



**Gitlaxt'aamiks
Village
Government**

Mahla'asgum Saw'insk

Genuugwiikw / Sept 2023 | Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government

Anaasa gwiikwhl hooxdit wil si'am'ugitdiit.

Marmots are most often observed at dawn and dusk but are active throughout the day (diurnal). As they are prey for a number of species, they tend to stay close to the entrances of their burrows. They spend their days foraging, sunbathing, grooming and even dustbathing. Marmots will often have a lookout that will sound an alarm if they feel threatened. All marmots prefer ground that is suitable for digging burrows and prefer locations with rock outcrops that can hide and protect their burrow entrance and for use as lookout platforms. Burrow depth ranges from 0.9m to 4.5m. The deeper burrows located below the frost line are used for hibernation and are referred to as a hibernaculum.

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Skateen Sidewalk Project

BTN Excavation began installing material for the storm drain July 28th 2023. BTN was able to complete the task over a period of three weeks. Once that had been completed, Allnorth Consultants provided quality assurance and staked out where the curb and sidewalk would start and end.

Terrace Paving began forming the curb for the sidewalk on September 11th 2023 and paving for the sidewalk began on September 26th 2023.

Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government allocated \$606,656 over a period of four years to the project. Allnorth assisted GVG in applying for grants for the project.



Skateen Sidewalk Curb being formed.



Pavement being finished by Terrace Paving

Skateen Avenue was chosen for Gitlaxt'aamiks' first modern sidewalk due to the amount of traffic the street sees during the school season. The next street to receive a sidewalk was chosen for the same reason. Skateen Ave and Wright Street see a large number of children walking to NESS and from home each day. This has long been a safety issue for the youth of Gitlaxt'aamiks and a source of traffic congestion for commuters in the village.

The Skateen sidewalk provides a massive quality of life improvement for commuters in Gitlaxt'aamiks. By moving pedestrians off the travel lanes, vehicle operations are improved and capacity increased. Research also indicates that people will walk for recreational purposes if a facility is provided. Recreational walking is one of the easiest ways for people to get the recommended allotment of physical exercise each day.

Waterpark Completed

Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government has allocated \$601,305.00 towards the project. \$250,000 came from Provincial Gaming Funds and \$286,350 came from GVG's Gap Closing Funds with the remaining \$64,955 coming from Local Priorities. A large portion of this project was made possible as a result of amendments to the Gaming Control Act and a long-term agreement, 7% of BC Lottery Corporation's net income will be shared with First Nations through 2045.

B.C. First Nations determine their own priorities for these funds, which may be spent in six areas: health and wellness; infrastructure, safety, transportation and housing; economic and business development; education, language, culture and training; community development and environmental protection; and capacity-building, fiscal management and governance.



The waterpark was made possible partly as a result of amendments to the Gaming Control Act



The Ni'isjoohl memorial pole is a house pole that was carved and erected in the 1860s. It tells the story of Ts'wawit, a warrior who was next in line to be chief before he was killed in a conflict with a neighbouring nation.



Ni'isjoohl Totem Pole Returned

The Nisga'a Nation has finally brought its family history home, almost 100 years after a totem pole was stolen and sold to Scotland's National Museum. The pole was taken without the nation's consent in 1929 by colonial ethnographer Marius Barbeau, who then sold it to the Scottish museum. Barbeau took the pole without the consent of the House of Ni'isjoohl — one of around 50 houses within the Nisga'a Nation — during a period when the Nisga'a Peoples were away from their villages for the annual hunting, fishing and harvesting season.

Eva Clayton, elected president of the Nisga'a Nation, said the day will be one of mixed emotions, and will be an educational opportunity for the Nisga'a youth. "It's one of joy, one of happiness, and one that brings tears to one's eyes because we have one of the long lost artifacts that has made its way home," she said. "It's going to be a very educational experience for the younger generation, and we look forward to carrying on our culture. With the physical presence of the pole, it will be giving our stories credibility."

