
Assembly of First Nations

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**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JULY 7, 8 & 9, 2015, MONTRÉAL, QC**

Resolution no. 13/2015

TITLE: Support for Collaborative Knowledge Building and Action for VisitAble Housing in First Nations Communities in British Columbia

SUBJECT: Health, Housing

MOVED BY: Grand Chief Mike Mitchell, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, ON

SECONDED BY: Chief Shining Turtle, Whitefish River First Nation, ON

DECISION Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:
- i. Article 21, (2): States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.
- B. The British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS) promotes VisitAble Housing for all Canadians, including persons with disabilities and seniors. Working in partnership with the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies, BCANDS aims to increase understanding of VisitAble Housing by highlighting lived experiences and reviewing current policies, practices, impacts and barriers. The aim is to develop and implement strategies to promote VisitAble Housing among buyers, builders, policy makers, and other stakeholders.
- C. The BCANDS is a non-profit, charitable, non-political organization with the mandate "to promote the betterment of Aboriginal people with disabilities in the province of British Columbia." BCANDS provides advocacy and support services in areas of social and human services, economic, education, training, health, human rights, and housing.

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- D. VisitAble Housing Canada is an initiative of the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies funded through the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships - Disability Component to promote VisitAble housing for all Canadians, including persons with disabilities and seniors. "VisitAble Housing" or "VisitAbility" is the concept of designing and building homes with basic accessibility providing easy access on the main level for occupants. VisitAble housing offers a convenient home for residents and a welcoming environment for visitors of all ages and mobility.
- E. BCANDS is currently a supporting organization working with VisitAble Housing Canada, and has partnered with the Esquimalt and Beecher Bay First Nations in creating a First Nations Task Force to promote and research VisitAble Housing in First Nation communities.
- F. The First Nations Task Force has recommended that three essential features be included in all new housing projects, which, when planned at the outset, keep additional costs to a minimum:
- i. A zero step entrance at the front, back or side of the house;
 - ii. Wide doorways on all main floors: minimum 32" (813 mm) with a clear door opening; and,
 - iii. A wheelchair-accessible bathroom on the main floor.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Support the First Nations VisitAble Housing project to improve housing accessibility including strategies to promote VisitAble Housing in First Nation communities among builders, policy makers, and other stakeholders.

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