

SAGAYT K'ÜÜLM GOOT –
OF ONE HEART

Gitxaala Nation Annual Report



2024-2025

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased by 1.5 million (1990–2000) and is projected to increase by a further 1.5 million by 2020 (Office for National Statistics 2001). The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 2.5 million by 2020 in the USA (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to develop strategies to meet the needs of the ageing population. The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a 'Global Strategy on Ageing and Health' (WHO 1999) which aims to 'enable older people to live longer, healthier, and more active lives'. The WHO strategy is based on the following principles: (1) older people should be able to live longer, healthier, and more active lives; (2) older people should be able to live in their own homes; (3) older people should be able to participate in social and community life; (4) older people should be able to live in a safe and secure environment; (5) older people should be able to live in a supportive environment.

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Photo by CLC

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If Not Now, When?

By Chief Councillor Linda Innes (Lou Ga Gwelks)

This past year has been one of the most transformative in my time as Chief Councillor. Our theme, Sagayt K'üülm Goot – Of One Heart, has guided every decision we've made as a Nation. We are stronger when we move together, and this year has shown, in powerful ways, what unity can accomplish.

As ex-officio to all portfolios and a representative on the GECO Board, I have had the honour of helping to steer initiatives that will shape our Nation for generations to come. Together, we secured ownership of the Crest Hotel and the Chances Casino and Convention Centre in Prince Rupert. These are not short-term ventures — they are long-term investments in Gitxaala's sovereignty, designed to generate sustainable wealth, meaningful jobs, and regional visibility for our Nation. They represent the next chapter in Gitxaala's story of economic independence.

But our economic journey is about more than business. It is about sovereignty. GECO continues to engage the Hereditary Advisory Committee, ensuring our traditional landholders are informed and guiding decisions. At the same time, Gitxaala continues to defend our territories through the courts. Our most recent legal claim is not simply about consultation — it is about the wrongful assessment of Gitxaala's title to the Prince Rupert Harbour area. The claim seeks declarations that both Crowns — federal and provincial — have breached their duties, including the duty to consult, as a result of their inaccurate assessment of the strength of Gitxaala's title claim to the Prince Rupert Harbour, Kaien Island, and the mouth of the Skeena River.

Gitxaala has submitted clear evidence confirming continuous occupation of these territories — evidence grounded in our adaawx, ayaawx, malsk, and gugwilx'ya'ansk, and supported by knowledge holders and independent experts. This case is not only legal; it is about truth and recognition. It asserts what we have always known — that Gitxaala has governed, harvested, and cared for these lands and waters since time immemorial.

We cannot stand by when others make choices that compromise our rights and our territory.

"If not now, when? If not our own educated people, then who?"

– Linda Innes



Photo by Marcia Robinson

This year also brought a major victory: our successful challenge of British Columbia's Mineral Tenure Act. The courts affirmed that consultation must occur before mineral claims are granted. This was more than a legal win — it was a validation of Gitxaala's laws and the enduring strength of our governance.

Appointing Marcia Robinson as Chief Administrative Officer was another milestone. A Gitxaala citizen with deep governance and financial expertise, Marcia has strengthened our administration and brought renewed integrity to our internal systems. Her leadership represents what we must continue to do — elevate and empower our own educated people into key positions.



Photograph by Jamie Angus-Brown

Through every challenge and success, I have remained grounded in community — visiting Elders, supporting youth in sport and learning, and standing in the Yaax (feast) system that continues to guide us. Leadership, to me, is not about power. It is about listening with humility, acting with integrity, and bridging tradition and modern governance to protect what matters most: our people, our land, and our future.

Looking forward, my top priorities remain clear:

- Education as the foundation of self-determination
- Protection of title and rights for future generations
- Stronger housing and infrastructure to meet the realities of climate change

If not now, when? Our path forward is generational and together we will walk it.



Photo by Brenna Johnson-Innes

Healing Journeys, Stronger Futures

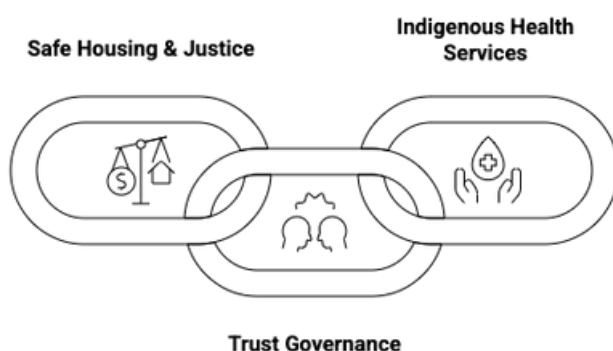
By Deputy Chief Brenna Johnson-Innes

This past year has stretched me as a leader, but also filled me with pride. Serving as Deputy Chief, my role has focused on governance, housing, justice, and health — areas that touch our citizens' daily lives.

On the governance side, I've supported revisions to Council's policies so they align with our Custom Election Code and Financial Administration Law. This kind of work doesn't always make headlines, but it strengthens the very foundation of how we govern. Transparency and accountability remain at the center of these changes.

Housing and justice have been another priority. As President of the Prince Rupert Indigenous Housing Society, I've worked to support new developments at Harbour View and to push forward the West A subdivision funding application. Housing is more than infrastructure — it is stability, safety, and dignity for our families. I also participated in regional justice discussions, ensuring Gitxaala's voice was heard at the Prince Rupert Indigenous Justice Centre and through the BC First Nations Justice Council.

Gitxaala's Strategic Priorities



One of the most meaningful parts of this year has been health and healing. I've provided governance leadership for Red Road North, which will open by the end of the year, as a treatment centre. Supporting recovery isn't abstract to me — it's about real people, real families, and real success stories. I celebrate every Gitxaala member who has taken the step to attend treatment, to stay connected, and to rediscover their strength. These are victories for all of us.



Marion Brown Photo

In addition, I've been deeply involved in the Gitxaala Trust Board and as Chair of the Northern First Nations Alliance. Through these roles, I've worked to strengthen investment priorities, governance standards, and collaboration with our neighbouring Nations.

A powerful moment came during the tsunami advisory this past July. It reminded me that leadership means showing up in urgent times, making decisions quickly, and keeping our people safe. That experience showed both our strength and the need to build more capacity for emergency preparedness.

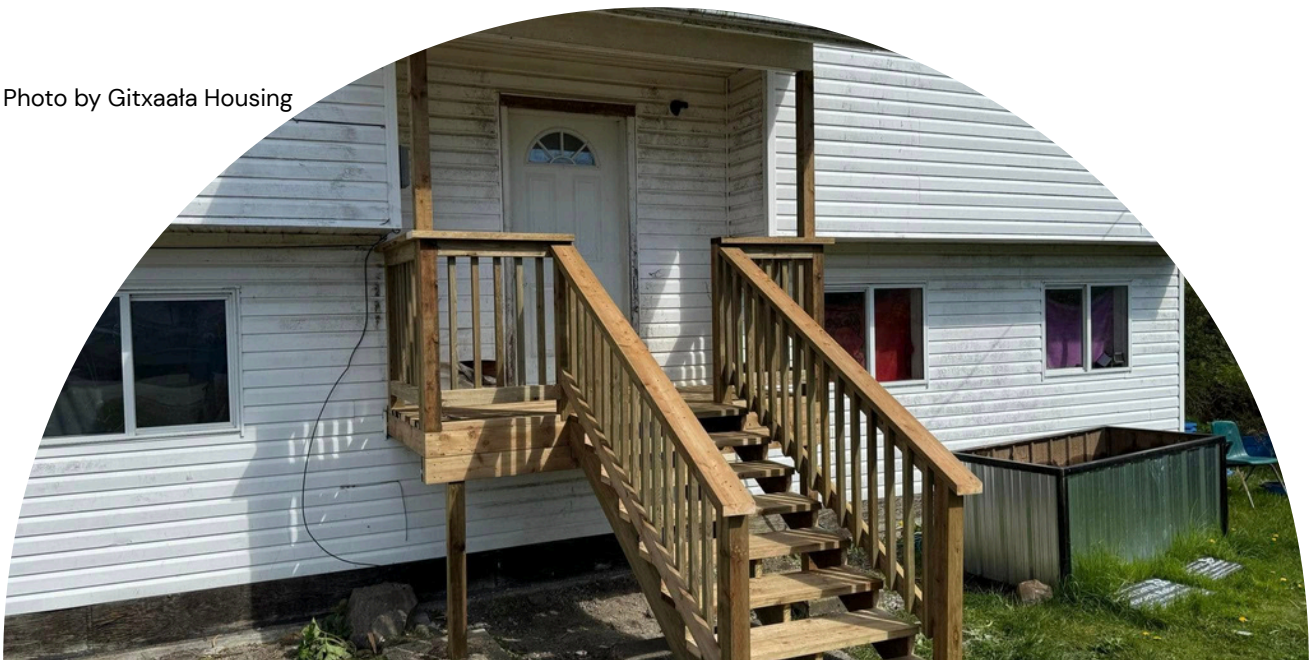
Looking ahead, my top priorities remain clear:

- Safe and stable housing, paired with fair justice services
- Strong trust governance so our investments reflect Gitxaala's values
- Expanded access to Indigenous-led health and recovery services

Leadership, to me, means listening closely, acting with honesty, and always putting the community first.

When I see our members healing, when I see new homes being built, when I see our laws growing stronger — I know we are walking the right path.

Photo by Gitxaala Housing



Serving with Transparency and Trust

By Councillor Joscelin V. Lewis

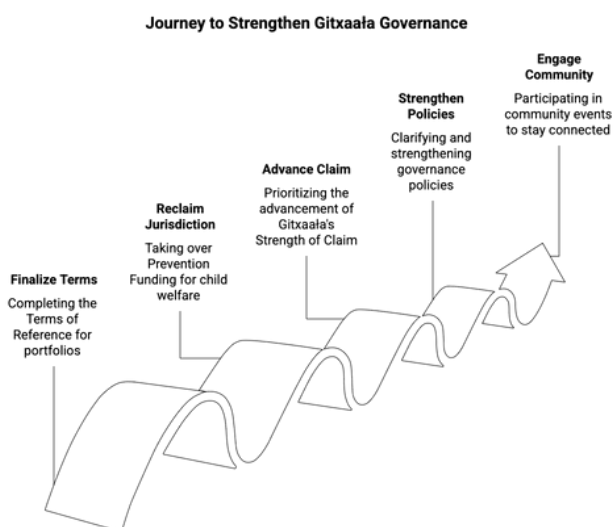
Over the past year, I've had the privilege of serving Gitxaala through my work in Community Services, Health, and the Finance & Audit Committee. My responsibilities included chairing and co-chairing portfolio meetings and advocating for our Nation at meetings with BC Ministers. One of the most significant milestones this year was finalizing the Terms of Reference for each of my portfolios. It was a lengthy process, but a much-needed one, and I'm proud that this important step is now complete.

I also served as a Board Alternate with the Northwest Inter-Nation Child & Family Services Society. This work is deeply meaningful, as we continue moving toward reclaiming Gitxaala's jurisdiction over child welfare. A major achievement this year was the Nation taking over its Prevention Funding — those resources now flow directly through Gitxaala. I look forward to more community engagement sessions and building on this positive progress.

As I reflect on my service, I remind myself often that actions must always align with Gitxaala's values and principles. I strive to lead by example, knowing that transparency and trust are essential to maintaining public confidence. This position is temporary, but the people are forever.

Looking forward, my priorities are clear: advancing Gitxaala's Strength of Claim, strengthening and clarifying governance policies — particularly the Governing Council Policy and Credit Card Policy — and ensuring that every action we take as leaders is transparent and accountable.

