



August 10, 2019

Request for Proposals

Project Name or Description: **CSFN – CSTC Transformative Change**

Procurement Contact Person: **Mina Holmes, Tribal Chief**

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SEEKING EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST:

The Carrier Sekani First Nations (CSFN) of Saik'uz, Tl'azt'en, Nadleh Whut'en, Burns Lake, Stelat'en, Takla Lake, and Nak'azdli Whut'en and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) are seeking Expressions of Interest from qualified individuals/firms that would provide CSFN leadership with a document that presents options and recommendations related to the creation and structuring of an entity/organization. The CSFNs are in progress of government to government (g2g) negotiations with BC and Canada aka Comprehensive Reconciliation (CR), ie. Pathways Forward Agreement 2.0 (PFA 2.0). Please see further down for backgrounder.

BACKGROUND: The Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) formed in 1979 to succeed the Lakes District Chiefs' organization. The CSTC was founded and constituted under the BC Societies Act in 1982 by Carrier and Sekani First Nations with traditional territories within the north-central interior. The CSTC is and has been governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Chief Councilors from each member First Nation.

The original intended purpose of the CSTC was to, among other things, achieve a just resolution of land claims and Aboriginal rights issues for the Carrier and Sekani peoples. Towards those ends, the CSTC acts as an administrative, political and technical organization representing and supporting its affiliated member First Nation Communities. The CSTC is mandated to work to:

- 1 Preserve and promote the Carrier & Sekani heritage and identity
- 2 Improve the social and economic independence of Carrier & Sekani people
- 3 Achieve a just resolution of land claims and aboriginal rights issues for Carrier & Sekani people
- 4 Promote better understanding between First Nations people and the general public
- 5 Advance and improve the standard of living of the Carrier & Sekani people
- 6 Promote self-government for Carrier & Sekani people

The member communities of the CSTC pursued these objectives through the BC Treaty Process from 1993 to 2007, after which it withdrew from the process and the associated Treaty funding agreement. Since that time the CSTC's core funding has retracted to base-Tribal Council Funding Program Policy (TCFP) via a Tribal Council Funding Agreement, which was reduced significantly. Services supported via the CSTC within this current model include:

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1. Tribal Chief
2. Executive Assistant
3. Manager
4. Accountant/Bookkeeper
5. Finance Asst./Reception
6. Technical Services Position (on-reserve infrastructure)
7. Fisheries (funded separate from the TCFP arrangement; via Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy)
8. GIS (position funded separate from the TCFP arrangement; via proposal-based funds or other funding agreements)

In the absence of any other collective “Nation-level coordinating body” for First Nations within the north-central interior, the CSTC has been utilized for this purpose in recent years. As per the structure outlined above, the CSTC is not resourced or structured to support a centralized collective-governance role, or a coordinated government services delivery role. The use of the CSTC as a surrogate for these purposes has not always produced positive outcomes.

Since 2015 some member communities of the CSTC (i.e. the CSFNs – Saik’uz, Tl’azt’en, Nadleh Whut’en, Burns Lake, Stellat’en, Takla Lake, and Nak’azdli Whut’en (a non-member since 2018) are pursuing Comprehensive Reconciliation (CR) with BC and Canada. The Wet’suwet’en First Nation, a CSTC member community, has not been part of this collaborative government-to-government work.

PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES:

For the past 3 years, work towards a has identified the need for an organization/entity specifically structured and mandated to facilitate CR-related objectives on behalf of the CSFNs. Supporting roles in this context in the near-term are envisioned to include:

1. Supporting centralized/collaborative capacities (negotiation, legal, natural resource management, economic development, socio-cultural, community health, etc.)
 - 1.1. As specified within the collective-capacity budget identified within the Pathway Forward Agreement - PFA2.0
2. Facilitating the creation of CSFN governance mechanisms that will transition over time as CR objectives are incrementally achieved, and Nation-level governance models are developed (decision making, program delivery, etc.)

It is envisioned that an entity serving these functions could inter-relate to the current CSTC in the following manners (and possibly others):

1. Be incorporated within the CSTC; involving a reconstituting (constitutions and by-laws) the CSTC, including re-structuring and re-branding etc.
2. Emerging separately and independent of the CSTC; maintaining the CSTC entity and its existing funding arrangement with INAC, and establishing a separate legal CSFN centralized CR-support organization.
3. Establishing a separate legal CSFN centralized CR-support organization (and as desired, transitioning services and functions delivered via the CSTC to the new entity, or some other entity).
4. Others...

The process of developing the options and recommendations is anticipated to include the following actions/considerations:

1. Working with an advisory committee of CSFN representatives (and their ambassadors) that will provide guidance and facilitate community level input to support this work
2. As time is of the essence, the project anticipated timeline is 3-6 month.
3. A standardized survey that will be utilized to support the collection of information; that survey will seek the following:
 - 3.1. Community member's perspectives (strengths/weaknesses) of the CSTC over time
 - 3.2. Similar perspectives of leadership, key CSFN community personnel, key CSTC staff and contractors
 - 3.3. Why the number of CSTC member communities have declined over time
4. Build on the original "Declaration" and vision that the original visionaries developed for the CSTC
5. The benefits of, and key challenges and barriers to working together in a collective context
6. Key service areas and functions, including:
 - 6.1. Collective capacities supported via PFA2
 - 6.2. Other collective capacities that emerge from CR discussions and related discussions
 - 6.3. Assisting with monitoring member/participant First Nation's socio-economic and health/wellbeing indicators
 - 6.4. Assisting with the development of self-governance models for participating/member First Nations
7. Service delivery models for the entity/organization that emphasize accountability to member/participant First Nations
8. Membership/participation of the CSFNs/CSTC member communities, including terms of reference
9. Considerations of how additional member/participant First Nations are engaged and on-ramped to become part of the entity/organization and related CR initiatives
10. Considerations that are required to allow the entity to transition over time as CR objectives are achieved, collective supports desired change, etc.
11. Governance of the entity, including governance roles, and the inclusion of "traditional people" in governance
 - 11.1. Specific consideration of the roles of Carrier-Sekani women in the entity/organization and its governance
 - 11.2. Specific consideration of the roles of youth in the entity/organization and its governance
12. Foundational documents (constitution/by-laws) for the entity/organization
13. Options for founding and initiating the entity/organization
14. Examples of similar entities/organizations that may exist regionally and more broadly that serve the envisioned functions and how they are structured, etc.

Deliverables will include a summary of all activities undertaken, a summary of all data and information developed, and summary reporting on options and recommendations, as well as an oral/visual presentation to the CSTC/CSFN leadership.

Elements of Proposal

A submission must, at a minimum, include the following elements:

- Description of the firm or individuals that includes a general overview, names and credentials of creative team, number of full-time employees.
- A one-page narrative outlining the individual's/firm's strengths and distinguishing skills or capabilities as they might relate to CSFN's.

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- An outline of past projects that demonstrate success in working with First Nations on such matters as outlined above including a proposed timeline.

Evaluation Criteria

The successful respondent will:

- Have been operating continuously in a similar capacity with other First Nations.
- The education, experience, knowledge, skills, and qualifications of the firm and/or the individuals who will be available to provide these services.
- The expertise of the firm in working with similar customers.

If you have additional questions or seek clarification, please contact cstcea@cstc.bc.ca.