunities, etc.
2. The SFEIS indicated the Business Assistance Program would offer ‘ ... a maximum of \$30,000 for each affected business up to a program maximum of \$5 million. Funds could be used to support rent or mortgage payments to offset construction impacts;’ Clarify whether the funds will be distributed as loans or grants, as one-time payments, etc. Additionally, clarify parameters determining ‘affected business.’
3. The SFEIS indicated payments for the added cost of renting or purchasing comparable replacement housing would be provided for residential displacements. Clarify how long this type of payment might be made available to displaced residents.

3. AIR QUALITY

- A. The SFEIS indicates construction-phase increased emissions will be mitigated through best management practices described in Section 5.10.4, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures. EPA commends FTA for including relevant BMPs from EPA’s Construction Emissions Reduction recommendations included in our SDEIS comment letter.⁸ Section 5.10.4 stated “The following section describes potential measures that *could* be implemented to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential air quality and GHG emissions impacts from the Project.” (emphasis added) However, the SFEIS is not clear as to whether these measures will become commitments in the ROD.

Recommendations before finalizing NEPA documentation:

1. Recommend FTA definitively indicate which BMPs will become commitments in the ROD.

4. CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- A. EPA acknowledges the information located in the SFEIS which indicated the Council will apply EPA’s recommendations in the development of the Construction Mitigation Plan, Construction Communication Plan, and construction staging.⁹

Recommendations before finalizing NEPA documentation:

1. Clarify whether tree replacement coordinated with local jurisdictions would be planned at a 1:1 ratio. We recommend committing to the use of native species.

⁸ EPA’s SDEIS comment letter dated July 31, 2024.

⁹ Development of these plans will occur during advanced design stages through ongoing coordination with city stakeholders and engagement.

5. **NOISE AND VIBRATION**

- A. The Build Alternative would result in moderate noise effects at two institutions and 25 residential properties (256 dwelling units), the majority (11 single-family residences with 256 dwelling units) of which are located in the City of Minneapolis.¹⁰ Severe effects would result at 12 properties (62 dwelling units), all within Minneapolis.

The SFEIS indicated the process for determining candidates for sound insulation begins with sound insulation testing. Figure 7-1, Noise Impacts Requiring Sound Insulation Testing for Potential Mitigation,¹¹ identified locations where testing would determine which buildings currently meet¹² the interior criterion of 45 dBA Ldn¹³ and which buildings do not meet the interior criterion and, therefore, would require additional measures to reduce noise. The process for evaluating dwellings at which moderate and severe noise effects are anticipated and determining whether sound insulation is appropriate is not clear after reviewing the SFEIS.

Noise effects have the potential to impact human health, especially in sensitive populations (e.g., children¹⁴). Executive Order 13045, "Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks," directs Federal agencies to identify and assess environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children and to ensure that activities address those safety risks. Children's hearing, speech, and ability to learn can be affected.

Recommendations before finalizing NEPA documentation:

1. Figure 7-1 does not include the five single-family residences listed as moderately impacted in the City of Brooklyn Park. Revise Figure 7-1 to include residences in Brooklyn Park or explain why these residences are not considered for potential sound mitigation.
2. Consider supplementing the above language with additional explanation. In particular, 'Testing at the locations identified in Figure 7-1 would determine which buildings currently meet the interior criterion of 45 dBA Ldn (where no further improvements would be needed) and which buildings do not meet the interior criterion and would require additional measures to improve the outdoor to indoor noise reduction.' Clarify why testing before the project is operational, rather than after the project is operational, will determine whether additional measures to reduce noise are needed.
3. Recommend FTA provide a method by which residents can request a noise and/or vibration analysis within one year of full operation of the proposed project with appropriate mitigation, as applicable.

¹⁰ Five single-family residences are listed as moderate impact in the City of Brooklyn Park.

¹¹ Figure 7-1 can be found in Appendix A-5: Noise and Vibration Technical Report

¹² Further improvements would not be needed for buildings which meeting the interior criterion of 45 dBA Ldn.

¹³ Sound insulation programs were developed to reduce interior noise levels in sleeping and living quarters in residential and institutional uses to meet guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Under these guidelines, interior noise levels for residential land uses should not exceed an Ldn of 45 dBA.

¹⁴ https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-07/documents/ochp_noise_fs_rev1.pdf

June 18, 2025

VIA EMAIL

Kelcie Young
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805
kelcie.young@metrotransit.org

RE: Metro Blue Line Light Rail Extension Project – Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Dear: Kelcie Young

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) for the Metro Blue Line Light Rail Extension project (Project) located in Minneapolis and Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. The Project consists of a rail extension of approximately 13.5 miles of distance from Target Field Station in downtown Minneapolis and ending at Trunk Highway 610 in the City of Brooklyn Park. Regarding matters for which the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has regulatory responsibility and other interests, the MPCA staff has the following comments for your consideration.

Watershed

- The main section watershed would comment on is Appendix Chapter 5. Since that Appendix was not included in the review, there are no comments from watershed.

