



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Guiding the Future of Transportation for the Twin Ports Area

August 14, 2025

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Mr. Sang H. Yi
Acting Maritime Administrator
Maritime Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Subject: MPO Support for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority's
MARAD Port Infrastructure Development Grant Application**

Dear Secretary Duffy and Acting Administrator Yi:

On behalf of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) and our Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC), I am writing to express our strong support for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority's (DSPA) application for \$30M in grant funding through the Port Infrastructure Development Program to help fund the 2025 Duluth Port Multimodal Terminal Expansion project. This grant, should it be awarded, will be matched by \$8.4M in secured state grant and local funding.

As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth-Superior area, the MIC is charged with transportation planning for all modes of travel within our planning area. The Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC) is one of three advisory committees to the MIC. The HTAC meets quarterly and is structured as a working group for addressing challenges and opportunities in the Duluth-Superior harbor, while promoting the port's economic and environmental importance to both communities.

The HTAC has emerged as a national model for working together to address complex, often controversial and sometimes contentious port and estuary-centered issues, through planning, collaboration, information sharing, and long-term institutional involvement. The HTAC's 34 voting members representing industry, government, academic, environmental, regulatory, recreation, and citizen groups address these issues. The Duluth Seaway Port Authority has been a long-standing HTAC voting member and the current chair is a DSPA staff member.

The DSPA owns and operates the Clure Public Marine Terminal on Rice's Point in Duluth, which falls within the larger Lincoln Park neighborhood. Improvements to port infrastructure and service capabilities made by DSPA support the growth of well-paying industrial jobs in Duluth and strengthen supply chain options for regional industries. As of 2022, maritime shipping within the Port generated over 7,000 direct and induced jobs and over \$1.6 billion in economic activity.

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MIC Letter of Support for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority's
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The 2025 Duluth Port Multimodal Terminal Expansion project includes 2 primary components: (1) demolishing the former grain elevators at the Duluth Lake Port dock to create 7.5 acres of new laydown space; and (2) reconstruction of 1150 linear feet of the Duluth Lake Port dock. This urgently needed rehabilitation of port infrastructure will allow for future expansion at the port, which last year handled an impressive 30 million tons of cargo, including iron ore, cement, durum wheat, spring wheat, oats, beet pulp pellets, and breakbulk, project and containerized cargo.

The proposed project is anticipated to contribute to meeting some of the economic vitality goals in our long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Further, it is anticipated that the improvements to port infrastructure and service capabilities made by DSPA would support the growth of good-paying industrial jobs in the Lincoln Park area of Duluth.

In short, the initiatives proposed in this grant application are supported by input we've received for many years from community stakeholders and would advance several of the MIC's key goals in regard to multimodal freight, mobility, economic development, and port development. We support this project and appreciate your consideration of this application. Sincerely,



Ron Chicka, AICP
MIC Director
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Cc: Wayne Boucher, MIC Policy Board Co-chair (MN)
Nick Baker, MIC Policy Board Co-chair (WI)
Jeff Udd, HTAC Chair