Section 87 Tax Exemption

In 2022, the Federal Government made an announcement that they would reinstate Section 87 Tax Exemption to those Treaty Nations who gave up their tax exemption status to finalize their treaties. Giving up our Section 87 Taxation was one of the issues that plagues our negotiators as they fought hard not to give up Section 87. In the end we agreed to give up our tax exemption rights to move our treaty forward. We agreed to pay all taxes, on one condition, that in the event another first nation was able to achieve a treaty without giving up Tax Exemption, the Nisga'a Nation Tax Exemption would be re-instated. This is what is before our nation right now with the hope that the reinstatement of Section 87 could be effective Jan 1st 2024. A Personal Income Tax Agreement was reached between the Nisga'a Nation and CRA, where our Nation agreed that CRA would administer the personal income tax on behalf of the Nation and would retain 5% of the taxes paid by Nisga'a Citizens in lieu of this service and 95% of the personal income tax would be returned to the Nisga'a Nation.

The villages were advised that whatever the villages paid in personal income tax would be returned to that village to be used for infrastructure projects, economic development projects, community initiatives, etc. For the first two years (2013-2014) the villages agreed to leave the personal income tax with NLG and have the funds divided equally to each village for the purpose of constructing new housing. This did happen and each village received more than \$800,000 for housing initiatives. Since 2015, Gitlaxt'aamiks has not received their share of the personal income tax funds returned to the nation from the CRA. Paying personal income tax did not benefit our community as most of our tax funds were redirected to the other villages. Another misconception is that Nisga'a Citizens from Urban locals' personal income tax is being received by the Nisga'a Nation. This is not true.



Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government's CAO Darlene Morgan

Information is being circulated that our budgets will be reduced by 6 million dollars. Prior to paying personal income tax, the villages received additional funds called "other allocations" which was surplus funds from the Settlement Trust and FFA budget. After we began paying personal income tax, we no longer received most of the other allocation funds. These funds just need to be reinstated to the villages.

So, what will the reinstatement of Section 87 Tax Exemption mean to us? Nisga'a citizens who work on Nisga'a Land will no longer have to pay personal income tax effective January 1st 2024 (tentative date), we will be able to purchase tax exempt fuel, cigarettes, vehicles and furniture. Another factor we need to prepare for is new status cards as many Nisga'a Citizens status cards have expired. Do we want Tax Exemption?

Heat Pump Program

In all of our public meetings last year, it was noted that there was a concern with the high cost of Hydro, this is where Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government had taken the initiative to follow through with researching ways to decrease the high cost of electricity in each of the homes within our community. Zed Energy started Feb 26th 2023 with Home Energy Audit Pre-Assessments and have completed 134 homes out of 244 homes. Based on the assessment, a copy of the report is provided to Frosty Registration. As the report will determine the size of the unit that they would need to order. As of Sept 20th 2023, Frosty Refrigeration began the first set of nine heat pumps. They have received a list that was created based on the homes that have completed the Home Energy assessment. Calder Enterprises will start topping up insulation in attics of homes that have been identified as inadequately insulated through the Home Energy Assessment.



Heat Pumps are up to 300% more efficient than electric baseboard heaters and 50% more efficient than window A/C units.

UBCM 2023

Deputy Chief Councillor Denise Eli:

“UBCM gives GVG the opportunity to hear what is happening in other communities in BC. It also provides an opportunity to share what has worked for our community. BC is changing its view on the impact of residential schools. It's important to continue education those who are not aware of the impact this era had on our ancestors and the following generations. Housing and the cost of living is a major concern across BC in small, medium, and larger cities. UBCM gives each delegate an opportunity to meet and discuss challenges as well as ideas for positive change. Informal discussion during luncheons, receptions, and banquets are just as important as the structured resolutions and panels. It's extremely beneficial for senior administration to attend as well, they bring the knowledge directly affecting our members and the best decisions when voting. We heard our citizens concern with respect to aftercare from treatment facilities. Our entire team met with the staff of Last Door which addresses substance abuse from a more holistic approach”



OCT 2023

Upcoming Events

Operations & Maintenance Public Meeting Oct 4th

Council of the Whole Meeting Oct 10th, Regular Council Oct 12th

Capital & Housing Public Meeting Oct 18th

Community Relations Public Meeting Oct 25th

NLG Ksi Lisims LNG Project Update October 11th

Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a Meetings October 25th, 26th, 27th



gitlaxt'aamiks
GITMIDIHK: PEOPLE OF THE GRIZZLY



Treaty Trivia

*Which chapter can the Section 87 Tax exemption be found in the NFA?
Please submit answer to Stirling Tait at GVG for a chance to win a prize.*

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