



Nisga'a Village of New Aiyansh Community Profile

People of the Grizzly



Tel: 250-633-3100

Toll-Free: 1-877-588-2388

Address: PO Box 233 5200 Skateen Ave. New Aiyansh, BC V0J1A0

Website: www.gitlaxtaamiks.com



Welcome to New Aiyansh: Home of the Gitmidiik



Situated in the majestic Nass Valley of British Columbia, New Aiyansh serves as the capital of the Nisga'a Nation. We are a community forged by history—both ancient and modern. From the literal foundations of the 1700s lava beds to the historic signing of the Nisga'a Final Agreement, our village stands as a testament to resilience, sovereignty, and the enduring strength of our people.

As the seat of the Nisga'a Lisims Government, New Aiyansh is more than an administrative hub; it is a center for cultural revitalization and a gateway to the wild, pristine beauty of the Pacific Northwest.

This Community Profile provides a comprehensive overview of our demographics, infrastructure, and economic landscape. It is designed for partners, residents, and visitors who wish to understand the unique blend of tradition and progress that defines life in the Nass Valley. We invite you to explore our vision for a prosperous future built on a foundation of ancestral wisdom.



History: The Legacy of Resilience



The community of New Aiyansh was established as a direct response to devastating floods that forced the relocation of the people from Gitlaxt'aamiks and Old Aiyansh.

The 1917 Flood: The first major flood occurred in 1917, after which the community rallied to rebuild through volunteer efforts.

The 1961 Flood: On October 12, 1961, the Nass River breached its banks, destroying homes and causing the loss of all the community's horses.

Building a Modern Village: Construction of the current site began in 1962. This move marked a historical milestone, as the new homes featured modern amenities like electricity, running water, and indoor washrooms.

Community Spirit: Since there was initially no funding for a church or community hall, residents donated their time and labor to build St. Peters Anglican Church and the New Aiyansh Community Hall.



The Founding of New Aiyansh (1962)



Construction of the new village began in 1962. After a site was chosen and cleared, the foundation of a modern community took shape through new roads, a sewer system, and the first 12 homes. This transition marked a historical milestone; for the first time, residents had access to electricity, running water, and indoor plumbing.

While many families were initially hesitant to leave their old homes, they were drawn by these modern amenities. Slowly but surely, the community migrated. Because funds were initially exhausted by residential construction, there was no money left for a church or community hall. For a time, families trekked back across the river every Sunday to attend services in the old village. Eventually, the community rallied once more. Through donations and public works campaigns, they built St. Peter's Anglican Church and a new community hall. It was a labor of love: the men volunteered their labor and the women prepared daily meals, with no one requesting a cent in pay.



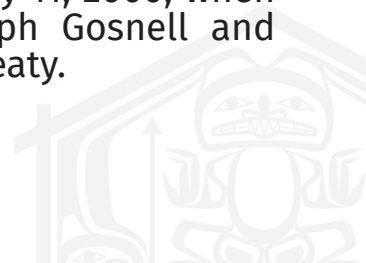
Governance and Leadership



The foundation of New Aiyansh was built upon the leadership of Chief Councillor James Gosnell, the first elected head of the Band Council. Serving for 16 years, Gosnell was instrumental in the village's physical development. Before his election, leadership had traditionally been appointed by the village's Hereditary Chiefs.

Working alongside him was Edmond Wright, who served as the first Band Administrator for 26 years. Together, they successfully negotiated and secured the funding necessary to build New Aiyansh. Their partnership also transformed local education; in 1978, they spearheaded the creation of a Nisga'a-led school system, leading to the official formation of School District #92 in 1982.

As the new village reached completion, both men transitioned to broader roles within the Nisga'a Nation treaty negotiations. This work culminated on May 11, 2000, when the Nisga'a Nation—under the leadership of President Dr. Joseph Gosnell and Secretary-Treasurer Edmond Wright—signed the first modern-day treaty.



Population Overview



New Aiyansh is the largest community within the Nisga'a Nation, with a total registered membership of 2,779.

