



PATHWAYS
EXECUTIVE SEARCH



Chief Administrative Officer



CH'ÍYÁQTEL
TZEACHTEN FIRST NATION



About Ch'iyáqtel

Ch'iyáqtel (formerly known as Tzeachten First Nation) is a proud affiliate of the Stó:lō Nation (People of the River) and member of the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe. The name Ch'iyáqtel means “Place of the Fish Weir”, honouring the ingenuity of their ancestors, who built fish weirs to provide for the community. Today, fishing and land stewardship remain central to Ch'iyáqtel life and culture.

The Nation is home to 752 members. Their language, Halq'eméylem, is the Upriver dialect spoken by 24 Stó:lō First Nations along the Fraser River, from Matsqui to Yale. Rich in culture, natural beauty, and resources, Ch'iyáqtel ancestors travelled the territory to hunt, fish, and gather berries. Guided by their teachings, Ch'iyáqtel leadership continues to prioritize decisions that support the well-being of both current and future generations.

Ch'iyáqtel holds 362.6 hectares of reserve lands located within the municipal boundaries of the City of Chilliwack. These lands are surrounded by residential and commercial developments. In response to the needs of their members and the local community, Ch'iyáqtel has supported the development of a mix of commercial businesses and light industry on reserve.

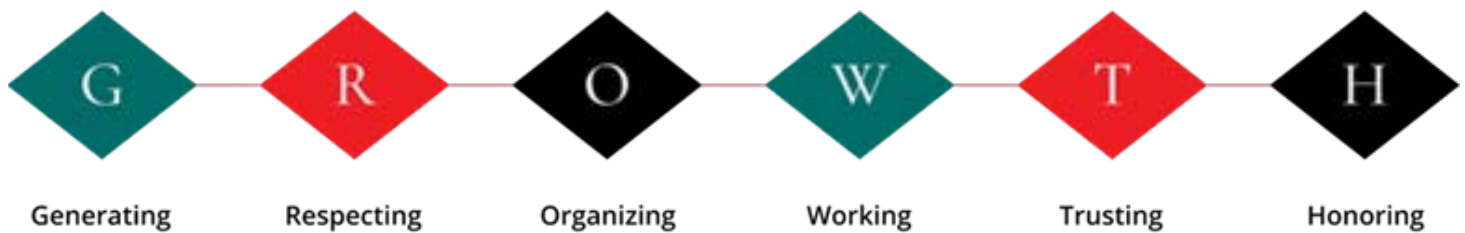
With limited land available and ongoing development pressures, expanding the land base for future community growth remains a key priority. In 2016, Ch'iyáqtel partnered with Skowkale First Nation and Yakwekwioose First Nation to acquire an additional 28.8 hectares of land. This land is managed cooperatively and with a shared vision of creating a vibrant, welcoming residential neighbourhood that includes commercial, retail, and community amenities. It is currently under a long-term lease designated for residential use.

About Ch'iyáqtel continued

Vision

Ch'iyáqtel remains the keeper of our traditional territories—a sacred responsibility passed down by our ancestors and upheld through sound cultural, environmental, and socio-economic stewardship.

Mission



Generating wealth and prosperity for our community through the creation of cultural, environmental, and socio-economic opportunities.

Respecting the needs of our members and staff by proactively promoting a healthy, safe community and workplace.

Organizing ourselves for success through effective administration, management, and governance.

Working together in the spirit of collaboration and partnerships.

Trusting that our team has the inherent ability to succeed at our ambitious goals.

Honouring our past as we position ourselves for a future that pays respect to who we are as a people.

About Ch'iyáqtel continued

Core Values

We are grounded in culture—never losing track of who we are, where we come from, and where we are going as Ch'iyáqtel people. We believe that respect is the foundation of all that we do. We value transparent and accountable communication, which builds trust and keeps our members and staff informed and engaged. We practice a strong work ethic, modelling attitudes and behaviours that inspire those around us. We recognize that a safe, active, inclusive community supports the health and well-being of individuals and families.

