



## United Tribes of Michigan

1715 Abbey Road, Suite A  
East Lansing, Michigan 48823  
Phone: 517-719-5579  
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*Matt Wesaw, Executive Director*

Committed to join forces, advance, protect, preserve and enhance the mutual interests, treaty rights, sovereignty and cultural way of life of the sovereign Indian tribes of Michigan throughout the next seven generations

### RESOLUTION # 07-10-30-08

#### Difficult Development Areas

**WHEREAS**, the United Tribes of Michigan is incorporated as a Michigan Corporation, 501(C)6, under Michigan's laws, December 5, 2005; and

**WHEREAS**, the United Tribes of Michigan is governed by an approved set of By-Laws; and

**WHEREAS**, the official membership of United Tribes of Michigan is open to all of the twelve Federally recognized tribes located in Michigan, with a current membership of eight of the federally recognized tribes with full voting privileges as to all issues; and

**WHEREAS**, each general member Tribe shall have only one (1) person from the member Tribe with the authority to vote on United Tribes of Michigan matters; and

**WHEREAS**, the organization provides a forum for Michigan's Tribes to address issues of common concern and is committed to join forces to advance, protect, preserve and enhance the mutual interests, treaty rights, sovereignty, and cultural way of life of the sovereign Indian Tribes of Michigan throughout the next seven generations; and

**WHEREAS**, United Tribes of Michigan accepts the mission to engage, as a matter of mutual concern, issues that impact the health, security, safety, and general welfare of Native Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, United Tribes of Michigan promotes expanded housing in all areas to help improve the health, security and general welfare of Native American citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, tribes build on the average of two homes per year; and

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#### *Michigan federally recognized Tribes:*

Bay Mills Indian Community • Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians  
• Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians • Little River Band of Ottawa Indians

#### *Members:*

Hannahville Potawatomi Indian Community • Keweenaw Bay Indian Community • Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians  
• Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians • Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians  
• Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians • Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan • Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

**WHEREAS**, realizing the impact of a 30% boost in tax credits will allow for reinvestment and/or increased investment in additional housing projects; and

**WHEREAS**, the 30% boost in tax credits will better reflect the difficult development situation on tribal land and allow the Tribes to better leverage their scarce resources; and

**WHEREAS**, a DDA designation would better address the financial difficulties inherent to tribal development; and

**WHEREAS**, a DDA designation would begin to resolve the affordable housing crisis on the various reservation throughout Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, lending is almost non-existent in Indian Country; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Americans living on Indian reservations represent a particular market segment, distinct from and essentially unaffected by housing market forces to which other minority groups are subject; and

**WHEREAS**, Tribal members who choose to live on the reservation expect to live with other Indian families and will endure housing difficulties and hardships unlikely to be endured outside of Indian country; and

**WHEREAS**, Tribes primarily operate at breakeven operations because of the social service/governmental responsibilities; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the United Tribes of Michigan supports the request of the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians to allow the State of Michigan to include the Michigan federally recognized Indian Tribes in the "*Difficult Development Areas*" as passed by United States Congress; and

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the United Tribes of Michigan requests the federally recognized Tribes in Michigan to individually pass a similar resolution of support and forward it to:

Mr. Keith Molin  
Interim Executive Director  
MI State Housing Development Authority  
735 E. Michigan Avenue  
P.O. Box 30044  
Lansing, MI 48909



# Lac Vieux Desert Band Of Lake Superior Chippewa Tribal Government

P.O. Box 249, Pow Wow Trail • Watersmeet, Michigan 49969

Phone: 906-358-4577 • Fax: 906-358-4785

## *Executive Officers:*

James Williams Jr., Tribal Chairman  
Joette Pete-Baldwin, Tribal Vice-Chairwoman  
Misaabe McGeshick, Treasurer  
Michelle Hazen, Secretary



## *Council Members:*

Roberta Ivey  
Shasta Klingman  
giwewigizhigookway Martin  
Tyrone McGeshick  
Tracy Pete

October 28, 2008

Mr. Keith Molin  
Interim Executive Director  
MI State Housing Development Authority  
735 E. Michigan Ave.  
P.O. Box 30044  
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Difficult Development Areas

Dear Director Molin:

In light of the recent legislation passed by Congress allowing states to determine Difficult Development Areas, we respectfully request that the federally recognized Indian Tribes located in Michigan be considered under this designation. The 30% boost in tax credits will better reflect the difficult development situation on tribal land and allow the Tribes to better leverage their scarce resources.

The Tribes will then be better able to reinvest these extra funds for another LIHTC project or additional low income housing. The great demand for affordable housing on the reservations can be met more effectively and efficiently with the added funding available through a DDA designation. You may know that Tribes are the local government for their tribal residents. As such, they have to provide many services, including housing. Tribes primarily operate at breakeven operations because of the social service / governmental role. They would prefer to work with a tenant that becomes behind on their rent rather than go straight to the eviction stage. This makes Tribes very different from the for-profit developers with whom you may be more familiar.

It is true that Tribes receive some assistance from the federal government, but the amount that they receive is primarily to manage their existing housing stock since many of the tenants pay little or no rent. There is very little left for the development of new housing projects. Because of this, Tribes typically only build

one or two new homes per year. This volume barely makes a dent in the housing need. With the tax credit program, Tribes can leverage their money and build more homes sooner.

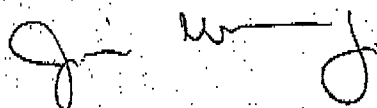
The rural and remote location of most reservations, procurement requirements, increased cost to do business and with fewer firms interested in working in remote locations creates a difficult development environment for tribal LIHTC projects. A DDA designation would better address the financial difficulties inherent to tribal development and begin to resolve the affordable housing crisis on the various reservations throughout Michigan.

Lending is also almost non-existent in Indian Country. Since most of the land owned by Tribes is held in trust by the Federal Government, banks have no right to foreclose on the land and therefore are reluctant to lend on the reservation. Tribes have to rely on federal programs to fund their housing activities.

It is imperative to understand that Native Americans living on Indian reservations represent a particular market segment, distinct from and essentially unaffected by housing market forces to which other minority groups are subject. Tribal members who choose to live on the reservation expect to live with other Indian families and will endure housing difficulties and hardships unlikely to be endured outside of Indian Country. For lack of a better term, there is a great "affinity" for living on traditional Indian lands among Indian families and this affinity supercedes conventional market forces. Recent history and experience has shown that Indian people will go to great lengths in order to live amongst their Tribal extended family, creating overcrowding, inadequate facilities and severe shortages. Because of these considerations, market data on housing off the reservation and even private housing owned and developed by non-Indians is immaterial. Vacancies and absorption periods for non-Indian housing are immaterial. What is material is the number of units needed by Indian families and that is indisputable.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



James Williams Jr.,  
Tribal Chairman