Local Residency: The village is home to 1,025 New Aiyansh membership. This includes 875 Nisga'a members and 150 non-members, such as RCMP officers, teachers, and employees of the Nisga'a organizations.

Urban Membership: Approximately 1,904 registered members reside outside the community in urban centers, including Terrace, Prince Rupert, Prince George, and Vancouver.



Current Government



The Nisga'a Village of New Aiyansh operates under a Village Government format, with elections held every four years in accordance with the Nisga'a Constitution and Nisga'a Laws. Under this constitutional framework, the Nisga'a Lisims Government and the Nisga'a Village Governments serve as the respective governing bodies for the Nation and its individual villages.

The Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government consists of eight elected officials dedicated to representing the constituents of New Aiyansh:

Chief Councillor: Calvin Morven

Deputy Chief: Noah Guno

Councillors: Leonard Guno
Denise Eli
Taron Scott
Melanie Woods
Steven Bright
Brian Tait



GVG Administration & Departments



Our Mission & Vision

The Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government (GVG) exists to promote the health, safety, and well-being of our citizens through essential municipal and community services. Guided by the strategic direction of our Council and leadership, we collaborate across management and staff to ensure the betterment of New Aiyansh.

Our vision is a vibrant, self-sustaining community driven by prosperity and service excellence. This vision is realized through the hard work and determination of our dedicated staff.

Our Team by the Numbers

Our organization consists of **110 dedicated employees** working across the following departments:

- **Administration:** 8
- **Finance:** 3
- **Human Resources:** 3
- **Programs & Services:** 21
- **Community Relations:** 10
- **Communications:** 2
- **Public Works:** 33
- **Stimulus:** 30+



Community Infrastructure



Government Landmark: Nisga'a Lisims Government

The Nisga'a Lisims Government building is the primary public edifice in New Aiyansh. It centralizes the Nation's legislative power and treaty-mandated services, housing the Legislative Chambers alongside the Executive offices of the President, Secretary-Treasurer, Chairperson, and Chairperson of the Council of Elders. The building also accommodates vital 11 Directorates.



Holy Trinity Church

As members of the Diocese of Caledonia, the community of New Aiyansh follows the Anglican faith. In partnership with the Diocese, a new church named "The Holy Trinity" was constructed in the Upper Village.

Meanwhile, the original church building is currently leased to Gitlaxt'aamiks Operations & Maintenance.



New Aiyansh: A Hub for Health and Wellness

New Aiyansh serves as the central hub for healthcare in the Nass Valley, operating a Health Centre managed by the Nisga'a Valley Health Board. The facility provides consistent clinical care through a full-time physician and nursing services. Additionally, the community benefits from a variety of programs, including public health, mental health, home and community care, and Nisga'a Health Benefits.

Community Infrastructure



School District No. 92 (Nisga'a) Board Office

The School District No. 92 (Nisga'a) Board Office, located in New Aiyansh, serves as the administrative heart of the first Indigenous-governed school district in British Columbia. The office provides centralized leadership, governance, and support services for all four community schools within the Nass Valley. The Board Office is the hub for district-wide decision-making and strategic planning.



Education in New Aiyansh

New Aiyansh serves as the educational hub for School District No. 92 (Nisga'a), home to the Nisga'a Elementary Secondary School (NESS). This comprehensive facility provides schooling for students from Kindergarten through Grade 12.

While each Nisga'a community maintains its own local elementary school, NESS serves as the central secondary hub and provides busing services to students in Grades 8–12 from surrounding communities.



Public Safety & Policing

The Lisims Nass Valley RCMP detachment is based on the outskirts of New Aiyansh, providing essential public safety and policing services to the entire Nass Valley. Led by a Sergeant and a Corporal with six Constables, the team serves the communities of New Aiyansh, Gitwinksihlkw, Laxgalts'ap, and Gingolx.

