



April 27, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
U.S. Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Rear Admiral Ann C. Phillips  
Maritime Administrator  
Maritime Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Duluth Seaway Port Authority Grant Application - MARAD Port Infrastructure Development

Dear Secretary Buttigieg and Rear Admiral Phillips:

On behalf of Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Duluth, please accept this letter of support for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority's (DSPA) application for \$30M in funding through the Port Infrastructure Development Program to help fund the 2023 Duluth Port Intermodal Terminal Expansion project.

The DSPA owns and operates 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. The 2023 Duluth Port Intermodal Terminal Expansion project includes the construction of 100,000 square feet of on-dock, rail-served warehouse space, the demolition of dilapidated grain elevators to allow for more than seven acres of outdoor material laydown area, and the purchase of a new hybrid-electric mobile harbor crane to enhance port operations and move the terminal toward decarbonization.

LISC's mission is "Together with residents and partners, we forge resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity – great places to live, work, visit and raise families." We provide a toolbox for communities to fill in resource gaps and connect the dots by leveraging funds and other resources that would not be available otherwise to promote

**Local Initiatives Support Corporation**

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equitable community and economic development and neighborhood revitalization. LISC is a national Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and community development intermediary, with 39 local offices and a rural program. Since 1979 we have made investments in every state, creating or preserving 460,500 affordable homes across the US, including multifamily rentals, and supportive housing for special populations. Nationally, we invested over \$25 billion, leveraging over \$69 billion in total development costs over our forty years of supporting urban and rural communities.

LISC Duluth opened in 1997 and has worked to improve the Duluth community on multiple fronts. Our strategic plan is centered on affordable housing development and preservation; neighborhood based equitable development; and on family income and wealth building for underserved populations. We have supported the development and preservation of 1,684 units of housing and the creation of 1,553 new local jobs. LISC has invested over \$105 million into the community which leveraged over \$302 million dollars in community development projects and programs across our community. We partner with many stakeholders to maximize our collective impact. We invest in and rely on our partners to meet resident and community needs. Our overarching goal is to make Duluth a better place to live for All Duluthians.

We recognize through our past work and partnership alongside DSPA that industrial jobs provide the opportunity for economic advancement and wealth generation for individuals in our community. The initiatives within this grant application would continue those efforts and directly support LISC Duluth's priority of strengthening our workforce ecosystem. This also dovetails with our current workforce development programs and sustainability of economic development assets within our community.

We appreciate your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sumair Sheikh', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sumair Sheikh  
Executive Director, LISC Duluth