



# Final Environmental Impact Statement

JULY 2016



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL TRANSIT  
ADMINISTRATION

# METRO Blue Line Light Rail Transit Extension Final Environmental Impact Statement

Prepared by:

**United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)  
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**

and

**Metropolitan Council, Minnesota (Council)**

In cooperation with:

**Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)  
United States Department of the Interior (USDOI), National Park Service (NPS)  
United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**

Submitted pursuant to:

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, 42 USC Section 4332 *et seq.*; Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500 *et seq.*, Implementing NEPA; Federal Transit Laws, 49 USC Chapter 53; Environmental Impact and Related Procedures, 23 CFR Part 771, a joint regulation of the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration implementing NEPA and CEQ regulations; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 54 USC Section 306108; Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended, 49 USC Section 303; Section 6(f)(3) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 16 USC Section 4601 - 4 *et seq.*; Clean Air Act, as amended, 42 USC Section 7401 *et seq.*; Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 USC 1531-1544, 87 Stat. 884); Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, 42 USC Section 4601 *et seq.*; Executive Order No. 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low Income Populations); Executive Order No. 13166 (Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency); Executive Order No. 11988 (Floodplain Management) as amended; other applicable federal laws and procedures; and all relevant laws and procedures of the State of Minnesota.

After publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS), the Council will issue an Adequacy Determination for the Final EIS in accordance with Minnesota environmental law.

Upon consideration of the comments received on this Final EIS, FTA will issue the Record of Decision, which will document FTA's decision on the project and list the required mitigation commitments to reduce or avoid impacts.

7/6/2016

Date of Approval

Marisol R. Simón

Marisol R. Simón  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
Region V

7.6.16

Date of Approval

Mark W. Fuhrmann

Mark Fuhrmann  
Program Director, Rail New Starts  
Metropolitan Council

## Abstract

The Metropolitan Council proposes to construct and operate the 13-mile extension of the METRO Blue Line approximately 13 miles, starting from its terminus in downtown Minneapolis to the northwest area of the Twin Cities, serving north Minneapolis and the suburbs of Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park. In this Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS), the project is defined as the METRO Blue Line Light Rail Transit (BLRT) Extension project. In addition to the proposed light rail alignment, LRT stations, park-and-ride lots, and ancillary facilities, including a proposed operations and maintenance facility (OMF), roadway and bicycle/pedestrian improvements and related freight rail modifications are discussed.

This Final EIS includes the project's Purpose and Need Statement and a description of the alternatives currently and previously considered. The following environmental categories are addressed in this Final EIS, including related methods and regulations, agency coordination (where applicable), anticipated direct long-term (operating) and short-term (construction) impacts, indirect impacts and cumulative effects, and committed mitigation measures; freight rail conditions; vehicular traffic; pedestrians and bicyclists; parking; aviation; land use plan compatibility; community facilities/community character and cohesion; displacement of residents and businesses; cultural resources; visual/aesthetics; economic effects; safety and security; utilities; floodplains; wetlands and other aquatic resources; geology, soils, and topography; hazardous materials contamination; noise; vibration; biological environment (wildlife habitat and endangered species); water quality and stormwater; air quality; and energy. This Final EIS also addresses the following: environmental justice compliance; Section 4(f) compliance; finance; evaluation of alternatives; public involvement and agency coordination; and a potential related joint development project.

For additional information concerning this document, contact:

### FTA Regional Contact

Marisol Simón  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320  
Chicago, IL 60606  
312.353.2789

### Local Agency Contact

Kathryn O'Brien  
Assistant Director, Environmental and Agreements  
Metro Transit – BLRT Project Office  
5514 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 200  
Crystal, MN 55428  
612.373.5377

## Document Availability

Printed copies of the Final EIS are available for public review at the following locations.

Location	Address
Brookdale Library	6125 Shingle Creek Parkway, Brooklyn Center
Brooklyn Park Library	8600 Zane Avenue North, Brooklyn Park
Golden Valley Library	830 Winnetka Avenue North, Golden Valley
Hennepin County Library – Minneapolis Central	300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis
Metropolitan Council Library	390 Robert Street North, St. Paul
Minnesota Department of Transportation Library	395 John Ireland Boulevard, St. Paul
North Regional Library	1315 Lowry Avenue North, Minneapolis
Rockford Road Library	6401 42nd Avenue North, Crystal
Sumner Library	611 Van White Memorial Boulevard, Minneapolis

Electronic-only copies of the Final EIS are available for public review at the following locations.

Location	Address
Legislative Reference Library	100 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, St. Paul
Maple Grove Library	8001 Main Street North, Maple Grove
Osseo Library	415 Central Avenue, Osseo

Printed copies of the project’s technical reports are also available for public review at the Blue Line Extension Project Office at 5514 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 200, in Crystal. Electronic versions of the technical reports are available on the project website, [www.BlueLineExt.org](http://www.BlueLineExt.org).

Any person with special needs, such as English language assistance or Braille, should contact Dan Pfeiffer at 612.373.3897 or [dan.pfeiffer@metrotransit.org](mailto:dan.pfeiffer@metrotransit.org) for assistance.

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