



CANADIAN CENTRE ON DISABILITY STUDIES

research and education on issues that affect us all

<http://www.disabilitystudies.ca>

Visitability Canada Network November 2007 Communiqué

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1. Welcome

The Canadian Centre on Disability Studies project on Understanding the Status of Visitability in Canada (funded by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Manitoba Government Department of Families Services and Housing) has come to a close. The final report has been submitted and it is imperative that we don't allow it to sit on a shelf, collecting dust. CCDS and all Think Tank participants and those interested in promoting visitable housing must maintain the connections we have made, and take action to move visitability to the next level. We would like to thank all of you for the support, dedication and leadership you have shown throughout the project and hope you continue to be an active member of the Visitability Canada Network. We want to hear from you as to your progress with your VISIBLE housing initiatives in your areas.

We plan to send out a communiqué once every two months to keep you posted on our progress. To stay connected, please continue to update and send information on your projects to Laura Rempel at research3@disabilitystudies.ca, and we will begin posting them on www.visitablehousingcanada.com. We are in the process of developing an online forum so you can post your initiatives and updates yourself. We will inform you when this feature is up and running.

2. Understanding the Status of Visitability in Canada Research Summary

Please find the research summary attached to this email.

3. CCDS Related News

- a. Laurie Ringaert and Olga Krassioukova-Enns will present to the CMHC National Housing Research Committee's Working Group on Distinct Needs in early November 2007 in relation to our visitable housing project.
- b. Design Exchange Presentation- CCDS presented our Visitability research project at the Design Exchange in Toronto on November 8, 2007, 1:00- 5:00pm. This presentation will be part of their "Designing for Communities" workshop. Laura

Rempel will present a 45-minute summary of our research and a design activity in which to apply the knowledge.

- c. **Aging with Disabilities Project Update**- attached to this email is the one page project description. Please visit www.agingwithdisabilities.com for more information.

The Canadian Centre on Disability Studies will work in partnership with advisory committees from Manitoba, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and nationally to identify needs, gaps and good practice models of caregiving/ supports, transportation and housing for people with long-term disabilities who are aging. The project is funded by the Office for Disability Issues, Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

The Project Team and Advisory Committees have been hard at work developing an environmental scan, annotated bibliography, website, and online survey. We have just completed the first two roundtable discussions with the advisory committees, consumers and service providers in Manitoba and Nova Scotia with plans for British Columbia in January 2008. Interviews with key stakeholders from both the aging and disability sectors will begin in November 2007. Due to the housing component of the research, visitable housing is still a priority area for CCDS and examines the larger community and what elements are needed to support aging in place. If you would like any additional information please contact the Project Coordinator, Laura Rempel at research3@disabilitystudies.ca

- d. **Abilities Magazine Fall 2007 Issue** includes a two-page article on this CCDS Visitability research in the Housing Forum section. Please see attached PDF for more information.
- e. **Winnipeg Foundation Grant**
CCDS has received a \$10,000 grant from the Winnipeg Foundation– we will be looking at different neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, survey the neighbourhoods on how visitable they are. This is in the development stages with Larry Hurtig and Harry Paine from the Manitoba Advisory Committee for the Aging with Disabilities Project.
- f. Laurie Ringaert and Olga Krassioukova-Enns have been invited to and will be attending a Visitability Think Tank in Atlanta November 8-10, 2007.

4. Provincial Updates

We request that you share information on any new initiatives you have learned about or been a part of since the Think Tank in May. For now you can send it to CCDS or we suggest testing out a new website tool we will soon be utilizing. We are in the development process of a web forum for the visitability website and we will let you know when that is up and running. The web forums will allow for continued sharing of information and networking even if there is no project funding.

Here are some of the articles, events and initiatives we have discovered since the end of the project.

Manitoba

- **Visitable Housing: Cost Estimate Summary** - June 2007

This report was prepared at the request of Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation (MHRC) and conducted by Progressive Accessibility Re-Form Associates (PARA), Hilderman Thomas Frank and Cram Landscape Architecture and Planning (HTFC), and Lanny L.M Silver, Architect.

The report summarizes the findings related to the cost and market implications of incorporating basic visitable features into two, single-family detached houses in Manitoba. The cost analysis is of a case study in Waverly West, a new development in Winnipeg based on two specific model homes (provided by a local home builder) and sites. The case studies look at different solutions determined by site drainage, earthwork, foundation, bathroom design, pathway, decks and changes needed to be made to the house plans to ensure visitability. The estimated costs of these changes ranged from \$3095 to \$8703. Caution should be exercised in generalizing the results, as each case is very site specific.

For more information, MHRC has made the report available on our website. www.visitablehousingcanada.com

- **Flora Place**- Winnipeg - Sept 8, 2007

28 new affordable and visitable townhouse apartments were developed in a \$3.5-million housing project geared to seniors and people with disabilities. The Province of Manitoba and feds contributed \$2.2 million toward the project, with the city adding \$600,000. Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation, a non-profit agency that owns and manages the development, funded the rest of the project.

