

MESSAGE FROM Gitxsan Development Corporation

On Monday, January 4, 2021, GDC's President and CEO, Rick Connors, officially announced to the staff team that he will be retiring from his role at the end of 2021.

Rick had made his intention to retire known to the GDC Board of Directors in late 2020. He provided a positive plan for succession to new leadership that will work with him throughout 2021 until his full retirement.

With the approval of the Board, Rick has named two very capable individuals to immediately serve as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Administrative Officer of GDC.

Chaz Ware, as Chief Operating Officer, will provide leadership, planning and oversight to all areas of operations, including building projects, project and field personnel, company fleet, logistics, dispatch, facilities and equipment. Chaz is Gitxsan and grew up in Terrace. His work as an Environmental Services Consultant and business owner with strong sales and business development expertise, provided a strong foundation for the work he began four years ago launching a new division of GDC. Chaz has built a team of Environmental Technicians now operating as Gitxsan Environmental Services, and engaged in numerous long-term projects with regional clients.

Kelsey Harmse is GDC's new Chief Administrative Officer. Kelsey has been working alongside Rick Connors since 2015, supporting GDC's business units as Director of Strategic Initiatives. She has a Masters in Business Administration and an undergraduate degree in Pre-Medicine. Kelsey's passion lies in helping people reach their potential and has implemented programs and initiatives that demonstrate GDC's ability to support Gitxsan individuals and community development. Kelsey is an effective, values-based leader who whole-heartedly believes that in partnership with the Gitxsan community, GDC can create a brighter, stable future for all Gitxsan.

With full confidence in the new Executive Leaders, Rick has stepped aside from day-to-day operations, and will devote the next year to bringing two critically important business opportunities to successful launch. Both proposed opportunities are major "bricks and mortar" businesses that have been in development over many months, and when operational, will generate dozens of local well paying jobs for community members.

Chaz, Kelsey and the GDC team are excited to move forward in 2020 toward growing business success, increasing local jobs and collaboration with the Gitxsan. Rick Connors remains as CEO through 2021 and will provide continuing support and special projects leadership as 2020 takes shape.