

Port NOLA confirms US\$1 million grant for Louisiana box terminal project

January 14, 2025



Port of New Orleans (Port NOLA)

The Port of New Orleans (Port NOLA) was awarded US\$1 million from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its Louisiana International Terminal (LIT) Sustainability Management Plan (SMP).

“This funding is a crucial investment in Louisiana’s future, supporting sustainable infrastructure and creating meaningful opportunities for our communities,” commented Congressman Troy A. Carter, Sr. (LA-02).

The Louisiana International Terminal will be built in Violet, Louisiana, 17 miles downriver from the Crescent City Connection bridge, eliminating air draft restrictions for vessels that call the port of New Orleans. The terminal will be able to handle the largest container vessels that traverse the Panama Canal locks increasing Louisiana’s import and export capacity, fostering strategic inland growth and allowing both container-on-barge and intermodal services to expand.

The Port NOLA LIT SMP will follow the Envision framework to achieve sustainable, resilient, and equitable infrastructure. The Envision verification process commonly produces direct community benefits, including:

1. Significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and provides targets to reach carbon-neutral goals.
2. Reduction in water and energy usage, encouragement of sustainable material use.
3. Promotion of social equity and community cohesion, improvements in public health, safety, and access to essential services.

4. Focus on creating local jobs and stimulating the economy, as the project is cost-effective and leads to long-term operational efficiencies.
5. Protection of habitats and mitigation of impacts.

The EPA grant delivers funds to three community-based organizations to help equitably provide workforce development and educational opportunities for the Violet and St. Bernard Parish communities that will relate to LIT's future careers and sustainability outcomes.

Of the US\$1 million grant, the Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development (CSED) will receive US\$100,000 to support professional development for local communities around sustainability education; Nunez Community College will receive US\$100,000 for port-sector educational programs; and the Urban League of Louisiana (ULLA) will receive US\$225,000 for workforce development.

An additional US\$100,000 will be used for Envision programming; US\$352,341 will go toward contractual support; and US\$122,659 will be allocated for Port NOLA administration and project events.

"We want to thank the EPA, our federal partners and the Port of New Orleans for this funding and for supporting our mission to help hardworking families in our community secure equity and economic self-reliance," noted Judy Reese Morse, President and CEO of Urban League of Louisiana. "Together – through collaboration—we will strengthen our workforce and create careers that provide generational wealth for workers in Violet and the region."

LIT is the largest public economic development project in the State of Louisiana. By 2050, it is expected to generate 32,000 new jobs nationwide, including more than 18,000 in Louisiana and over 4,300 in St. Bernard Parish, as well as more than US\$1 billion in new state and local tax revenue.

In the 2024 regular session, Governor Jeff Landry and the Louisiana Legislature committed US\$230.5 million to Port NOLA infrastructure projects including the Louisiana International Terminal. The state commitment follows US\$300 million in landmark federal funding awarded to Port NOLA last year to assist in building LIT, which represents the largest federal investment in a new box terminal in the history of the U.S. Department of Transportation. LIT has also garnered support from more than a dozen ports in six states as well as from major trade and agriculture associations throughout the heartland of America.

LIT will be built through a historic public-private partnership between Port NOLA and two private terminal operators. New Jersey-based Ports America, North America's largest marine terminal operator, and the largest shipping company in the world MSC, through its terminal development and investment arm, Terminal Investment Limited (TiL), have committed US\$800 million toward the project.

LIT is currently in the federal permitting process and the construction is expected to begin in 2025.