Staying connected with our people is at the heart of my role. I make time for community engagement sessions, feasts, weddings, funerals, school events, and sporting activities whenever possible. Whether in Lax Klan or Prince Rupert, I value the conversations I have with citizens — especially those that speak to community pride. Everyone deserves to feel heard, respected, and included in the decisions that shape our future.



Be the Change: A Councillor's Journey

By Elliott Moody, Gitxaala Nation Councillor

When I first thought about running for Council, the question I asked myself was simple: What kind of future do I want my son to inherit? The answer was clear. I couldn't just sit back and watch change from the sidelines—I needed to step forward and try to be that change. Gandhi's words, "Be the change you want to see in the world," have always stayed with me, and they guided me into this role.

Stepping into the council chambers was not easy. At times, it has felt like sink or swim. But I haven't walked this path alone. I've been fortunate to work with a strong team who have helped me navigate the challenges. And truthfully, I've welcomed those challenges—they've sharpened my skills, pushed me to grow, and opened doors to real dialogue with our people.

At the heart of it all is my son, and the community I serve. They keep me grounded. They remind me why I strive to be open and transparent, why I keep an open-door policy for anyone who wants to talk, share concerns, or simply be heard. This work is never about me—it's about us, about Gitxaala.

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean." – Ryunosuke Satoro

Protecting Our Home

My portfolio with the Gitxaala Territorial Management Agency (GTMA) reflects my greatest passion: safeguarding our territory and waters. I was raised here. I've seen the beauty of our lands and seas, but I've also watched places like Banks Island be scarred by outside interests.

One of my biggest priorities is ensuring the clean-up of Banks Island. I want future generations to stand on that land and see only its beauty, not the damage left behind. That vision may take time—it's a lofty goal—but we are already walking the path as a Nation. And I believe, wholeheartedly, that we will get there together.

From the moment I became a councillor, it stopped being about "me" and started being about "we." I serve the Nation—it does not serve me. That responsibility is something I hold close every single day.

A Strong Connection

I grew up in this community. People here have watched me grow, supported me, and influenced the person I've become. Those ties are not just strong—they are unbreakable. I want every member to know I am reachable. If you need to talk, I'm here. If you want to share concerns, dreams, or just have a conversation, my door is open.

Looking to the Future

What inspires me most about our governance is how we work hand in hand with hereditary leadership. Our goals are unified, grounded in our traditions. But even as we look to the past for guidance, we must also look ahead.

For Gitxaala to flourish, we must bring younger leaders into the circle now. We cannot expect them to step up one day without guidance—we must shape, mentor, and support them, just as those before us shaped and guided us.

To truly live as Sagayt K'üülm Goot – Of One Heart, we must embrace the wisdom of our past, the responsibilities of the present, and the voices of our youth who will carry our Nation forward.

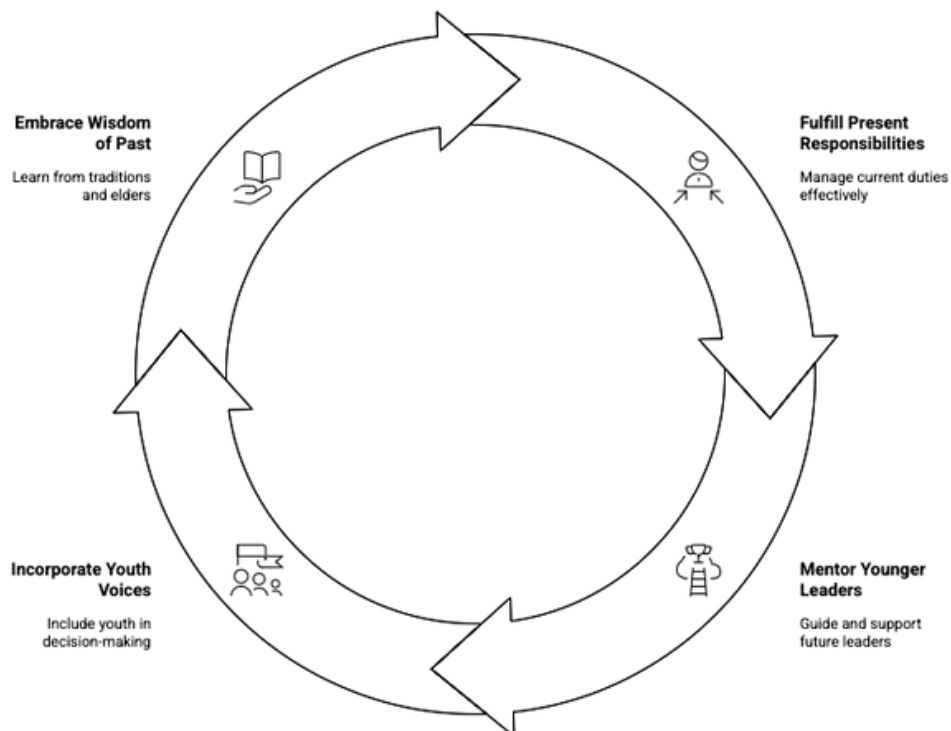
That is the future I see for Gitxaala. That is the work I will continue to do.

As always, I am here—for my son, for our people, and for our Nation.



Photo by Brenna Johnson-Innes

Gitxaala Governance Cycle



Finding My Voice as Youth Councillor

By Jamie Angus-Brown, Youth Councillor

Serving as Gitxaala's Youth Councillor has been a journey of growth, learning, and responsibility. When I first stepped into this role, I knew it would take time to find my voice — and over this past year, I've learned to use it more and more. Every decision we make as Council must be in the best interest of our citizens, and that truth has guided me as I've spoken up, shared perspectives, and listened carefully to others.

Much of my work has been in a support role. As ex-officio to multiple portfolios — Education & Culture, GTMA, and now Youth — I gained a deeper understanding of how each area works and how decisions are made. It was a lot to carry, but it gave me valuable insight into our governance processes. With encouragement and guidance from others on Council, I've learned to take advice, apply it where it fits, and grow as a leader.



Photo by Jamie Angus-Brown

"I've been gradually finding and using my voice — learning that every decision we make must be in the best interest of Gitxaala citizens."

Jamie Angus-Brown, Youth Councillor

Living in the community has also kept me closely connected to citizens. I make it a priority to attend events, meetings, and activities, and I'm proud to share song and dance through our drum and dance group, something I've been part of for many years. Those connections keep me grounded and remind me of why I serve — to make sure our younger generation is heard and represented.

Looking ahead, my top priorities are clear:

- Creating a Terms of Reference for the Youth Portfolio
- Encouraging participation in a youth council
- Developing guidelines to support youth needs and provide a space for their concerns

This year has been a roller coaster at times, but I'm grateful for the experience and the support I've received. I know the work is just beginning, and I'm committed to building a strong foundation for future youth leaders.

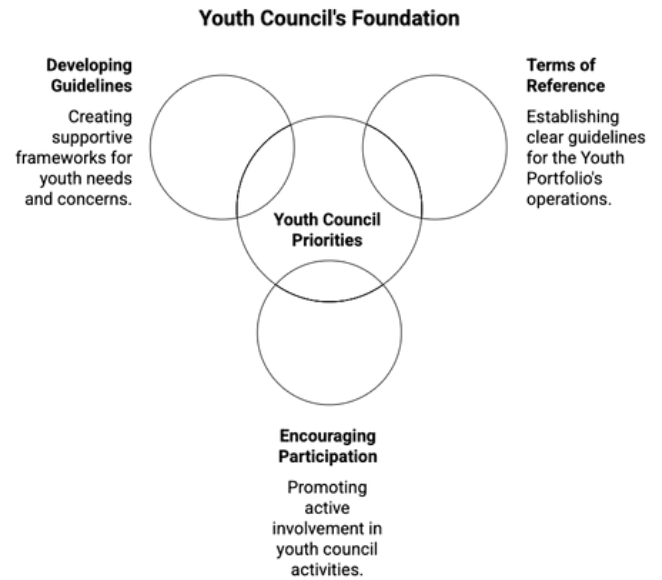


Photo by Jamie Angus-Brown



Working Together for Our People

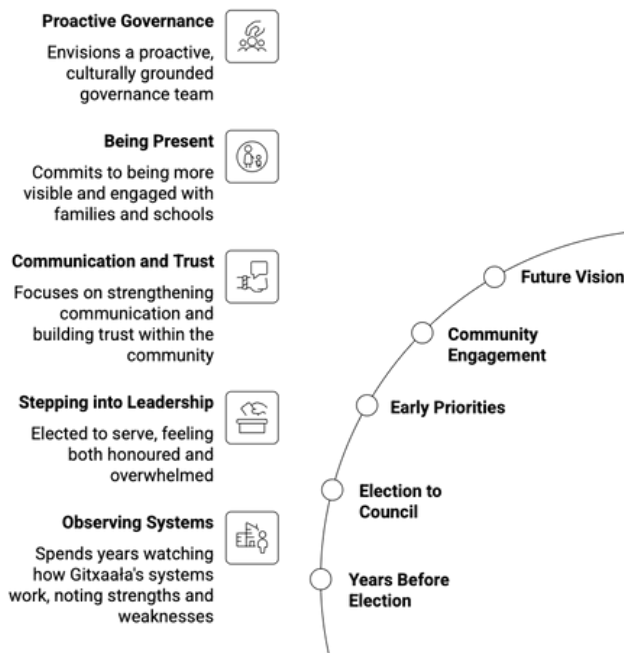
By Councillor Gail Watkinson

When I first decided to run for Council, I did it for our youth and for the future of Gitxaala. I've spent years watching how our systems work — and sometimes how they don't. I want to see a better working system where Nation members, staff, and Council all pull together as one team. It is truly an honour to have been elected to serve. I won't pretend it has not been overwhelming at times — stepping into this role has brought moments of nervousness and even fear. But those feelings remind me just how much this responsibility means. Every decision we make has an impact on our people, and that's something I carry with care and humility.

***My dream: Sagayt
K'üülm Goot – Of
One Heart.***

–Councillor Gail Watkinson

Journey and Vision for Gitxaala



My priorities are simple but deeply important: to strengthen communication, build trust, and create better systems that support our staff and citizens. I want to be more present — visiting the school, spending time with families, and being visible in the community. True leadership isn't about standing in front or at the top; it's about working together toward shared goals.

I am still learning, but I am here. We can do this together.

Looking ahead, I believe strong, culturally-grounded governance means being proactive, not reactive. It means building an interactive, connected team that supports one another and makes decisions rooted in our values. What gives me hope for Gitxaala's future is exactly that — our ability to work as one.

Building Strength, Together

By Lii T'aam Lax Aniis Gaax – Councillor Rowena Ridley

When I think about leadership, I think about listening. Our strength as Gitxaala people has always come from our ability to come together, to share openly, and to take care of one another. That's the heart of accountability — ensuring our citizens are fully informed, that every voice is heard, and that every decision we make reflects the values we hold as a Nation.

My work on Council is grounded in transparency and trust. Before stepping into this role, I spent years supporting Chief and Council as an Executive Assistant. It gave me a deep understanding of how our governance operates — the flow of authority, the responsibility that comes with every decision, and the importance of honouring our Ayaawx and hereditary leadership. Those experiences, and the guidance I've received from our Elders and leaders inspired me to step forward. I wanted to be part of strengthening the systems that serve our people.

Today, my focus is on Infrastructure and Housing — areas that are essential to our Nation's growth. More and more members are asking to come home, to raise their children in the community where their roots run deep. But we know the need is greater than the supply. Housing, roads, and essential infrastructure must keep pace with our peoples' dreams.



Photo Teresa Stewart

My goal is to ensure every Gitxaala family who wants to return has the opportunity to do so — safely, comfortably, and with pride.