Transportation

- There will be increase in number of intersections operating at unacceptable levels of service and traffic disruption during construction of the project including lane, intersection, and roadway closure and detours, vehicular access changes, roadway geometric changes, and new LRT crossings. Long-term impacts mitigated through intersection improvements and short-term impacts mitigated through Construction Mitigation Plan, Construction Communication Plan, and construction staging. Additional mitigation measures were identified in the 2024 Traffic Report to mitigate vehicle queueing and operations, signal timings, and safety. Specifically, modifications included a 9th Avenue connection to mitigate traffic concerns and provide traffic mitigations at additional intersections to accommodate the design impacts. As design progresses, additional mitigation measures will be identified. All these mitigation strategies must be implemented as stated in the FSEIS.
- The Council will identify mitigation strategies for temporary closures in the Construction Communication Plan, which will include construction staging requirements during construction. The purpose of the Construction Communication Plan is to prepare Project-area residents, businesses, and commuters for construction; listen to their concerns; and develop plans to minimize disruptive effects. Strategies could include:

- issuing and distributing regular construction updates
- providing advance notice of roadway closures, driveway closures, and utility shutoffs
- conducting public meetings
- establishing a 24-hour construction hotline
- preparing materials with information about construction
- addressing property access issues
- assigning staff to serve as liaisons between the public and contractors during construction

Air quality analysis

- The FSEIS should address all the potential impacts expected from the proposed project especially during construction. Motorized vehicles affect air quality by emitting airborne pollutants. Changes in traffic volumes, travel patterns, and roadway locations affect air quality as the number of vehicles and the congestion levels in each area change. The adverse impacts on air quality should be analyzed in the SEIS by addressing criteria pollutants, a group of common air pollutants regulated by the Environmental Protection (EPA). The criteria pollutants identified by the EPA are ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide, lead, and sulfur dioxide. Potential impacts resulting from these pollutants are assessed qualitatively by comparing the projected concentrations to National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Only a qualitative discussion of NAAQS pollutants has been provided in the FSEIS.

Construction-phase (short-term)

- Construction of the Project would affect traffic volumes and operations on roads in and around the study area. During construction, some intersections might need to temporarily operate with reduced capacities or be temporarily closed. Increased traffic would temporarily increase emissions and concentrations of air pollutants near homes and businesses because of detours during construction.
- Implementation of better management practices (BMPs) would reduce Greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and particulate emissions from construction activities. Based on the scattered, intermittent, and temporary nature of construction activities, exceedances of ambient air quality standards during the construction phase of the Project are not anticipated. However, the contractor should implement a series of BMPs during construction to control dust.
- We also believe that the construction of the Project would provide more options for public transportation; for an example, the reliance on passenger cars for daily work commute and recreational trips would be reduced as people choose transit instead of driving. The marginal reduction in vehicle travel on highways and local streets would contribute to indirect air quality improvements. However, the induced development that could result from the construction of the Project could also increase motor vehicle travel, thereby indirectly increasing air pollutant emissions.

Mobile Sources Air Toxic (MSAT) analysis

- The FSEIS has conducted qualitative MSAT analysis. The proposed Project aims to reduce vehicle emissions that can contribute to the MSAT emissions. With a focus on transit usage and overall emission reductions, localized air quality impacts and related human-health outcomes can be improved. MSAT emissions are expected to be reduced if the construction contractors and

maintenance operations are required to utilize vehicles and machinery with certified Tier 4 non-road engines adhering to the EPA regulations.

Construction operation and maintenance – using clean diesel construction equipment

- The MPCA looks forward to Metro Council and Hennepin County achieving its commitments to prioritizing the use of clean diesel equipment at its construction sites. All construction work relies on the extensive use of heavy-duty diesel engines. Older diesel equipment from before 2007 emits extremely high levels of harmful air pollutants. As most, if not all, transportation construction work is carried out near where Minnesotans live, commute, work, and recreate, people's exposure to heavy duty diesel emissions can be a health risk.
- The MPCA hopes that Metro Council and Hennepin County will move ahead soon with implementing its commitment to develop and employ model contract language including vehicle and equipment emission standards that would either require or give additional bid points for companies that agree to using newer, cleaner diesel trucks and equipment. With project plans spanning for a few years and operating for many hours, the contract language should provide for ongoing updates as diesel engines continue to improve their emission standards. Strategies to minimize impacts resulting from diesel equipment should have been addressed in the SEIS. If you have any questions concerning our review of this Project air quality and traffic impacts, please contact me by email at innocent.eyoh@state.mn.us or by telephone at 651-757-2347.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Project. Please be aware that this letter does not constitute approval by the MPCA of any or all elements of the Project for the purpose of pending or future permit actions by the MPCA. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Project proposer to secure any required permits and to comply with any requisite permit conditions. If you have any questions concerning our review of this FSEIS, please contact me by email at chris.green@state.mn.us or by telephone at 507-476-4258.

Sincerely,

Chris Green

This document has been electronically signed.

Chris Green, Project Manager
Environmental Review Unit
Resource Management and Assistance Division

CG:rs

Attachment

cc: Dan Card, MPCA
Melinda Neville, MPCA
Nicole Peterson, MPCA
Colin Boysen, MPCA
Lauren Dickerson, MPCA
Innocent Eyoh, MPCA
Deepa deAlwis, MPCA
Jason Hawksford, MPCA