Municipal Infrastructure & Regional Services



Infrastructure & Public Works

Managed and operated by the Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government, the community's robust infrastructure stands as a testament to the self-governance and development achieved since the enactment of the Nisga'a Treaty. New Aiyansh serves as a regional leader in waste management, providing essential landfill services for all four Nisga'a communities through a site fully managed by local personnel. The village's Maintenance Department oversees critical utility systems, including a high-quality sand filtration water treatment plant and a mechanical sewer system consisting of three interconnected lagoons, which is currently being enhanced with an advanced aeration system. These modernization's, alongside the complete paving of community roadways in 2000, ensure reliable service, environmental sustainability, and enhanced safety for all residents and visitors throughout the Nass Valley.



Municipal Infrastructure & Regional Services



Emergency Response & Fire Services

The safety of New Aiyansh is upheld by a dedicated Fire Department and Emergency Medical Responder, which provides comprehensive fire protection and emergency response for the entire community. Fully managed under the Village Government, the department is responsible for safeguarding all residential homes, commercial properties, and public buildings.



In addition to fire suppression, the community is supported by Emergency Medical Responders (EMR) who provide critical, life-saving care during medical emergencies. These first responders are often the first on the scene, offering stabilization and support until further medical transport can be arranged. This volunteer-based model reflects the community's strong spirit of service and commitment to ensuring a safe environment for all residents and visitors.

Canada Post

The Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government operates a full-service Post Office located within the Sii T'ax Development Corporation store. This facility provides the community with comprehensive postal services, including Xpresspost, registered mail, and standard retail shipping, ensuring reliable and convenient communication links for all residents.



Community Facilities

New Aiyansh takes great pride in its modern facilities, which serve as the heartbeat of community life. Owned and operated by the Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government, these venues support a vibrant blend of traditional customs, athletic excellence, and youth engagement.



Gitlaxt'aamiks Sport and Recreation Centre

The central hub for community activity, this multipurpose facility is essential for:

- **Cultural and Events:** Hosting traditional feasts and significant community gatherings.
- **Athletics:** Serving as a primary venue for sports and recreational programming.
- **Youth Engagement:** Providing a dedicated space for youth initiatives and social development.



Gitlaxt'aamiks Resource Centre

The Gitlaxt'aamiks Resource Centre serves as a vital multipurpose hub, supporting both community nutrition and local craftsmanship. The upper level is the central operations base for the **Meals on Wheels Program**, which provides essential lunch services for students at Nisga'a Elementary Secondary School (NESS) and hosts the community's Breakfast Club for children. The lower level is home to the **Sewing Centre**, offering a dedicated space for traditional and contemporary textile work, further enriching the community's cultural and creative resources.



Community Facilities

Post-Treaty Landmarks

Reflecting the growth and vision of the community since the Nisga'a Treaty, two landmark developments offer premier spaces for public and private use:



Gitmidiik Auditorium

A venue designed to host significant community gatherings, the auditorium is a premier space for large-scale presentations, assemblies, and cultural events.

Both the Gitmidiik Auditorium and the Gitlaxt'aamiks Sport and Recreation Centre are available for rental, providing professional-grade environments for community-led events, cultural events and private functions.



Arts & Culture Centre

This versatile facility currently provides professional office space, leased by:

- Gitmidiik Group
- Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Department
- Nisga'a Administrative Decisions Review Board
- K'alii Aks Timber Corporation



Community Facilities



Gitlaxt'aamiks Nursery and Headstart Program

The Gitlaxt'aamiks Nursery and Headstart Program offers a culturally grounded early childhood education framework designed to support the holistic development of Nisga'a children. The Headstart initiative focuses on toddlers aged two to three, emphasizing language immersion, land-based teachings, and intergenerational connection through regular engagement with community Elders. Complementing this, the Nursery School serves as a dedicated Pre-Kindergarten program that bridges the gap to formal schooling by prioritizing academic and social readiness. Together, these programs utilize modern platforms like Brightwheel to streamline administration while remaining deeply committed to family involvement and the preservation of traditional seasonal knowledge.



Community Facilities



Farmers Market

The Farmers Market (located in New Aiyansh) is a seasonal community hub that supports local food security and economic development. Managed through the Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government Economic Development department, it provides a platform for Nisga'a entrepreneurs and local producers. Rates are \$20.00 per vendor table. Operation is from June-August annually.