Accountability means more than meetings and reports. It means being accessible, connecting with citizens where they are, and making space for every voice in the conversation. Whether it's sitting down with families, listening to youth, or spending time with Elders, I believe our Nation grows stronger when we build relationships rooted in care.

Looking ahead, I see a Gitxaala Nation that continues to evolve — blending the strength of our traditional governance with the tools of modern leadership. Our challenge is to balance both worlds without losing sight of who we are. When I think of our future, I see a Nation that stands tall together, with strong homes, strong hearts, and a shared sense of purpose.

I carry that vision with me every day:

Sagayt K'üülm Goot – Of One Heart.

“When we come together — honouring the wisdom of our Elders, empowering the voices of our youth, and strengthening the bonds of family — we build a future where unity and hope thrive for generations to come.”
— Councillor Rowena Ridley

Where Tradition Meets Modern Leadership



Building a Stronger Foundation

By Marcia Robinson, Chief Administrative Officer

This past year, our Administration team has focused on building the foundation for a stronger, healthier, and more welcoming organization. For me, this has been about more than just policies or procedures — it has been about shaping a workplace where our staff feel valued, our citizens feel heard, and our Nation continues to thrive.

One of our proudest accomplishments was launching a comprehensive Staff Professional Development program. In just a few months, more than 60 Gitxaala employees took part in training on our Financial Procedures, Trauma-Informed Practices, and team-building through the Spirit of Leadership Program. These sessions weren't just checkboxes on a list — they were opportunities to grow together, to learn skills that matter, and to strengthen the culture of respect within our workplace. We are also planning upcoming sessions on Lateral Kindness, Conflict Resolution, and Bullying and Harassment. Each step helps us build an organization rooted in respect and accountability.

Another highlight was the inaugural Gitxaala Day, which brought staff and citizens together in a celebration of who we are. It wasn't just an event — it was a moment of transformation. The energy, pride, and unity that day will carry us forward, shaping how we gather and celebrate as a Nation.

We also worked closely with Chief and Council, Directors, and Managers to prepare for the First Nations Leadership and BC Ministers Gathering. Together, we planned our advocacy to ensure Gitxaala's voice was heard on critical issues like health, education, housing, food security, and infrastructure. That teamwork showed how powerful we can be when we walk into these spaces prepared and united.

Of course, challenges remain. We know our policies and communication systems need continued attention. That's why we've partnered with organizations like the First Nations Financial Management Board, the First Nations Market Housing Fund, and the First Nations Education Steering Committee to strengthen our governance tools. Looking ahead, we'll also be developing a communication strategy to guide our next steps.



Through all of this, I've seen the strength of our team and the potential of our Nation. At peak times, we employ up to 160 people — each one contributing to Gitxaala's growth and service to citizens. Our top priorities for the year ahead are clear: continuing staff development, modernizing our policies and procedures, and preparing a strong succession plan to ensure long-term stability.

Administration is sometimes the work you don't see — the policies, training, and planning that sit behind the scenes. But it's also the work that makes everything else possible. My commitment is to keep strengthening our foundation so that Gitxaala can build, grow, and thrive for generations to come.

"It's about more than policies and procedures — it's about creating a workplace where our staff feel valued, our citizens feel heard, and our Nation thrives."

—Marcia Robinson, CAO



Photo by Marcia Robinson

Lach Klan School – Learning in Both Worlds

By Deb Stava, Director of Education

At Lach Klan Junior Elementary School, our vision is simple yet powerful: to help our children walk with confidence in both worlds – grounded in Gitxaala knowledge and ready to meet the opportunities of the wider world.

This past year, our classrooms were places of transformation. Elders, hereditary leaders, and knowledge keepers joined teachers to share Adaawx, language, and traditional teachings. These moments of connection are what shape not only lessons, but lives.

We focused on building strong foundations in **literacy, numeracy, and zones of regulation**, ensuring that every child has the tools to succeed academically and emotionally. For the first time, our students participated in two national Indigenous youth gatherings – **Indspire** and the **Black Diamond Sports and Leadership Summit** – broadening their horizons and strengthening their sense of identity.

We proudly celebrated **four graduates** this year. Behind every diploma stands a network of teachers, families, and community members who supported those students on their journey. We launched a **Parent Club**, inviting families into the classroom to share in their children's learning.

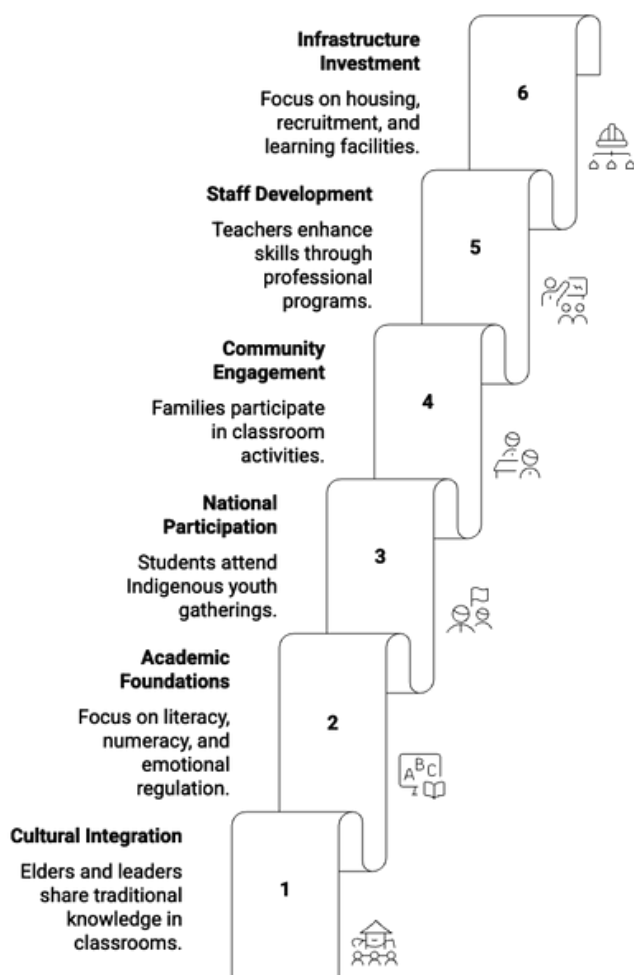


Photo by Lach Klan School

"Every child who learns in both worlds strengthens the circle of our Nation. When they hear our stories and master new skills, they carry Gitxaala forward."

— Deb Stava

Journey to Empowered Youth



Our staff have also grown — four earned Education Assistant certifications, while others engaged in professional development through FNEC, FNSEA, ECE programs, and Coast Mountain College. With the support of Connected North and Northern Therapy, we've enhanced access to speech and occupational therapy, helping students with diverse needs thrive.

Looking forward, we're investing in long-term sustainability. Housing for teachers, a strong recruitment strategy, and new learning infrastructure remain priorities. We're also working to bring the UBC NITEP Indigenous Teacher Education Program closer to home, so that Gitxaala citizens can train as future educators.



Lach Klan School Photo

Language & Culture – Our Words, Our Strength

By Dustin Johnson, Manager, Language & Culture Department
(under the direction of Director of Education, Deb Stava)

Language is the heart of who we are — the voice of our ancestors, the rhythm of our lands, and the key to our future.

This past year, the Language & Culture Department made remarkable strides in revitalizing Sm'alg yax and celebrating the cultural identity that connects us as Gitxaala people. We offered 45 classes across Lax Klan and Lax Kxeen, bringing together fluent speakers, learners, and families in an environment that honours both tradition and technology.

We also deepened our digital presence through the First Voices platform, where our team uploaded nearly 900 Gitxaala words, 39 phrases, three stories, and one song — all preserving the living voice of our Nation. These digital archives make Sm'alg yax accessible to future generations while protecting the sacred knowledge shared by our Elders and speakers.

In June, we co-hosted Indigenous Peoples Day 2024, launching Ła Sm'alg yagm Gitxaala — “The Gitxaala Language Lives.” Our community wore these words proudly, printed on t-shirts, surrounded by songs, laughter, and the presence of both hereditary and elected leadership.

“Every time we speak our language, we honour those who carried it for us. Ła Sm'alg yagm Gitxaala — our language lives.”

— Dustin Johnson, Manager, Language & Culture

Richard, Rita and Elaine Robinson



Language and Culture Archival Photo



Language and Culture Photo

One of the most moving moments of the year was the Elders' Territorial Revisit in September. Nearly 30 Elders and hereditary leaders boarded the Tsimshian Storm to visit ancestral village sites, recording place names and stories in Sm'algyax. The air was filled with pride, gratitude, and emotion — a reminder that language and land are inseparable.

Our department also continued repatriation efforts, bringing home a sacred gambling mat belonging to Sm'ooygít Seeks from the Brooklyn Museum. We participated in regional collaborations with Heiltsuk and Wetsuwet'en Nations, hosted the North Coast Drum & Dance Night, and helped open the 2025 All-Native Basketball Tournament, blending culture, celebration, and community pride.

Looking ahead, our priorities are rooted in connection and continuity. We are expanding mentorship between fluent speakers and learners, increasing community signage in Sm'algyax, and creating more on-the-land and on-the-water language programs. We aim to grow our department by adding new positions that strengthen cultural revitalization and create lasting opportunities for Gitxaala citizens.

Gitxaala Language and Culture Revitalization Journey



Continuous Learning Centre – Education for All Generations

By Deb Stava, Director of the Continuous Learning Centre

Learning doesn't end when school does. At the Continuous Learning Centre (CLC), we believe education is lifelong — it grows with us, from early years through adulthood, opening new paths for every Gitxaala citizen.

This year, we supported more than 140 citizens through training, employment programs, and post-secondary sponsorships. Our focus has been on bridging education and opportunity — connecting people to careers, credentials, and confidence.

We celebrated remarkable student success stories.

"Gitxaala's support made it possible for me to complete my Applied Coastal Ecology Diploma, Resource Management and Protection Diploma, and Bachelor of Justice Studies," said Riley Caputo (Wah Wil Gyoo). "Now I'm in my first semester at UVic's dual Indigenous and Canadian law program — a foundation built on Gitxaala's belief in my future."

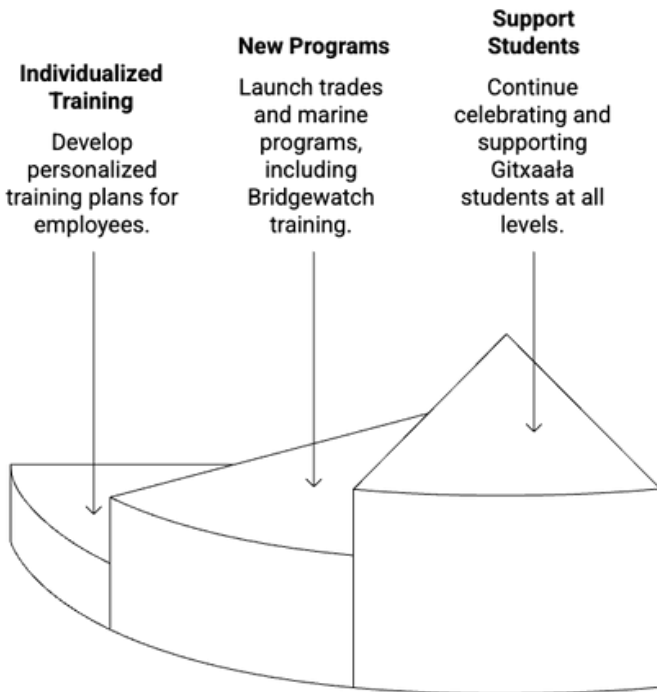
Another student, Kendall Hyzims, shared: *"CLC helped me every step of the way — from training to finding my first job. I never thought I'd come this far, and now I'm a 2nd Cook building a career I love."*

Our partnerships continue to expand — Tri-Corp, IDL, Port of Prince Rupert, BCIT, Coast Mountain College, GECCO, and many others have joined us to bring training home. We engaged in Career and Job Fairs in Kitkatla, Prince Rupert, and Vancouver, connecting members with employers and building confidence across all ages.