British Columbia

- **Measuring Up The North Project**

Is a project in Northern British Columbia is a partnership between the North Central Municipal Association and the BC Paraplegic Association with supporting partners 2010 Legacies Now and the BC Healthy Communities Initiative. The goal of the project is to assist 41 communities and regional districts to develop livable, senior-friendly, disability-friendly, universally designed communities. The project will address both accessibility and inclusion and will use the "Measuring Up" tool created by 2010 Legacies Now Society as well as other relevant tools. With strong support through Northern BC, the project will assist communities through locally controlled initiatives potentially increase participation of seniors and people with disabilities, employment rates, tourism opportunities, economic development, sustainability, retirement living and cooperative ventures. The intent is to build better communities for all citizens. The project will engage local governments, disability and seniors organizations, businesses, and citizens in active dialogue, assessment and planning for their community. Visitability will be a major project goal. The

project is funded by the Real Estate Foundation of BC, the Nechako Kitamaat Development Fund and United Way Prince George. For more information, contact Laurie Ringaert, Project Director at: 250-563-6942 or at measurenorth@bcpara.org.

Nova Scotia

- A home builder (Harmony Homes in Windsor) has made a commitment to universal designed housing in Nova Scotia. The link to more information is in the article link provided below. <http://easternviews.blogspot.com/2007/09/no-place-like-home.html> For more information contact Ralph Ferguson.
- A Designing for Inclusion Symposium, was held October 20, 2007 in Halifax hosted by Dalhousie University, School of Occupational Therapy and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

5. USA Updates

- Three new Visitability ordinances have been passed in:
 - 1) La Fayette, Colorado (September 2007) - access required in 25% of all new houses, whether privately funded or using some public money
 - 2) Tucson, Arizona (October 2007)– where EVERY new house is to be visitable
 - 3) Birmingham Alabama – has just passed an ordinance, as it is very recent decision more information will be available in the future.
- AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) has commissioned a 30-page Issue Paper on Visitability which Jordana Maisel of the State University of New York at Buffalo, and Eleanor Smith of Concrete Change are authoring.
- Olga Krassioukova-Enns and Laurie Ringaert are participating in a conference entitled “Visitability Think Tank Atlanta “ in Atlanta Georgia on November 9-10 2007.

6. International Updates

- Age Friendly Cities Guide was launched by the World Health Organization October 1, 2007. The Canadian Reports for Saanich, British Columbia, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba and Halifax, Nova Scotia are now available online. Please follow the link if you would like to download the guide or read the press release. www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2007/pr53/en/index.html

7. Next Steps

a. Think Tank Follow-up

CCDS has made visitable housing a priority and committed ourselves to maintaining the network, website and hosting a follow-up Think Tank event. We have been actively seeking funding for the event and are in the preliminary planning stages. The proposed date is March 4-5 2008, in Winnipeg. Followed by a conference based on our current Aging with a Long Term Disability research project (proposed date March 6-7, 2008).

b. Visitability Website and Forum

CCDS is in the process of developing a web forum for our visitable housing website. We will keep you posted as to when it is up and running. This will be an opportunity to continue sharing information and networking to move the visitability agenda forward.

c. New Proposals

1. CCDS has submitted a proposal to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) for their 2008 External Research Program.
2. CCDS will continue to submit to other funders.

8. Other

- Promoting Basic Accessibility in the Home: Analyzing Patterns in the Diffusion of Visitability Legislation. By Christy M. Nishita, Phoebe S. Liebig, Jon Pynoos, Lena Perelman, and Katie Spegal. Journal of Disability Policy Studies. Vol. 18, no.1 2007 pp. 2-13

Abstract:

Visitability legislation, which requires minimum accessibility in single-family homes, is an unprecedented advancement in disability policy that began with the passage of an Atlanta ordinance in 1992 and has spread to other jurisdictions. Based on the diffusion of innovation model (Gray, 1973), our study used interviews, news articles, and analyses of legislation to examine the spread of the visitability concept, the patterns of diffusion, the opposition's main concerns, and the mechanisms by which advocates overcame opposition and facilitated passage. Results indicated that a policy entrepreneur (Kingdon, 1995) was largely responsible for the consequent spread of visitability across cities and states in a horizontal pattern of diffusion. Opponents from the building industry were largely concerned about added cost, which forced advocates to employ education and negotiation tactics. Despite considerable controversy, proponents' success provides other advocates with lessons on how to ensure a more widespread impact on U.S. housing stock.

- Free 6-page: Visitability Handout Simple, Clear, Illustrated: downloadable at <http://www.assistutah.org/access-visitability/visitability.htm>
- Free PowerPoint presentation on Visitability and Entrances: visit <http://www.concretechange.org/>

Thank you for all your efforts with Visitable Housing. Please share your updates with us! Don't forget to visit: www.visitablehousingcanada.com for updates!

Contact Information:

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