Our Focus Areas

- **Finance & Administration:** Empowering our organization to achieve sustainability to better serve the community.
- **Economic Development:** Building a sustainable economy that enables self-governance, empowers our people, and secures community prosperity.
- **Land & Environment:** Stewarding and safeguarding our land and environment—honouring our responsibilities to future generations.
- **Housing & Infrastructure:** Planning, delivering, and maintaining the housing and infrastructure needed to support the community.
- **Health & Wellness:** Empowering our members to define and implement their health and wellness needs.
- **Culture & Community:** Delivering high-quality programs and events that promote our language, traditions, and ceremonies.

To learn more about Ch'iyáqtel, please click [here](#).



The Role: Chief Administrative Officer

Reporting directly to Chief & Council, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the senior administrative executive for Ch'íyáqtel and the principal conduit between elected leadership and administration. The CAO provides enterprise-level leadership, strategic oversight, and executive direction to ensure Council's priorities, governance decisions, and long-term vision are translated into disciplined, accountable, and culturally grounded execution across the Nation.

This executive mandate reflects Ch'íyáqtel's continued growth, increasing operational complexity, and evolving governance environment. The CAO functions beyond day-to-day management, providing strategic stewardship of the organization, reinforcing appropriate delegation and accountability through Directors and Managers, strengthening organizational cohesion, and ensuring administration is aligned with the Nation's vision, values, policies, laws, and community priorities.

Working in close partnership with Chief & Council, the CAO advances strategic planning, governance excellence, fiscal sustainability, intergovernmental relations, organizational performance, and high-quality service delivery. The CAO provides integrated oversight across administration, finance, human resources, lands, housing, infrastructure, health and wellness, culture, community programs, and economic development, while ensuring senior staff are empowered, supported, and held accountable within their respective portfolios.

The CAO will bring cultural humility, integrity, discretion, political acuity, and sound executive judgment to the role, along with a respectful understanding of Indigenous governance, cultures, traditions, languages, and protocols. Knowledge of Stó:lō culture and experience working with First Nations governments would be meaningful assets.

Key Responsibilities

Governance, Council Relations, and Strategic Leadership

- Serve as the primary administrative advisor to Chief & Council, supporting effective governance, informed decision-making, and clear separation between political leadership and administrative operations.
- Translate Council direction, strategic priorities, and community goals into organizational plans, annual priorities, departmental workplans, and measurable outcomes.
- Provide executive leadership that supports Ch'íyáqtel's evolving governance model, organizational maturity, and long-term growth.
- Ensure Chief & Council receive timely, accurate, and relevant information, reports, options, and recommendations to support governance decisions.
- Lead the development, implementation, monitoring, and renewal of strategic plans, operational plans, policies, and administrative systems.
- Promote transparent, ethical, accountable, and culturally grounded administration in alignment with Ch'íyáqtel's vision, mission, values, laws, policies, and procedures.
- Identify organizational risks, emerging issues, opportunities, and trends, and provide proactive advice to Chief & Council.

Administration and Organizational Oversight

- Provide overall leadership and oversight for the administration, ensuring programs, services, and operations are delivered effectively, efficiently, and in alignment with community priorities.
- Lead, support, and hold accountable Directors and Managers while reinforcing appropriate delegation, role clarity, and cross-departmental collaboration.
- Strengthen organizational systems, processes, internal controls, reporting practices, and service standards to support accountability and continuous improvement.
- Foster a respectful, professional, high-performing workplace culture rooted in trust, collaboration, cultural safety, transparency, and accountability.
- Oversee human resources, recruitment, performance planning, succession planning, leadership development, workplace health and safety, and employee relations through appropriate managers and advisors.
- Ensure the administration has the capacity, resources, and systems needed to meet current responsibilities and prepare for future growth.

Key Responsibilities **continued**

Financial Stewardship, Sustainability, and Risk Management

- Provide enterprise-level oversight of financial planning, budgeting, reporting, funding agreements, capital planning, and long-term fiscal sustainability in partnership with the Director of Finance.
- Support Chief & Council in understanding financial implications, organizational risks, investment opportunities, and strategic trade-offs.
- Ensure Ch'iyáqtel maintains sound financial governance, effective internal controls, policy compliance, transparent reporting, and responsible stewardship of resources.
- Oversee organizational risk management, including legal, financial, operational, human resources, governance, reputational, and compliance risks.
- Support sustainable growth by aligning administrative capacity, financial resources, infrastructure, and service delivery with long-term community needs.