Continuous Learning Centre Photo



Achieving Educational Goals

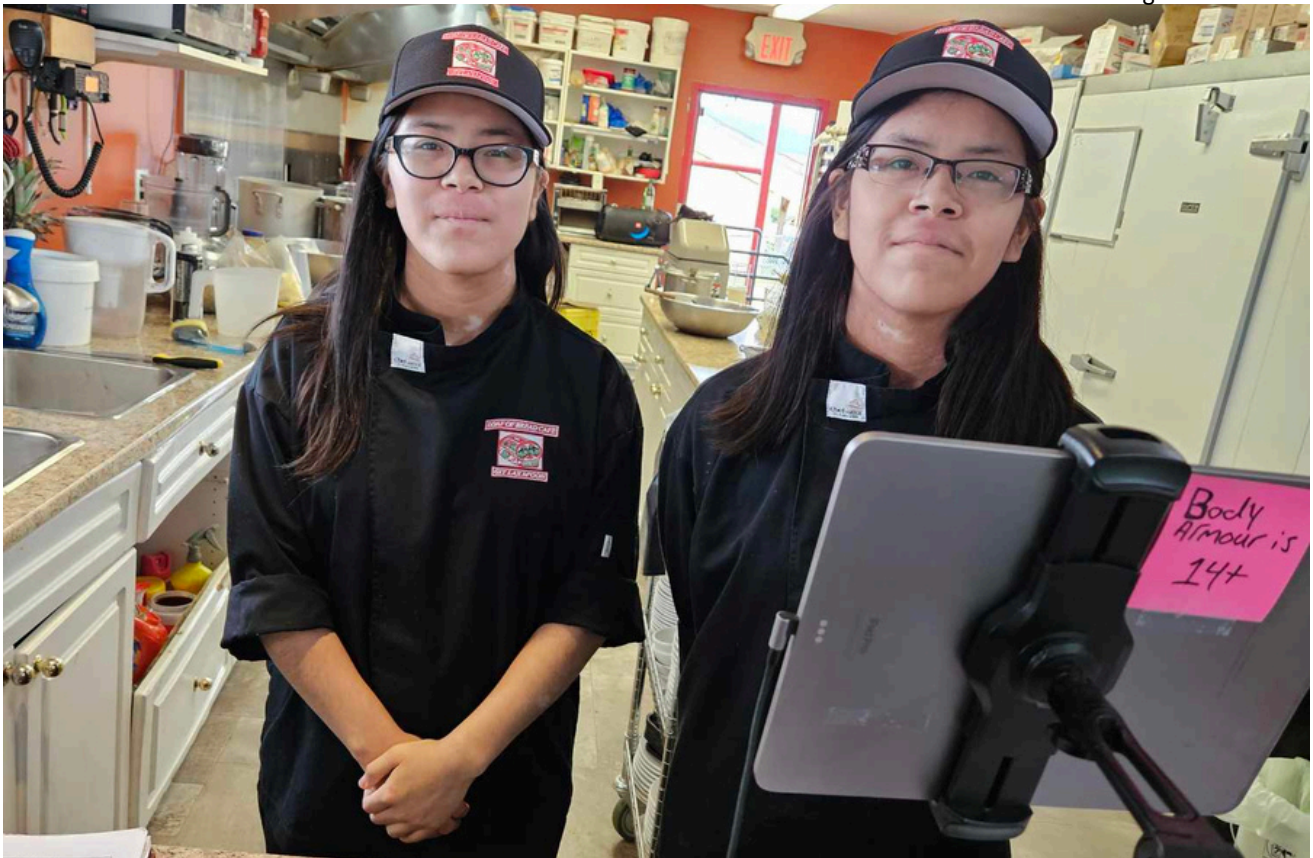


We also streamlined community distributions — from fish and sports incentives to back-to-school programs — improving coordination, efficiency, and fairness across departments. Looking ahead, we’re planning upgrades to both the Kitkatla and Prince Rupert CLCs, investing in technology, heating and cooling systems, and classrooms designed for family literacy and intergenerational learning. We’re also indigenizing the CLC environment — integrating Elders, language, and culture into every space, ensuring our learning reflects who we are.

Our goals for 2025–26 include:

- Developing individualized training plans and a Nation-wide employee matrix
- Launching new trades and marine programs, including Bridgework training
- Continuing to celebrate and support Gitxaala students at every level

Continuous Learning Centre Photo



Building Homes, Building Hope

By Ernie Westgarth, Director of Community Services

When we talk about community services, the conversation almost always comes back to housing. A safe, warm, energy-efficient home is more than just shelter — it's the foundation of family life, of health, and of pride in being Gitxaala. Over the past year, my team has worked tirelessly to strengthen that foundation. From mould renovations to planning an entirely new subdivision, we are building not only houses but also a future for our members.

2024–2025 Highlights

Mould Renovations

One of our biggest undertakings this year was tackling the mold issues that have affected several homes. With support from Indigenous Services Canada, we were funded for 10 full renovations, and I'm proud to say seven of those are already complete and occupied. These homes aren't just renovated; they've been rebuilt with energy efficiency, health, and safety in mind. Each renovation represents a healthier living environment and a chance for a family to thrive.

Photos by Gitxaala Housing



West Bay Subdivision Feasibility

The future of housing in Gitxaala is taking shape at West Bay. This year we completed the feasibility report for an 80-lot subdivision. It's an ambitious project, but one that reflects the reality: our members want to come home. Thirty-plus units are already scheduled and submitted for full BC Housing funding. These will be accessible, single-level homes, designed for Elders, families, and members with mobility needs. With demand for housing rising, West Bay will be ready to welcome the many Gitxaala citizens who dream of returning.

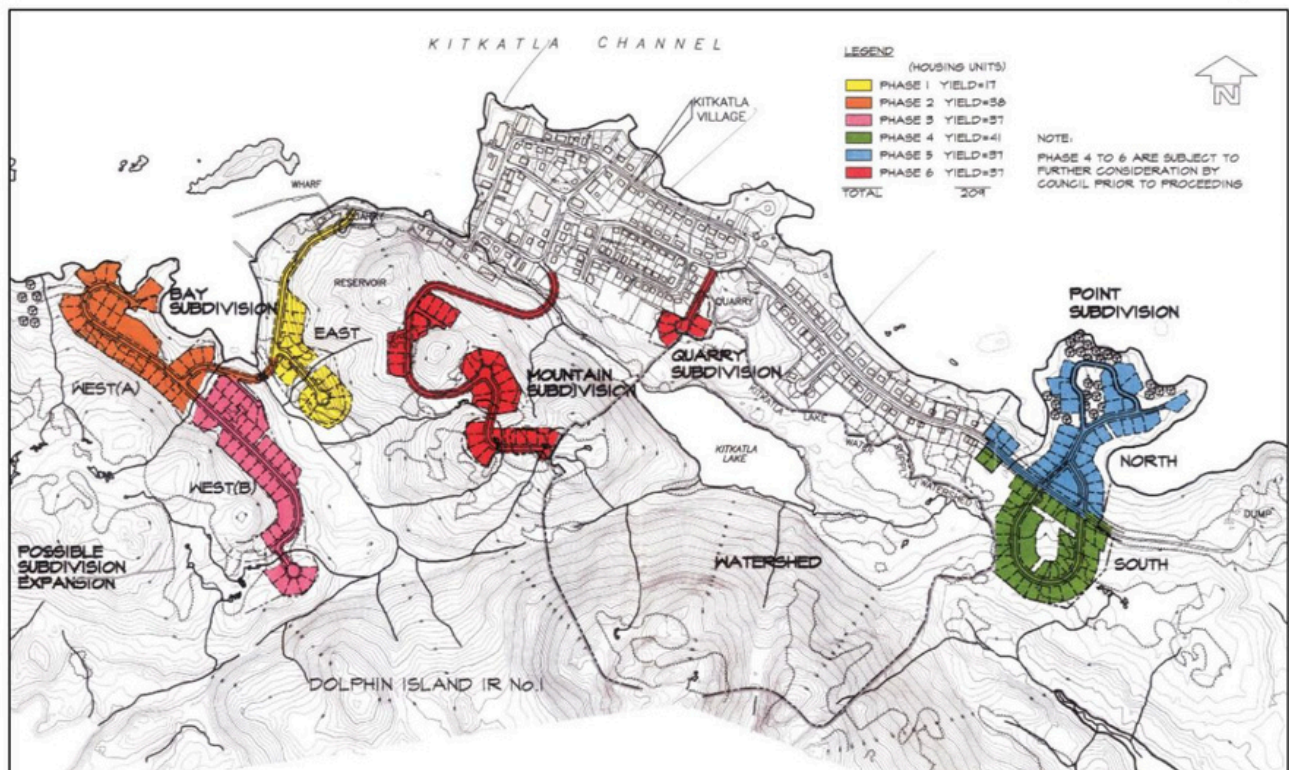
Asset List and Heat Pumps

Our work doesn't stop at new builds. We continued addressing major items on the ISC asset list, including school drainage upgrades and crawl space conditioning in teacher duplexes. And in a big step toward sustainability, we launched a \$2.3 million energy-efficient heat pump project. With ISC, EnerGuide, and BC Hydro grants covering the costs, these systems will make homes warmer in winter, cooler in summer, and more affordable to maintain.

Provided by Gitxaala Housing

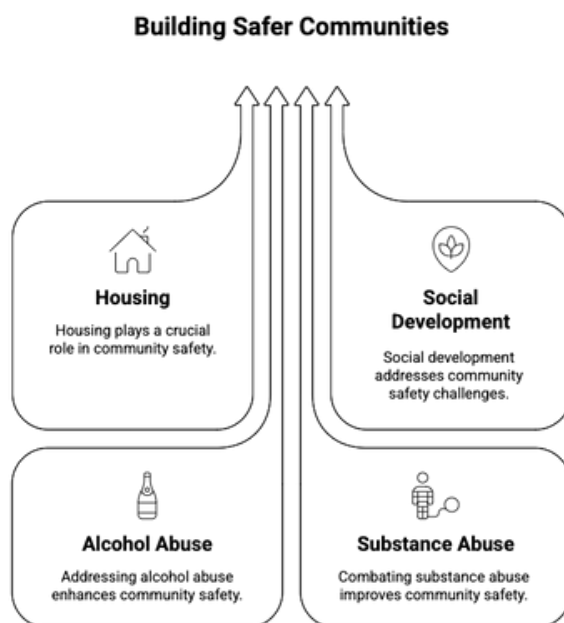
ENGINEERING SERVICES PROPOSAL GITXAALA NATION

WEST BAY SUBDIVISION FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT



Collaboration and Community Safety

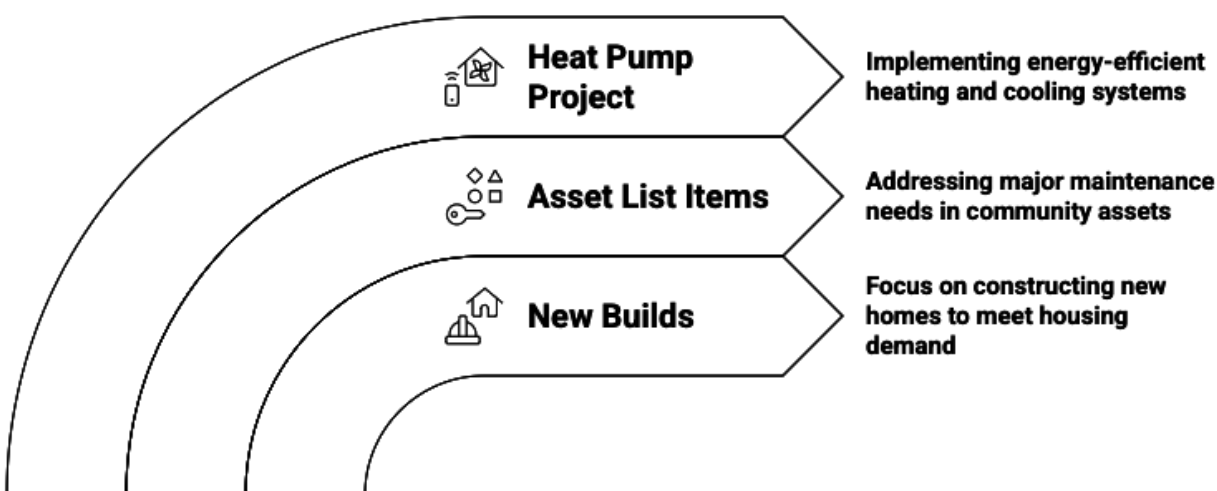
Housing cannot be separated from community safety. This year, by working closely with the Social Development and Assist Team, we've seen real improvements in addressing alcohol and substance abuse impacts. Over the past six months, these collaborations have strengthened safety and well-being across the community. It's proof that when departments work hand in hand, the results reach far beyond the walls of any one home.