Mushroom Depots

The Mushroom Depots, located on Tait Street in New Aiyansh, serves as a professional hub for the region's wild mushroom trade. Managed by the Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government, the facility is strictly dedicated to the buying of mushrooms to ensure a focused environment for harvesters and visitors alike. To uphold community standards and respect for the land, the depot is maintained with high expectations for cleanliness and operational safety.



Outdoor Leisure



Rec Centre Playground

Completed in 2022, the Rec Centre playground was strategically developed to serve as a premier recreational landmark for the upper community, addressing a long-standing need for accessible, high-quality outdoor amenities. The project was driven by the core objective of providing a modern, safe environment where children can engage in physical activity on state-of-the-art equipment designed with the highest safety standards in mind.



Water Park

Completed in September 2023, the water park was a \$601,305 project funded through Provincial Gaming Funds (\$250,000), GVG Gap Closing Funds (\$286,350), and Local Priorities (\$64,955). This initiative was largely supported by amendments to the Gaming Control Act, which ensures First Nations receive 7% of BC Lottery Corporation's net income through 2045. These shared revenues grant B.C. First Nations the autonomy to invest in vital sectors such as infrastructure, health, and community development, directly enabling local priorities like this water park.



Outdoor Basketball Court

Established in 2000 following the completion of paving in the Nisga'a Village of New Aiyansh, the outdoor basketball court was further enhanced a few years later with the addition of fencing, lighting, and permanent hoops. Today, the facility remains fully accessible for community use at any time, serving as a vibrant hub for youth basketball camps, Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations, and casual outdoor recreation.

Economic Development & Strategic Growth



Sii T'ax Development Corporation serves as the economic arm of Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government, driving sustainable growth and creating local opportunities through a diverse portfolio of business operations. By managing key community assets and expanding into industrial support services, Sii T'ax plays a pivotal role in the community's self-determination and long-term prosperity.

Retail & Hospitality Operations

Sii T'ax Development Corporation oversees the community's core retail and tourism hubs, ensuring high-quality service for residents and visitors alike:

New Aiyanash Gas Bar: A central community asset providing fuel, baked goods, and essential convenience items through the attached general store. It also serves as the local hub for the Canada Post outlet.

Lava Roc Restaurant: Offering local dining options in a unique setting located within the Interpretive Centre.

Gift Shop: Featuring authentic indigenous artwork, crafts, and souvenirs that celebrate the heritage of the Nass Valley. Located within the Interpretive Centre.

New Gas Station & Mechanic Shop: This upcoming development is specifically designed to meet the increased demand for fuel and professional vehicle maintenance services.



Employment Programs



The Stimulus Work Program

The Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government Stimulus Plan is a six-month initiative providing 66 community members with diverse work and training opportunities across infrastructure, cultural, and social sectors. By offering roles ranging from trades and labor—such as carpentry and greenhouse operations—to traditional skills like smokehouse training and fishing, the program fosters community-based capacity building without requiring formal certifications for most entry-level positions. This comprehensive project supports village development through specialized placements, including support for elders and professional internships, ensuring a broad impact on both community well-being and individual career growth.

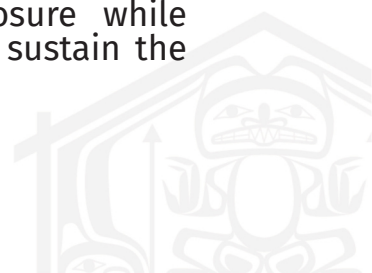


Employment Programs



Student Summer Work Program

The Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government's Student Summer Work Program is a strategic youth employment initiative designed to foster professional growth and community engagement among Nisga'a students. By integrating youth into diverse operational sectors—ranging from public works and groundskeeping to administrative support and communications—the program provides participants with hands-on experience that bridges the gap between academic learning and career readiness. Participants are mentored within GVG departments to ensure they gain high-quality technical exposure while contributing to the vital services and infrastructure projects that sustain the village of New Aiyansh during the busy summer months.