Intergovernmental Relations, Partnerships, and Community Engagement

- Represent and advance Ch'iyáqtel's interests with other First Nations, Indigenous organizations, federal, provincial, regional, and municipal governments, funders, service partners, and external stakeholders.
- Support Chief & Council in strengthening intergovernmental relationships, partnership opportunities, agreements, advocacy priorities, and strategic initiatives.
- Promote constructive relationships with members, staff, partners, neighbouring communities, and the broader public while maintaining confidentiality and political neutrality.
- Ensure community engagement, communication, and reporting practices support transparency, trust, and informed participation.

The Candidate

Qualifications, Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- A degree in public administration, business administration, Indigenous governance, law, planning, finance, or a related discipline is preferred; an equivalent combination of education, leadership experience, and community-based knowledge will be considered.
- 10 or more years of progressive senior leadership experience, ideally within a First Nation, Indigenous government, local government, public-sector, or complex community-serving organization.
- Demonstrated experience supporting elected leadership, governance bodies, Boards, or Councils with sound advice, policy implementation, strategic planning, and organizational oversight.
- Strong understanding of First Nations governance, administration, programs, funding, community priorities, and the importance of maintaining clear roles between elected leadership and administration.
- Proven ability to lead Directors and Managers, build organizational capacity, strengthen accountability, and foster collaboration across diverse portfolios.
- Experience overseeing financial planning, budgets, funding agreements, capital planning, risk management, and long-term organizational sustainability.
- Strong strategic planning, policy development, change management, systems improvement, and organizational development skills.
- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain respectful relationships with members, staff, Chief & Council, government partners, neighbouring Nations, funders, and external stakeholders.
- Excellent communication, facilitation, negotiation, briefing, report-writing, and presentation skills.
- High level of integrity, discretion, political acuity, professionalism, and sound judgment, with the ability to handle sensitive and confidential matters appropriately.
- Cultural humility and a respectful understanding of Indigenous cultures, traditions, languages, protocols, and community-based decision-making; knowledge of Stó:lō culture is an asset.
- Satisfactory Police Information Check, Credit Check, and Education Verification required.
- Valid Class 5 Driver's License and acceptable Driver's Abstract required.



Working Conditions

Work is performed primarily in an office environment, with regular engagement with Chief & Council, staff, members, partners, and external governments. Occasional travel out of town to attend meetings, negotiations, conferences, or training is required. Evening and/or weekend work may be required to support Council meetings, community engagement, urgent matters, or organizational priorities.

Location and Territory

Chíyáqtel is a strong, thriving, and engaged member of the Stó:lō Nation (People of the River) and proudly part of the Ts'elxweyeqw Tribe. The Ts'elxweyeqw are the First Peoples of the Chilliwack River Watershed, located in what is now known as the Central Fraser Valley in southwestern British Columbia. The tribal name 'Ts'elxweyeqw' is commonly recognized in English as Chilliwack.

The Chíyáqtel reserve lies within this territory and is part of the Ts'elxweyeqw land base, which spans approximately 95,000 hectares across the Chilliwack River Valley. In addition, Chíyáqtel shares 64.8 hectares of grass reserve land with eight of Chilliwack's surrounding First Nation groups.

The Application Process

Chiyáqtel is an inclusive and equitable organization and encourages applications from qualified candidates, including persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. The position offers a competitive compensation package for eligible candidates, with a proposed salary range of \$150,000–\$200,000 per annum, plus benefits and pension.

The position is open to all qualified applicants, although preference will be given to candidates of Indigenous ancestry.

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume in PDF format directly to Pathways Executive Search outlining your interest, qualifications, and experience.

Email: **Applications@PathwaysExecutiveSearch.com**, please include **Chiyáqtel - CAO** in the subject line.

For more details or to further explore this important leadership opportunity, please contact:

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Pathways Executive Search is an international executive recruitment firm, known for its ability to attract and recruit talent in culturally grounded ways. Guided by Indigenous values and principles of Indigenous inclusion, Pathways walks with those looking to broaden candidate pools, find qualified and experienced candidates, and live out their values and commitment to creating workplace cultures where people can thrive.