Challenges and Lessons

The greatest challenge remains overcrowding. Too many families are still waiting for suitable housing. That said, we've managed to house about 60% of applicants by renovating abandoned or aging homes and returning them to the housing stock. The lesson has been clear: it's not only about building new units, but also about making the most of the homes we already have. Looking forward, we must continue to clean up our housing stock, always with energy efficiency and health in mind. Every renovated home is an opportunity to meet a family's need while also reducing costs and improving long-term sustainability.

Gitxaala Community Services Overview



Public Works: Keeping the Community Running Every Day

By Vince Davis, Director of Public Works

When people see our crew out cutting grass, hauling recycling, or unloading a barge, it can look like just another day of hard work. But behind every task, there's one goal: to keep our community running smoothly and safely. Public Works is the backbone of daily life in Lax Klan, and this past year has been no exception.

"Public Works takes care of a variety of projects — from grass cutting to recycling and garbage. During the summer you'll see us out mowing, while others collect garbage and recycling from homes and businesses. The recycling is compacted in the bailer, while garbage goes into the Transtor and is later shipped to Prince Rupert. Recently, we drained fluids from derelict vehicles and staged them for transport. It's steady work that makes the community safer and cleaner."

— Dakota Bennett, Public Works Crew Member

2024–2025 Highlights

Water Plant Upgrades

Safe drinking water is essential, and our top priority. This year, we carried out important upgrades at the water plant, including work on tube settlers and the floc tank. These improvements strengthen water quality and reliability for every household in the village.

Vehicle Removal Program

Over the years, derelict vehicles have built up across the community. This year, our crew tackled the job head-on. Workers drained gasoline, engine oil, transmission, and radiator fluid to make vehicles safe, then staged them for removal. Once Wainwright Marine arrived, the vehicles were loaded and transported out of the community for safe disposal and recycling.

School Generator

Keeping the school running during power outages is critical. This year, Public Works supported the installation and maintenance of a new generator so students and staff have uninterrupted access to learning and safety.



Vince Davis Photo

Moving the Community's Lifeline: Barges and Fuel

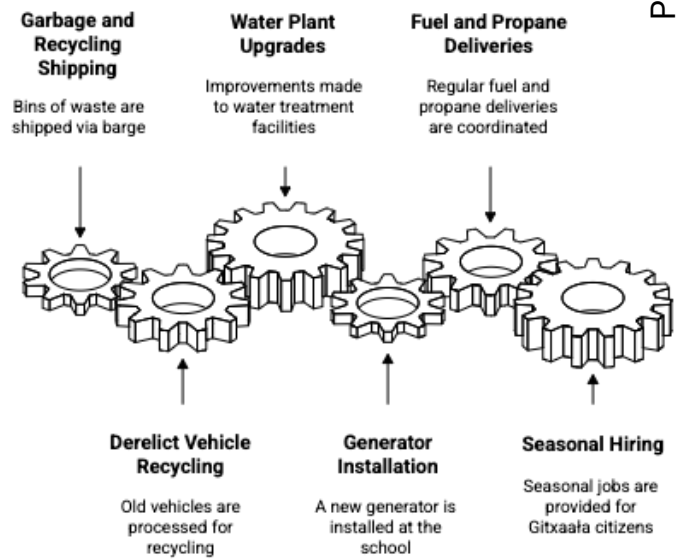
Every few months, once enough material is ready, our crew stages products above the dock for Wainwright Marine's arrival. When the barge ties up, Public Works offloads everything — from bins of garbage and recycling, to derelict vehicles, to freight trucks bringing appliances and goods for citizens and the Housing Department.

Public Works also supports fuel delivery, guiding gasoline and diesel trucks to the fuel station for top-ups, ensuring community supply. We direct Coastal Propane deliveries as well, making sure citizens and businesses have what they need. On average, we send 15–20 bins per shipment for disposal or recycling in Prince Rupert. This cycle of collection, storage, and offload is constant — but it ensures the community has safe roads, reliable fuel, and access to essential supplies.

Metrics & Impact

- 15–20 bins of garbage and recycling shipped per barge cycle
- Multiple derelict vehicles drained, staged, and shipped out for recycling
- Tube settlers and floc tank upgraded at the water plant
- New generator installed at the school
- Regular fuel and propane deliveries coordinated
- Seasonal hiring provided jobs for Gitxaala citizens

Public Works Activities in Lax Klan



Security Photo

Budget Overview

The biggest investments this year were in the vehicle removal program, water plant upgrades, and the school generator. These spending areas had the most visible impact in improving community safety and service reliability.

Operational costs — especially for fuel, barge shipments, and equipment maintenance — remained a large share of the budget. In some areas, costs ran higher than expected due to equipment repairs, but this was balanced by underspending in smaller programs as our internal capacity improved.

Looking ahead, Public Works needs more stable long-term capital planning. Establishing a five-year budget framework will help us prepare for major upgrades while reducing reliance on external contractors.

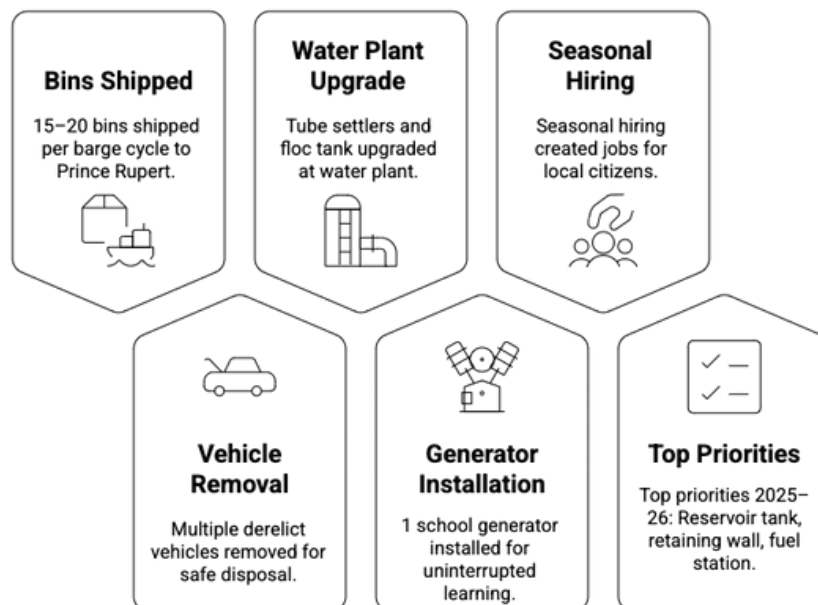
Future Needs

Much of our fleet is aging, requiring frequent replacement or repair. Ongoing staff training and certification will also be critical — ensuring Gitxaala continues to build its own capacity. Climate change is another pressing challenge, with storms and rising waters highlighting the need for emergency preparedness systems like backup generators and retaining walls.

Priorities for 2025–2026

- Reservoir tank change-out to ensure safe drinking water
- Lake retaining wall replacement to address erosion and protect water sources
- Fuel station upgrade or replacement to modernize safety and meet demand

Community Improvements



Food Security: Growing Strength, Harvesting Pride

By Jammi Kumar, Manager of Food Security Division

When I think about the past year, I see greenhouses full of fresh vegetables, jars of homemade jam, salmon being shared with families, and the smiles of citizens carrying produce home. Food Security is more than a program — it's about resilience, culture, and caring for one another. Our work is building health and independence, one harvest at a time.

2024–2025 Highlights

Infrastructure Development

We built a 30x50 foot high-tech greenhouse with capacity for 75,000 lbs of fresh food annually. Alongside it, we expanded the community garden, installed fencing, and constructed a 20x40 Garden Pavillion — a gathering place for Elders, workshops, and events. Fifty backyard garden beds were also installed to bring food production into family yards.

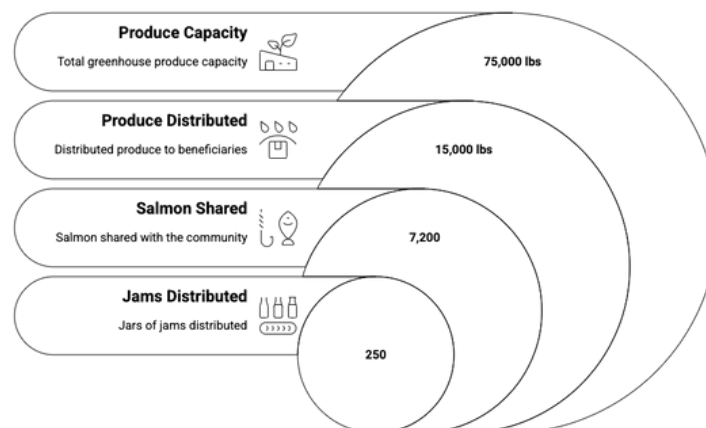
Enhanced Local Food & Fisheries

This year, we distributed 15,000 lbs of fresh produce valued at \$56,000 and harvested 7,200 salmon worth about \$110,000 with the Myrna Melody boat. Citizens also received 250 jars of jams and jellies from local fruits.

Training & Capacity Building

We hosted 30 participants in backyard gardening workshops, trained staff in greenhouse maintenance, and engaged five youth in fisheries training.

Food program output and distribution



Voices from the Community

*"Tomatoes you gave us —
sooo good! We love it... so
fresh and tasty."*

*— Jeanette Moody,
Citizen/Elder*



Photo by Elliott Moody

Photo by Leona Peardon

*"Thanks to Food Security
for this wonderful salmon."*

*— Allan Brown,
Citizen/Elder*



Collaboration

We worked closely with the Public Works Department to coordinate shipping, storage, and delivery, ensuring food and fish reached homes safely and efficiently.

Challenges

The challenge ahead is sustainability. Infrastructure has been funded, but operational costs for the Community Food Store and Emergency Food Centre will require Band Administration support until sales revenue stabilizes.

Metrics & Impact

- 75,000 lbs/year capacity from new greenhouse
- 15,000 lbs of produce distributed (value \$56,000)
- 7,200 salmon shared (value \$110,000)
- 250 jars of jams/jellies distributed
- 30 citizens trained in backyard gardening
- 5 youth trained in fisheries
- 8 full-time staff employed
- ~\$900,000 invested in infrastructure
- \$165,000+ secured in grants

Budget Overview

Nearly \$900,000 was invested in food security infrastructure, fully funded by external grants. No major under- or over-spends occurred. For 2025–26, operational funding for the Food Store will be critical until revenue streams stabilize.

