

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
DETERMINATION OF ADEQUACY**

**METRO BLUE LINE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (BLRT) EXTENSION PROJECT
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the lead federal agency, and the Metropolitan Council (Council), the Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU), published a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the METRO Blue Line Light Rail Transit (BLRT) Extension Project in July 2016. Notification of availability of the BLRT Extension Project Final EIS for public and agency review was published in the *Federal Register* on July 15, 2016, and in the *Minnesota EQB Monitor* on July 18, 2016. The Final EIS was also available for public review at the Blue Line Extension (Bottineau LRT) Project Office in Crystal and at city halls and libraries in Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Robbinsdale, Golden Valley, and Minneapolis, and the Metropolitan Council Library. The FTA's Record of Decision (ROD) was issued on September 19, 2016. The Final EIS and ROD are incorporated herein as part of this Determination of Adequacy.

The BLRT Extension project is approximately 13 miles of a new light rail transit line proposed as an extension of the METRO Blue Line (Hiawatha LRT). It will operate from downtown Minneapolis through the communities of Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park. The BLRT Extension project will operate primarily at-grade, with structures providing grade separation of LRT crossings, roadways, and water bodies at specified locations. The alignment will have 11 new stations in addition to Target Field Station where it will continue as the METRO Blue Line, and a light rail operations and maintenance facility in the City of Brooklyn Park. The BLRT Extension project is described in Section 2.5.1 of the ROD, and in Chapter 2 and Appendix E of the Final EIS.

DETERMINATION OF ADEQUACY

Chapter 4410 of the Minnesota Rules requires the Council, as RGU, to determine the adequacy of the Final EIS for the BLRT Extension project. The Council has determined that the Final EIS is adequate under Minnesota Rule 4410.2800, subd. 4. Rule 4410.2800 sets the following standard for determining if a Final EIS is adequate:

Subp. 4. Conditions. The Final EIS shall be determined adequate if it:

- A. addresses the potentially significant issues and alternatives raised in scoping so that all significant issues for which information can be reasonably obtained have been analyzed in conformance with part 4410.2300, items G and H;
- B. provides responses to the substantive comments received during the Draft EIS review concerning issues raised in scoping; and
- C. was prepared in compliance with the procedures of the act and parts 4410.0200 to 4410.6500.

In making this Determination of Adequacy, the Council applied the criteria found in part 4410.2800, subp. 4, and finds that:

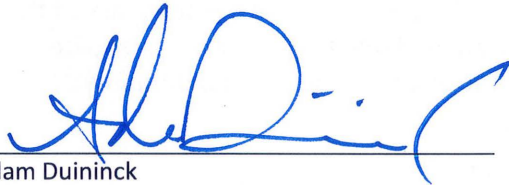
1. The Final EIS addresses all potentially significant issues and alternatives identified during scoping. All significant issues for which information could reasonably be obtained have been analyzed in conformance with Minnesota Rules, part 4410.2300, items G and H. The analysis in the Final EIS addresses long-term and short-term (construction) direct and indirect impacts, as well as cumulative impacts related to the BLRT Extension project. The ROD provides FTA's decision for the BLRT

Extension project and the Council concurs with the ROD. Table 3.1 of the ROD summarizes the long-term and short-term impacts to environmental and transportation-related resources that will result from the BLRT Extension project. Specific mitigation measures for impacts from the BLRT Extension project are in Attachment A of the ROD.

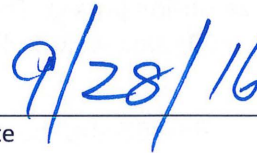
2. The Final EIS provides responses to all substantive comments received during the Draft EIS public comment period. Appendix G of the Final EIS contains all comments received during the public comment period on the Draft, and responses to these comments.
3. The Final EIS was prepared in compliance with procedures of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 116D, and with Minnesota Rules parts 4410.0200 to 4410.6500.

Additionally, during the public comment on the Final EIS, the Council received seven letters or other communications with comments. The letters addressed topics including BLRT Extension project cost, alignment selection, safety of co-locating LRT and freight rail, adequacy of the Final EIS, continued coordination with stakeholders, permitting coordination, coordination with BNSF, concurrence on the completion of the Section 4(f) evaluation process, wetlands and stormwater management, wildlife crossings, tree mitigation, and measures to decrease exposure to air toxics during construction. Although Minnesota Rule 4410.2800 does not require an RGU to respond to comments on the Final EIS, the Council did review and consider the comments received on the adequacy of the Final EIS as part of this Determination of Adequacy. The comments received are included in Attachment E of the ROD and responses to comments received are found in Attachment F.

As a result of these findings, and based on the BLRT Extension project's ROD and administrative record, the Council has determined the Final EIS for the BLRT Extension project is adequate under the State of Minnesota's environmental review process. This Determination of Adequacy concludes the Minnesota environmental review process.



Adam Duininck
Chair
Metropolitan Council



Date