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.

Date of Approval

7/6/2016

Marisol R. Simón
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
Region V

Date of Approval

7/6/16

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:

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Crystal, MN  55428  
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## Document Availability

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

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<td>Brookdale Library</td>
<td>6125 Shingle Creek Parkway, Brooklyn Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brooklyn Park Library</td>
<td>8600 Zane Avenue North, Brooklyn Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden Valley Library</td>
<td>830 Winnetka Avenue North, Golden Valley</td>
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<td>Hennepin County Library – Minneapolis Central</td>
<td>300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis</td>
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<td>Metropolitan Council Library</td>
<td>390 Robert Street North, St. Paul</td>
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<td>Minnesota Department of Transportation Library</td>
<td>395 John Ireland Boulevard, St. Paul</td>
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<td>North Regional Library</td>
<td>1315 Lowry Avenue North, Minneapolis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rockford Road Library</td>
<td>6401 42nd Avenue North, Crystal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sumner Library</td>
<td>611 Van White Memorial Boulevard, Minneapolis</td>
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Electronic-only copies of the Final EIS are available for public review at the following locations.

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<td>100 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, St. Paul</td>
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<td>Maple Grove Library</td>
<td>8001 Main Street North, Maple Grove</td>
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<td>Osseo Library</td>
<td>415 Central Avenue, Osseo</td>
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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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