Priorities for 2025–2026

- Construct a community smokehouse and fish processing facility
- Build a community kitchen and office next to the greenhouse
- Launch and operate the Community Food Store and Emergency Food Centre

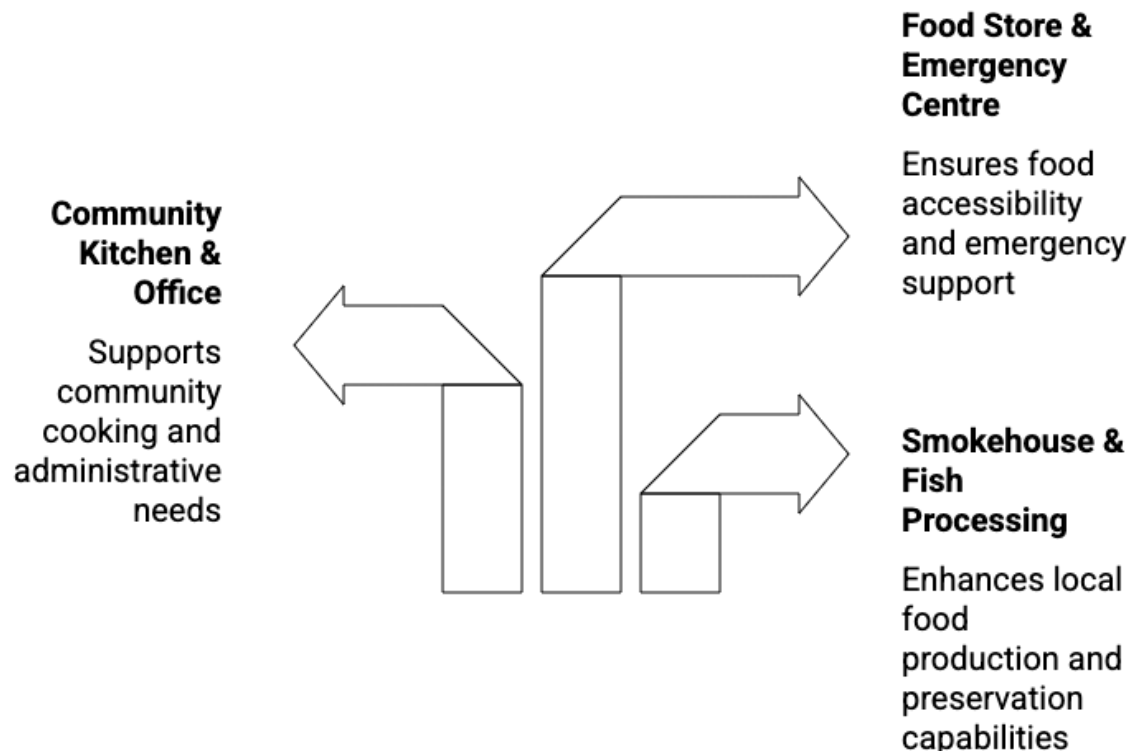
Fred Wilson Photo



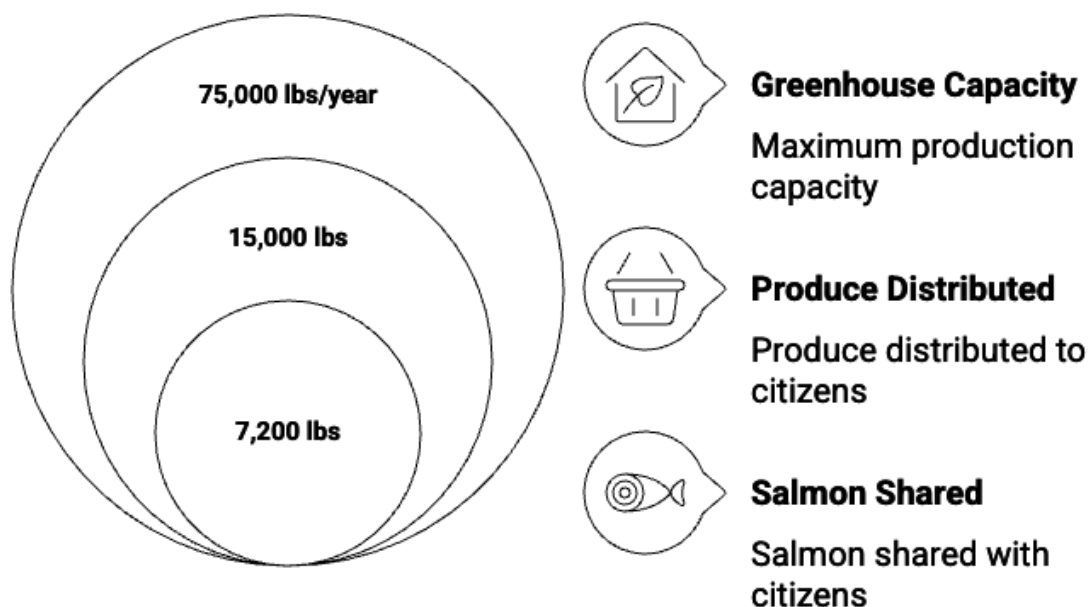
“Food security is about more than meals — it’s about sovereignty, resilience, and caring for one another.”

— Jammi Kumar, Manager of Food Security Division

Priorities for 2025-2026 - Lax Klan



Food Security Initiative 2024-25



Health & Social Development: Supporting Families, Building Wellness

By Roxanne Aster, Acting Health Director

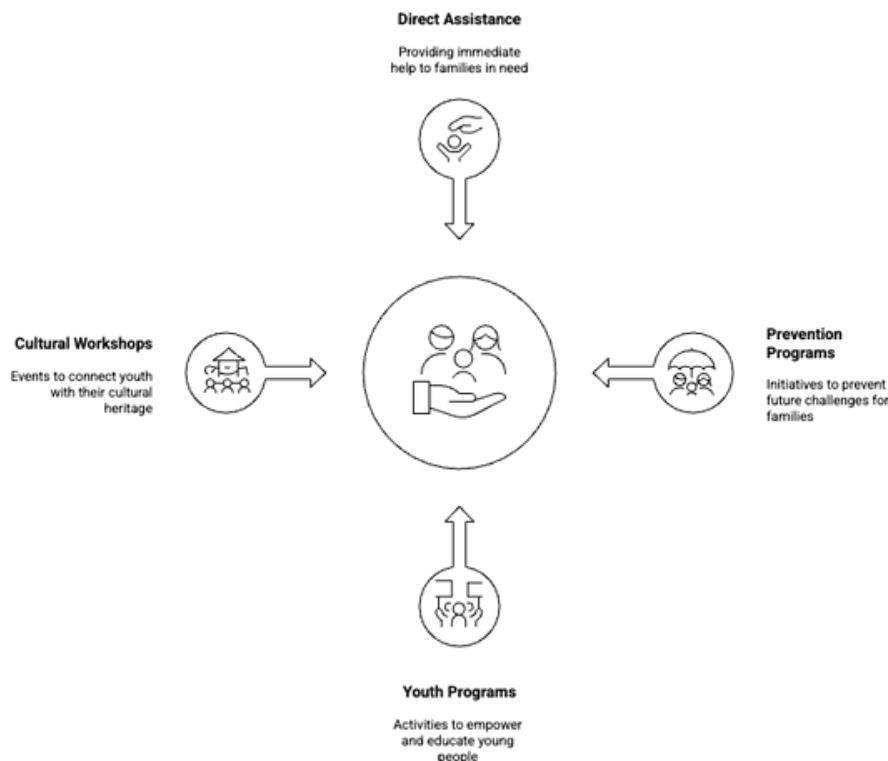
This year in Health & Social Development has been about strengthening families, expanding wellness services, and creating space for healing and pride in who we are as Gitxaʼa. Every program, whether focused on immediate support or long-term prevention, was designed to meet citizens where they are and carry forward our values of care, dignity, and connection.

Social Department Highlights

The Social Department was a steady hand for families this year, providing both direct assistance and opportunities for prevention and growth. Family support services helped citizens through difficult times, while youth programs and culturally rooted workshops gave young people tools to strengthen their voices and identities.

As one citizen shared: *"I feel supported, knowing the Social Department is there for me and my family when we need help. The workshops and assistance gave me strength to keep moving forward."*

Social Department's Impact on Families



Health Department Highlights

On the health side, care ranged from preventive clinics to community-wide wellness initiatives. Brighter Smiles Dental and Pediatrics served more than 100 patients, while Babeeta and Optometry clinics supported nearly 300 citizens in total.

Mental health counselling reached 41 active clients, but it also went beyond clinical sessions. Our team organized Kitkatla's Pride Parade and a community wellness circle — blending visibility, inclusion, and healing in ways that touched many.

Home Care Nursing provided daily and weekly visits to 23 residents, most of them Elders. This service is one of our most important, ensuring that citizens can remain close to family and community with consistent, compassionate care.

As one Elder put it:

"The Home Care program allows me to stay in my home, close to family and community. I know I can count on the nurse to check in, help with my medicines and make sure I am okay."

Gitxaala Nursing Photo



Priorities for 2025-2026

Priority Area	Focus
Family Support	Expand to meet rising demand
Home Care Nursing	Strengthen with staff and documentation
Clinic Visits	Continue visits, expand preventive services
MCH & Mental Health	Grow programming, centre culture and inclusion



Jamie Angus-Brown Photo

Investing in Early Health and Family Strength

This year, the Maternal Child Health (MCH) program showed how culture and care come together. Families learned seafood harvesting, regalia-making, and traditional food preservation, while children enjoyed healthy snacks, summer picnics, and teachings from Elders. Visiting specialists supported parents with baby massage and nutrition, blending Western medicine with Gitxaala traditions.

This program reflects our vision that health is not only about treatment but about living well, grounded in identity and culture.

Budget Overview

Our resources had the biggest impact in visiting clinics, home care nursing, and direct family assistance. Staffing gaps led to some underspending in specific areas, but the overall challenge remains capacity. Future investment is needed in stable staffing, integrated record systems, and cultural wellness initiatives.

