

## City of Minneapolis Request for Committee Action

**To:** Transportation & Public Works  
**Date:** 8/8/2016  
**Referral:** N/A  
**From:** Public Works Department  
**Lead Staff:** Jim Voll, Principal Planner, CPED; Rebecca Hughes, Transportation Planner, Transportation Planning & Programming; Donald Pflaum, Transportation Planner, Transportation Planning and Programming; Kathleen Mayell, Transportation Planning Supervisor, Transportation Planning and Programming  
**Presented by:** Don Pflaum, Transportation Planner, Transportation Planning & Programming  
**File Type:** Action  
**Subcategory:** Environmental Review

---

**Subject:**

Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Corridor) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Comments.

**Description:**

Approving the attached comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Corridor) LRT project and directing the Public Works Department to submit the comments to the Metropolitan Council.

**Previous Actions:**

February 2, 2016: Approving the Preliminary Design Plans for the route of the Blue Line LRT Extension (Bottineau Corridor) pursuant to Minnesota Statute 473.3994 Subd. 3.

March 3, 2015: Receive and File an update regarding the Blue Line Light Rail Extension (Bottineau Corridor LRT).

May 13, 2014: Approve the proposed comments on the DEIS for the Blue Line LRT Extension (Bottineau Corridor) and direct the Public Works Department to submit the comments to Hennepin County.

February 15, 2012: City Council Resolution to endorse the D1 alignment for the Bottineau Transitway, subject to an executed Memorandum of Understanding with Hennepin County and Metro Transit to pursue an arterial Transitway project and transit-oriented development initiatives in North Minneapolis, separate from the Bottineau Transitway project.

February 15, 2012: City Council Resolution to approve and submit comments on the scope of issues to be studied in the Bottineau Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

February 15, 2012: City Council Resolution to accept the invitation to become a participating agency for the Bottineau Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement process.

February 14, 2012: T&PW Committee received and filed presentation by Hennepin County on the Bottineau Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement process.

September 22, 2009: T&PW Committee Receive and File presentation on the Bottineau Transitway Alternatives Analysis Study.

---

**Ward/Address:**

Not Applicable

### **Background/Analysis:**

The 13-mile Blue Line Extension (BLRT) is a regional light-rail transit corridor that serves Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park. This \$1.5 billion transit line will directly connect to the Green Line, the Green Line Extension, and the Northstar Commuter Rail Line in Downtown Minneapolis. Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) connections to the BLRT are planned for the Penn Avenue North Corridor in 2018. Future bus service and infrastructure improvements have also been planned for the Emerson/Fremont Avenue North corridors in addition to the West Broadway corridor. The BLRT project is expected to serve an estimated 27,000 riders per weekday (14,500 new riders) and is proposed to have 11 new stations, including two new stations in Minneapolis. The project will interline with the Blue Line, allowing for a one seat ride between Brooklyn Park, Downtown Minneapolis, and the Mall of America.

In May 2014 the City of Minneapolis commented on the original Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the BLRT. A number of public hearings were held at that time to address the DEIS.

On July 15, 2016 the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was issued for public review, with comments on the adequacy of the FEIS to be accepted by the Metropolitan Council through August 15, 2016. The FEIS is considered adequate under Minn. Rule 4410.2800, subp. 4, 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 DEIS 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.

Or, as summarized, the FEIS will be determined adequate if it addresses and analyzes the significant issues raised in scoping, responds to substantive comments on the DEIS, and is prepared in compliance with the environmental rules. Therefore, comments by City staff on the adequacy of the document will address whether it meets those standards.

A Federal Record of Decision will likely be issued for the project in September 2016. A Full Funding Grant Agreement is anticipated in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2018 assuming local funding commitments from Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB), Hennepin County, and the State of Minnesota. The Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Corridor) is expected to begin operations in 2021.

### **Recommendation:**

Approve the attached comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Corridor) LRT project and direct the Public Works Department to submit the comments to the Metropolitan Council.

### **Financial Review:**

**No financial impact.**

### **Attachments:**

1. Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Corridor) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)- Notice of Availability.
2. FEIS Staff Comments.