



Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota

P.O. Box 308 • 39527 Reservation Highway 1

Morton, MN 56270

Cansayapi Otunwe

LOWER SIOUX INDIAN COMMUNITY RESOLUTION NO. 19-22

SUPPORT FOR EARTHLODGE BUILDING


- WHEREAS, The Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota (the “Community”) is a duly organized and federally-recognized Indian Tribe under 25 U.S.C. § 476, and is governed by the terms of a Constitution and By-Laws originally adopted by the Tribal Members on May 16, 1936, and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on April 23, 1936; and,
- WHEREAS, pursuant to said Constitution and Bylaws, the Community Council of the Lower Sioux Indian Reservation (“Community Council”) is the governing body of the Lower Sioux Indian Community; and
- WHEREAS, the Community Council has the authority, as enumerated in ARTICLE V-POWERS, including but not limited to: (m) encourage and foster the arts, crafts, traditions, and culture of the Community...; and
- WHEREAS, *Oceti Sakowin* (Seven Campfires including the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota) People are the Original People of *Minisota Makoce* and lived on this land for thousands of years; and
- WHEREAS, *Oceti Sakowin* tribal governments today are committed to the continuation and revitalization of our cultural traditions; and
- WHEREAS, we have an inherent right to practice our cultural traditions within our ancestral homeland; and
- WHEREAS, earthlodge building is one of our ancient cultural traditions and this cultural tradition is far older than the building tradition and codes of the State of Minnesota; and
- WHEREAS, the Community’s Tribal Historic Preservation Officer also supports Makoce Ikikcupi’s efforts regarding the earthlodge building.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Community Council hereby supports Makoce Ikikcupi's efforts to recover homeland and practice our cultural traditions, including earthlodge building.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Community Council fully supports the efforts of Makoce Ikikcupi earthlodge building and agree these cultural dwellings should be exempt from Minnesota building codes because they do not apply.

CERTIFICATION

We certify that Resolution No. 19 - 221 was duly adopted by the Community Council of the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota at a meeting held on the 4 day of October, 2019, a quorum being present by a vote of 2 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining.



Robert Larsen, President

Grace Goldtooth, Vice President

Earl Pendleton, Treasurer



Jane Steffen, Secretary



Kevin O'Keefe, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer





Tribal Historic Preservation Office
Lower Sioux Indian Community
P.O. Box 308 • 39527 Reservation Highway 1
Morton, MN 56270

September 2019

Governor Tim Walz,
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Walz,

Please accept this letter as a document of our full support for the Makoce Ikikcupi (Land Recovery) Project.

This project was launched in 2009 and, after a decade of fundraising, in summer 2019 Makoce Ikikcupi began implementing their vision of a culturally-grounded, sustainable community, one that is off-grid with no electricity and running water. They hope to walk the path back to the ways of our ancestors, through language, through ceremony, and through simple ways of living. Part of this is the recovery of one of our traditional housing structures, the Dakota earthlodge.

Today, the city of Granite Falls is requiring approval from a building inspector who will only permit projects that adhere to state building codes. Such codes were not written for these kinds of cultural structures. As an example, the code includes requirements for light, ventilation, heating, minimum room sizes, ceiling heights, sanitation, toilet, bath and shower spaces, emergency escape and rescue openings, means of egress, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms. The codes were written for those committed to industrial civilization and western building practices.

The Lower Sioux Tribal Historic Preservation Office is supportive of Makoce Ikikcupi's request for an exemption from these state building codes, not because they are unconcerned about safety, sanitation, or the structural integrity of our housing, but because the building codes were not written to regulate Dakota earthlodges. They also were not written to support Indigenous concepts of planning, architecture, or engineering.

In closing, we pray your offices recognize that there are no existing building codes for this type of cultural structure and they should not be held to the standard Minnesota building codes. Recovering our traditions and practicing our culture should not be illegal within our ancestral homeland.

Respectfully,

Cheyenne St. John, THPO
Lower Sioux Indian Community
Tribal Historic Preservation Office