Priorities for 2025–2026

Looking ahead, our focus is clear:

- Expand family support to meet rising demand and prevent crisis
- Strengthen Home Care Nursing with additional staff and clearer documentation systems
- Continue visiting clinics while expanding preventive services
- Grow MCH and mental health programming, keeping culture and inclusion at the centre



Photo Brenna Johnson-Innes

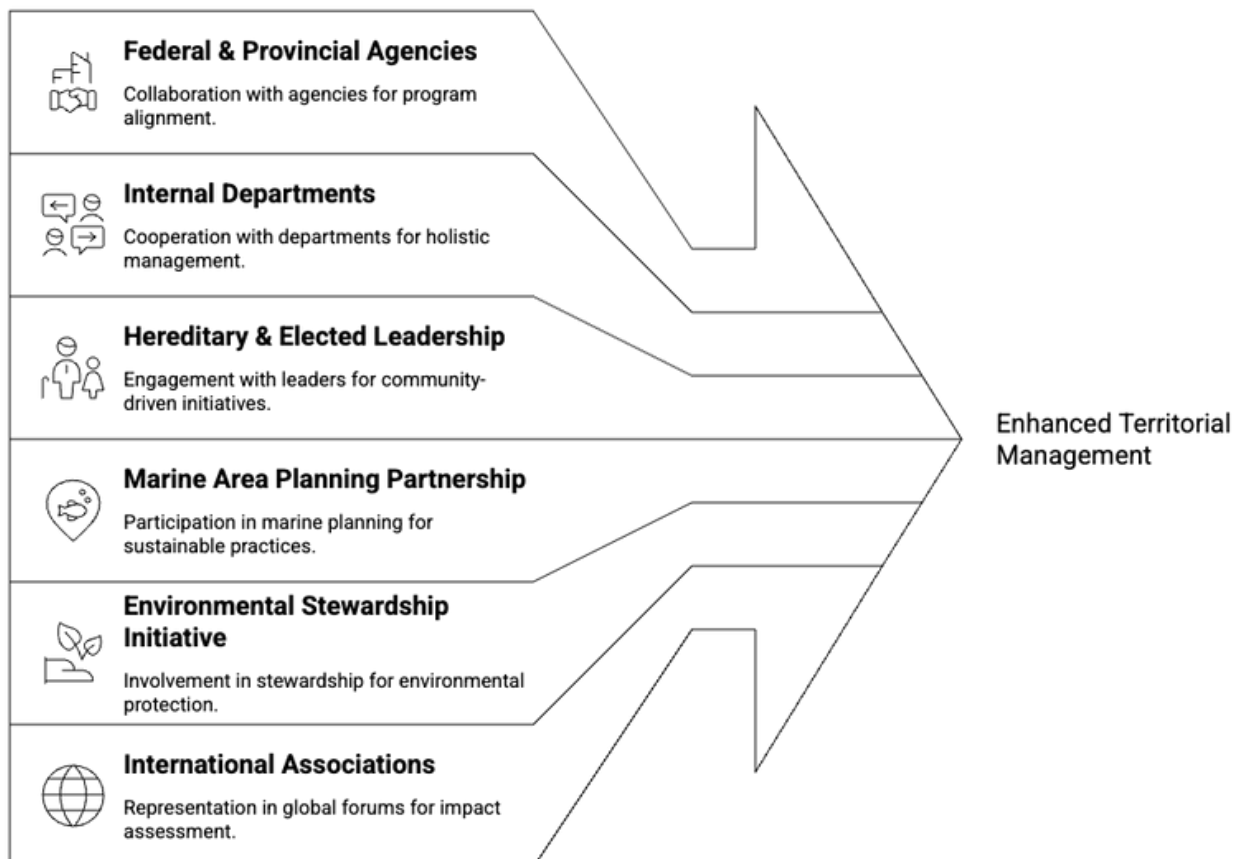
Protecting Gitxaala's Territory: GTMA Report

By James Herbert, Acting Director, Gitxaala Territorial Management Agency

Every day, our work at the Gitxaala Territorial Management Agency (GTMA) is about one thing: ensuring N̓uut'iksgm Laxyuubm Gitxaala — our lands and waters — are respected, protected, and managed according to Gitxaala principles.

This past year, we've made major strides in marine protection, impact assessment, and Guardian training, while continuing to represent the Nation at regional, national, and international decision-making tables.

Unified Efforts for Gitxaala



2024–2025 Highlights

Marine Protected Area Planning

One of our biggest undertakings has been the initiation of the Gitxaala Inlet Marine Protected Area Plan. Through the Government-to-Government Agreement, we're developing management practices rooted in Gitxaala laws, knowledge, and values. This is about more than protection — it's about sovereignty over our marine environment for generations to come.

Risk & Impact Assessment Guidelines

We completed the final pilot of the Gitxaala Risk and Impact Assessment process. This home-grown tool allows us to evaluate projects on our own terms, setting standards that inform Gitxaala leadership and help guide decision-making in the face of development pressures.

Guardian & Fisheries Program Training

Our Guardians are on the frontlines every day. This year, we expanded training and outreach, ensuring youth had opportunities to learn and work alongside experienced stewards. From compliance monitoring to species surveys, their work ensures our territory remains strong and healthy.

Voices from the Team

"Each permit and referral we review is complex and requires careful attention. Working with leadership, staff and community has strengthened our team, ensuring Gitxaala's territory is respected and protected. There's still work to do, but we're growing stronger and more prepared every year."

— Craig Bolton, Referrals Coordinator, GTMA

Photo Marion Brown



Collaboration & Partnerships

GTMA worked with more than 15 federal and provincial agencies this year, aligning programs, consultation processes, and technical projects. We also collaborated with internal departments like Education, Culture, and Language, as well as hereditary and elected leadership. Externally, we were active in initiatives like the Marine Area Planning Partnership, Environmental Stewardship Initiative, Coastal Stewardship Network, and the Network of Marine Protected Areas. Our voice was also present nationally and internationally through the AFN Indigenous Protected Area Working Group, the National Environmental Planning Caucus, and the International Association for Impact Assessment.

Challenges & Issues

Like many departments, we face challenges. Shifting external priorities can pull focus from Gitxaala's strategic goals. Federal and provincial emphasis on economic development threatens our decision-making authority. And there remains a need for stronger community engagement around stewardship.

We've responded with a draft Strategic Plan, increased policy analysis for leadership, and identified new priorities like community harvesting workshops. Finalizing and implementing these strategies will be key for the new Director in the year ahead.

Achieving GTMA's Strategic Goals



By the Numbers (2024–2025)

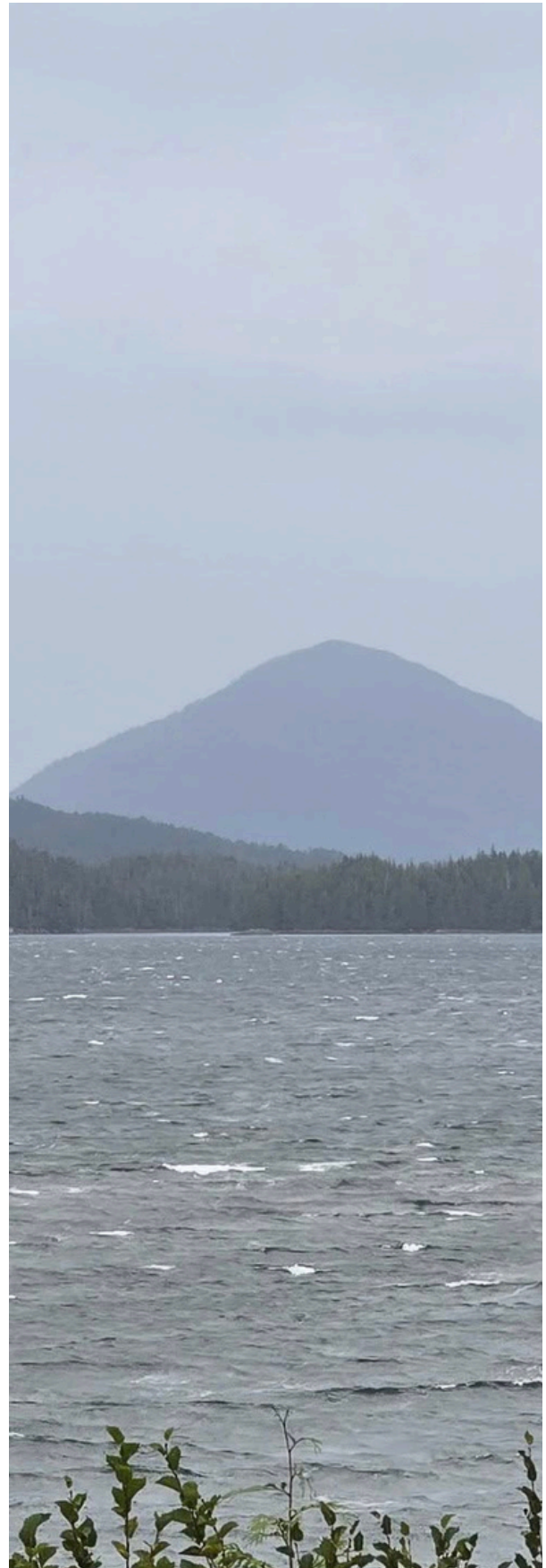
- 230–260 patrols conducted across Gitxaala's marine territory
- 125–150 permits & licences processed through the Referral Portal
- 18 Impact Assessments underway for complex projects
- 6 Guardians trained & deployed, with ongoing certification in SVOP, First Aid, and monitoring
- 1,000+ meetings attended at regional, provincial and federal tables
- 18 research & monitoring programs (fish, species, water, traditional knowledge, climate change)
- 10+ community engagement sessions and school visits
- 7 Gitxaala members employed, plus many short-term contracts supporting local participation

Budget & Resource Use

The Guardian and Fisheries programs carry the highest costs, but also deliver the strongest day-to-day impact. While overspends occurred in equipment and maintenance, savings came from reduced reliance on external contractors as staff capacity improved. Moving forward, a five-year budget plan is being developed to stabilize GTMA operations and ensure long-term sustainability.

Priorities for 2025–2026

- Finalize & implement the Strategic Plan to align staff and leadership priorities
- Expand community engagement with more regular workshops and harvesting programs
- Build internal capacity through training, succession planning, and increased staff presence in territory
- Advance sovereignty through partnerships, knowledge collection, and stronger decision-making policies



Cyril Aster Photo



Gitxaala Day 2025



Where We Have Walked, Together

It has been a year of movement and meaning. A year where we rose each day with the tide, guided by the same heartbeat that connects every Gitxaala home, every boat, every drum, every child's laughter echoing off the shoreline.

The theme **Sagayt K'üülm Goot – Of One Heart** has carried us through — a reminder that we are bound not only by ancestry and territory, but by the love we hold for one another and the strength we draw from walking side-by-side.

This year, across every department and council table, we saw that strength in action. It showed up in the quiet persistence of those who keep the water running, the school lights on, the streets clean. It lived in the teachers who braid Sm'algyax and math together in the same lesson, in the Elders who share the stories of where we come from, and in the youth who dare to imagine where we can go.

"If not now — when? We owe it to our ancestors and our children to act with courage today."

— Chief Councillor Linda Innes

Leadership in Motion: Voices from Council

Our Council has walked through a year of learning and growth, guided by the teachings of the Ayaawx and the wisdom of those who came before.

Chief Councillor Linda Innes described this year as "a turning of the tide." Her leadership focused on stability, governance renewal and ensuring that Gitxaala's laws and traditions remain central to every decision.

Linda's steady presence guided the Nation through major transitions — strengthening policy, reasserting sovereignty, and ensuring that the Gitxaala voice remains strong in every negotiation and partnership.



Jamie Angus-Brown Photo

Deputy Chief Brenna Johnson-Innes – Healing Journeys

Deputy Chief Johnson-Innes leads with empathy, weaving wellness and inclusion into every part of governance.

“Leadership,” she says, “is about walking gently — even when the path is hard.”

Councillor Joscelyn Lewis – Strength in Accountability

Councillor Lewis upholds strong fiscal governance and transparency, ensuring financial integrity and stability serve the people first.

Councillor Elliott Moody – Voices of the Future

Councillor Moody champions environmental protection and youth empowerment. “One day,” he says, “our children will see our territory’s beauty — untouched and thriving.”

Youth Councillor Jamie Angus-Brown – Finding My Voice

Councillor Angus-Brown brings humility and determination to his role, helping launch the Gitxaala Youth Council so young leaders can shape the Nation’s future.

Councillor Rowena Ridley – Building Strength, Together

Councillor Ridley focuses on housing and infrastructure to bring families home. “My goal is to ensure every Gitxaala family can return — safely and with pride.”

Councillor Gail Watkinson – Working Together for Our People

Councillor Watkinson leads with heart and humility.

“Every decision we make touches our people,” she says. Her dream, Sagayt K’üülm Goot – Of One Heart, remains her guiding vision.

Council Vision Forward

Looking to 2025–2026, Gitxaala Council remains united in vision and purpose:

- Chief Councillor Linda Innes – advancing governance renewal and protecting title and rights.
- Deputy Chief Brenna Johnson-Innes – expanding wellness and healing initiatives.
- Councillor Joscelyn Lewis – strengthening fiscal accountability and interdepartmental collaboration.
- Councillor Elliott Moody – advancing environmental protection and youth mentorship.
- Youth Councillor Jamie Angus-Brown – launching the Gitxaala Youth Council.
- Councillor Rowena Ridley – guiding infrastructure and housing priorities.
- Councillor Gail Watkinson – fostering teamwork, communication, and collective growth.