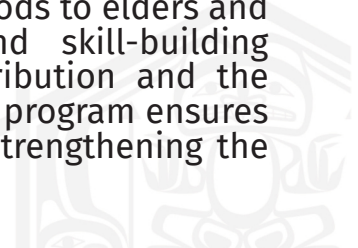


Employment Programs



Smokehouse Project

The Smokehouse Project, established by the Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government in 1996, is a vital cultural and food security initiative designed to preserve traditional Nisga'a methods of harvesting and processing foods like salmon, oolichans, and sea lion. The program prioritizes providing high-quality, nutrient-dense traditional foods to elders and low-income community members while offering employment and skill-building opportunities for local youth. By focusing on non-commercial distribution and the meticulous, round-the-clock labor required for traditional smoking, the program ensures that ancestral knowledge is passed down through generations while strengthening the community's self-reliance.



Events & Gatherings



National Indigenous Peoples Day Annual Celebration

The National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebrations in New Aiyansh, BC, every 3rd week of June, is a community-wide event hosted by an appointed society. The festivities feature an extensive range of activities including a parade with a different theme yearly, a children's bicycle parade, and competitive events such as a 3 on 3 basketball tournament, arm wrestling, and a soapbox derby to name a few. Attendees can also participate in unique contests like wolf howling and soap berry whipping, enjoy an Elders BBQ, or explore various carnival games and bouncy castles. With all proceeds supporting the appointed society, the celebration serves as both a vibrant cultural gathering and a fundraiser featuring a raffle table with high-value items and a cash raffle.



Events & Gatherings



Hobiyee Celebration

The annual Hobiyee Celebration is a rotating cultural event that travels through each Nisga'a community over a four-year cycle, eventually returning to the Nisga'a Village of New Aiyansh, where the community consistently demonstrates exceptional hospitality. Orchestrating such a significant gathering requires a complex logistical effort, ranging from administrative tasks like program design, advertising, and sponsorship procurement to the boots-on-the-ground coordination of staff volunteers. A successful celebration hinges on a wide array of moving parts, including the preparation of three daily meals, coffee/water station and tribal picnics, vendor table and audio-visual management, 50/50 raffles, and comprehensive media coverage through photography and social platforms.



Conclusion

Looking Forward: Our Path to Prosperity

The foundation of New Aiyansh is built on a rich history and a resilient community, but our focus remains firmly on the horizon. As we move through 2026 and beyond, the Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government is committed to a future that balances modern economic growth with the preservation of our cultural identity. Our priority is to create an accessible, thriving environment where every member and partner has the resources they need to succeed.

Strategic Vision & Infrastructure

We are currently entering a phase of significant revitalization. Our strategic goals focus on enhancing community connectivity and sustainable development:

- **Infrastructure Modernization:** Ongoing upgrades to local facilities and utilities to support a growing population.
- **Economic Diversification:** Creating opportunities for local entrepreneurship and inviting sustainable partnerships that align with our community values.
- **Youth & Education:** Investing in the next generation through athletic programs, cultural initiatives, and academic support to ensure our leadership remains strong for years to come.

Connect With Us

Transparency and accessibility are the pillars of our administration. Whether you are a resident seeking information or a professional looking to collaborate, we invite you to reach out to our dedicated departments.

Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government Office

Physical Address: 5200 Skateen Avenue, New Aiyansh, BC

Mailing Address: PO Box 233, New Aiyansh, BC, V0J 1A0

Phone: 250-633-3100

Official Website: www.gitlaxtaamiks.com

Departmental Contacts

Administrative Inquiries: Chief Administrative Officer

Media & Communications: Communications Department

Community Services: Programs and Services Department and Community Relations Department

Stay Informed

To keep up with real-time updates, community newsletters, and event galleries, follow our official digital channels. We are dedicated to ensuring that every member is informed as we build our future together

Document Note: This community profile is a living document, updated annually to reflect our progress.

Latest Revision: August 2026

