



**CONSEIL
DE GESTION
FINANCIÈRE** des
Premières Nations

Gitsegukla First Nation Achieves Financial Management System Certification!

On March 27, 2020, Gitsegukla First Nation achieved Financial Management System (FMS) Certification with the First Nations Financial Management Board (FMB). This means their finance and administrative governance practices now meet FMB Standards which are based on internationally recognized standards of financial management.

About Gitsegukla:

Gitsegukla is a proud community that is located at the Skeena River Valley about 24 kms west of New Hazelton, which is situated in a beautiful valley on the Git ksii yeen (Skeena River). The community (gəl ts'ep) is surrounded by mountains, seek₃ (spruce), haawak (birch), skānist (pine), sim gān (cedar) and kōox₃t (maple) trees. The name *Gitsegukla* in Sim'alyax means "People of Jigyukwhla", which is the name of a sharply pointed mountain nearby.

A few years back when the Community was in financial difficulties and was in Third Party Management under the Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) Default Management Program, this approach proved to be more punitive than beneficial. Being in Third Party Management, the Community lost its autonomy to make financial decisions on its own. Under the leadership of the Chief and Council and with the support of the Community, they decided to work with the FMB under their Default Management Pilot program, which had an alternative approach that focused on Capacity Development on Financial Management. Gitsegukla modestly suggested that all organizations had to work together, which meant the FMB, ISC, MNP and the Community all participated in the success of the program by working together for the common goal of getting Gitsegukla out of Default Management by implementing its Financial Administration Law. Gitsegukla now has the capacity in place to manage its own affairs with strong finance and administrative governance practices.

Since working with the FMB, Gitsegukla has also received its Financial Performance Certificate, which demonstrates its Financial Management Capacity and allows them the ability to borrow from the First Nation Finance Authority and benefit from favorable interest rates like many other Governments in Canada.

Gitsegukla Band Council has done its work in more than one way: right from the first band moving forward; to community involvements, to MNP going from third party to co-management and to

finally being self-managed. FMB is setting up the logistics of our final goal: we are working together towards our milestone; it is our destiny.

Gitsegukla has set an example for other Nations under default management who would greatly benefit from this pilot project and the FMS Certification. To live by their FAL, the entire organization has to paddle the canoe together. Gitsegukla's leadership ensures that everyone on this 'canoe' has a role to play and provides clear communication on the direction as well as setting realistic timelines. Their canoe is now headed to a new and exciting destination.

The FMB acknowledges Gitsegukla on this incredible achievement!

About FMB: The Financial Management Board is a First Nations-led nonprofit organization that supports First Nations in developing sound finance and administrative governance practices. The FMB was created under the *First Nations Fiscal Management Act (FMA)* in 2006. Services offered are at no cost to First Nations. For more information on all products and services, visit www.fnfmb.com.

Working with FMB and seeking FMS certification provides several benefits including:

- Gives increased transparency and accountability to members and future business partners
- Builds the skillset and reputation for strong finance and administrative governance practices
- Provides council members and staff the tools they need to better manage the Nation's finances
- Provides increased stability and continuity through finance and governance practices
- Improves risk management

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