Together, they embody one shared vision — Gitxaala standing strong, of one heart.



Departments in Action: The Work of Many Hands

Behind every Nation milestone stands a team of quiet workers, thinkers, and builders — each doing their part to keep Gitxaala strong.

Administration: Building the Systems that Support the Nation

Behind the scenes, CAO Marcia Robinson led the work of aligning Gitxaala's governance systems with its values, ensuring that every department, project and initiative moves forward with accountability and purpose. Under Marcia's leadership, Administration strengthened internal communication, streamlined reporting, and built systems that support efficiency and transparency. Her focus this year was on ensuring that each department's voice is heard and connected, transforming reporting from a technical task into a storytelling tool that honours both data and people.

"Administration is the bridge between vision and delivery — our role is to make sure good ideas become lasting systems."

—Marcia Robinson, CAO

Public Works – Vince Davis, Director

Public Works is the heartbeat of everyday life. When we turn on the tap, see a clean road, or watch a barge offload safely, it is because of this crew's commitment. This year, their work on the water plant upgrades, derelict vehicle removal, and school generator installation kept the village safe and steady through all seasons. Their efforts — often unseen, always essential — are what keep the rhythm of community life steady.

Community Services – Ernie Westgarth, Director

Housing is more than wood and nails; it is where healing begins. This year, seven homes were restored through mould renovation funding, and plans for the West Bay subdivision — 80 new homes — moved forward. These homes will be designed for accessibility, energy efficiency, and family connection. Ernie's team is building more than houses — they're building the conditions for families to come home.

Language & Culture – Dustin Johnson, Manager

The heartbeat of Gitxaala lives in its words. Through 45 Sm'algayax classes, the *FirstVoices* project and events like *Indigenous Peoples Day* and the *Elders' Territorial Revisit*, the department helped over 200 people connect or reconnect with the language. The team also brought home ancestral recordings, songs and names — preserving the sound of identity for generations yet unborn.

Health & Social Development – Roxanne Aster, Acting Director

In clinics, kitchens and homes, this department tended to the body and the spirit of the Nation. Over 400 citizens received care — from dental and pediatric clinics to home nursing and mental health counselling. The Pride Parade and Wellness Circle created spaces for inclusion and visibility. The RunWalk 5K, dedicated to Ruby, honoured a life of service and joy. At its core, the department's message is simple: health is community.

Gitxaala Territorial Management Agency – James Herbert, Acting Director

GTMA's work is the bridge between tradition and policy — turning Gitxaala law into everyday practice.

Through the Gitxaala Inlet Marine Protected Area Plan, the department secured a model for stewardship that reflects both science and Sm'algyax law. The Risk and Impact Assessment Framework empowered leadership to make informed decisions rooted in sovereignty. Guardians, fisheries staff, and youth stewards patrolled the waters — their presence reminding the world that these territories are watched, cared for, and loved.

Education – Deb Stava, Director

Lach Klan School continues to thrive as a place where children walk in two worlds — learning from books and from Elders.

This year celebrated four graduates, the certification of four Education Assistants, and expanded supports for diverse learners through partnerships with FNEESC, Connected North, and Northern Therapy.

Deb's leadership continues to build a foundation for community-led education, with aspirations for future participation in UBC's Indigenous Teacher Education Program.

***"We don't just build
infrastructure. We build peace
of mind."
— Vince Davis***

Language & Culture – Dustin Johnson, Manager

The Language & Culture team carried forward the living spirit of Gitxaala identity. Through 45 Sm'algyax classes, the upload of 890 words, 39 phrases, 3 stories, and 1 song to FirstVoices, and community events from Indigenous People's Day to North Coast Night, the department made language visible, audible, and joyful once again.

Photo by Language & Culture



***"Language is breath. When we
speak Sm'algyax, our ancestors
speak through us."
— Language & Culture Department***

Where We Are Going, Together

Looking ahead to 2025–2026, our course is clear — shaped by ancestral law and strengthened by the next generation. The coming year will demand both steadiness and courage: to build on what works and transform what must.

Council Vision Forward

Guided by the Heart of the Nation

As Gitxaala enters another year of growth and renewal, your Council remains united in purpose — leading with courage, humility, and a shared commitment to our people. Each Councillor brings a distinct voice to the circle, yet together they embody **Sagayt K'üülm Goot — Of One Heart** — the living principle that guides our Nation forward.

In this time of continued transformation, governance is not only about policies and plans; it is about people. It is about rebuilding trust, strengthening capacity, and ensuring that every decision reflects who we are as Gitxaala. The work of your Council continues to balance tradition and progress — honouring hereditary governance and ancestral law while navigating the complexities of a modern administration.

From Chief Administrative Officer Marcia Robinson

This past year has been one of remarkable collaboration across Council, administration, and community. Our collective focus has been on strengthening the internal systems that support transparent, accountable governance while aligning every department's work with Gitxaala's Strategic Plan.

As we look ahead to 2025–2026, my priority remains to bridge leadership and administration, ensuring that each initiative, from public works to health and education, is rooted in shared values and measurable results. Together, we continue to build a Nation where governance is lived in action: responsible, compassionate, and responsive to the needs of all citizens.

"Strong governance begins with strong relationships — within Council, across departments, and throughout community."
— Marcia Robinson, CAO

Photo Jamie Angus-Brown



Gitxaala Council Vision for 2025–2026

Chief Councillor Linda Innes continues to lead Gitxaala through a process of governance renewal, ensuring that every law, policy, and procedure upholds transparency, fairness, and cultural integrity. Her focus is on creating enduring systems that protect Gitxaala's sovereignty while honouring the voices of our people.

Deputy Chief Brenna Johnson-Innes leads with compassion, advancing wellness and healing within the fabric of leadership and community life. Her approach reminds us that governance, at its best, reflects balance — the ability to lead with both strength and kindness.

Councillor Joscelin Lewis will continue her work in fiscal accountability and strategic coordination, ensuring that resources are used wisely and departments work together seamlessly. Her commitment to transparent budgeting and sound planning strengthens the Nation's foundation for long-term success.

Councillor Elliott Moody brings energy and determination to the work of environmental protection and youth mentorship. His leadership ensures that Gitxaala's lands and waters remain protected for generations, while young citizens are empowered to lead with confidence and vision.

Youth Councillor Jamie Angus-Brown represents the future of Gitxaala leadership. In the coming year, he will help launch the Gitxaala Youth Council, a vital platform for young people to share their ideas, participate in decision-making, and contribute directly to the governance of their Nation.

Departmental Vision: Growth, Healing, and Innovation

Each department is stepping forward with renewed energy:

- Public Works will advance the reservoir tank replacement, lake retaining wall, and fuel station modernization, ensuring a resilient infrastructure for the next generation.
- Community Services will break ground on new housing, continue renovations, and create long-term maintenance systems for sustainable homes.
- Health & Social Development will expand home care staffing, host new wellness events, and deepen traditional healing practices.
- GTMA will finalize its five-year Strategic Plan, strengthen community workshops, and continue to assert Gitxaala authority across all levels of government.
- Education will grow family engagement, staff training, and recreational programming — nurturing whole-child learning that blends literacy with identity.

Language & Culture will expand mentorships, signage, and intergenerational gatherings, ensuring Sm'algyax lives on every wall, every classroom, and every heart.

Leadership is not about standing above, but standing with — together, Of One Heart.

Faces of Gitxaala

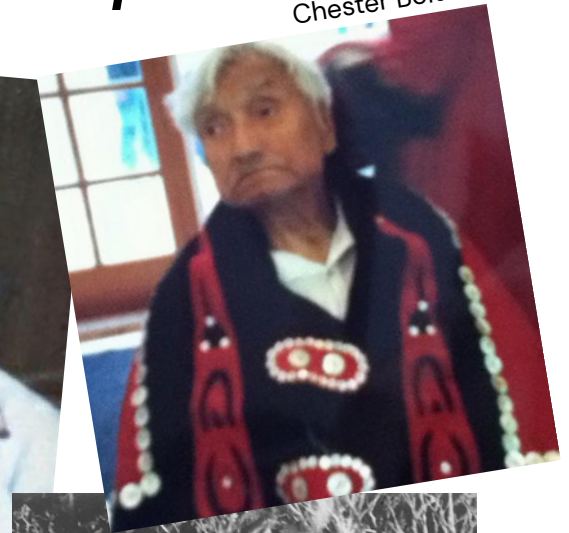


Photos courtesy of Gitxaala Citizens



We walk in the footsteps of those who made the path.

Chester Bolton



Dorothy Gordon



Gertie Bolton



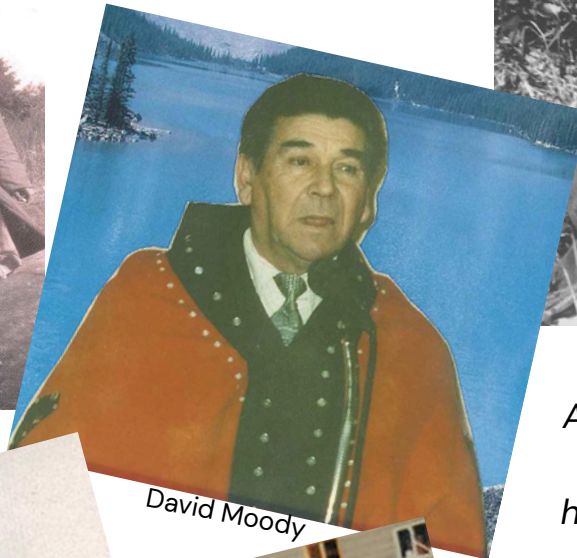
Matilda Innes



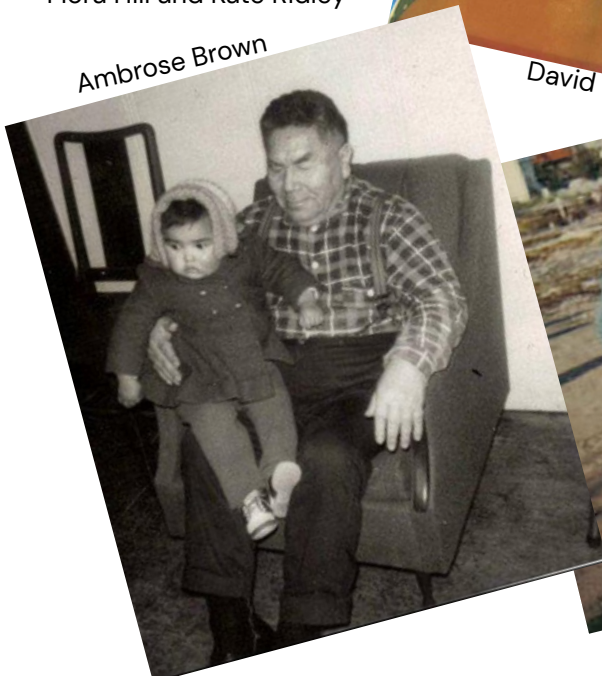
Flora Hill and Kate Ridley



David Moody



Ambrose Brown



Alice Shaw



*Archival photographs of
Gitxaala Citizens who
have gone before us are
shared with deep
gratitude to the
Language and Culture
Department. These
images honour the
memory of our loved
ones and the legacy
they left within Sagayt
K'üülm Goot – Of One
Heart*



Photo by Brenna Johnson-Innes

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Sagayt Kūūlm Goot – Of One Heart

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All Gitxaala staff, Elders, youth, and families whose work fills these pages with meaning



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