REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

POSITION TITLE: Chief Administrative Officer

REPORTS TO: Regional Board

DIRECT REPORTS:

- General Manager, Regional and Community Utilities
- General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services
- General Manager, Corporate and Transportation Services
- General Manager, Planning and Emergency Services
- Executive Coordinator
- Other positions as assigned by the Board

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting directly to the Regional Board, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the senior administrative and principal professional advisor to the Board and is responsible for the overall administration and operation of the Regional District of Nanaimo.

As the Board's sole employee, the CAO provides strategic leadership, objective advice, and organizational direction to ensure effective implementation of Board priorities, policies, and decisions. The CAO leads a diverse and complex organization serving approximately 170,000 residents across four municipalities and seven Electoral Areas and is responsible for balancing the interests of municipal and Electoral Area communities, urban and rural priorities, environmental stewardship, infrastructure investment, fiscal sustainability, and evolving public expectations.

Operating within a dynamic multi-jurisdictional governance environment, the CAO fosters collaborative relationships with the Board, first nations, municipalities, senior governments, regional partners, employees, and the public.

The CAO is a seasoned and highly respected public sector leader who demonstrates exceptional judgment, political acuity, and the ability to provide candid, evidence-based advice while maintaining political neutrality and strong governance relationships.

The CAO serves as the public face of the administration and must communicate effectively during periods of uncertainty, controversy, and community concern while ensuring responsible stewardship of public resources and maintaining a high-performing organizational culture.

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provides strategic leadership and direction to advance the Board's vision, priorities, and long-term objectives.
- Serves as the Board's principal advisor by delivering objective, evidence-based recommendations and supporting effective governance and decision-making.

- Maintains political neutrality while fostering strong, transparent, and collaborative relationships with the Board.
- Demonstrates professional courage and integrity by providing measured, independent and evidence-informed advice to the Board, including when that advice may not align with the Board's preferred direction.
- Respects the Board's decision-making authority while supporting Directors in understanding the implications, risks and opportunities associated with their decisions.
- Anticipates where professional advice may differ from the Board's expectations or preferred approach and communicates with sensitivity to elected officials' objectives and concerns, without compromising the clarity, independence or integrity of the advice.
- Balances competing municipal and electoral area interests, as well as urban and rural priorities, to support effective regional decision-making.
- Leads and develops a high-performing, accountable, and service-oriented organization that promotes employee engagement, leadership development, workforce sustainability, and a positive workplace culture.
- Provides leadership, direction, coaching, and performance management to members of the Executive Leadership Team and ensures effective succession planning and organizational capacity.
- Oversees labour relations, workforce planning, leadership development, and organizational change initiatives.
- Directs the development and implementation of policies, programs, and initiatives that support Board priorities and organizational objectives.
- Ensures the responsible stewardship of public resources through sound financial management, long-term fiscal planning, effective asset management, and risk management practices.
- Directs the preparation and administration of annual operating and capital budgets, long-range financial plans, and organizational performance measures.
- Aligns organizational resources, programs, and services with Board priorities while balancing service expectations, affordability, and organizational capacity.
- Builds and maintains productive relationships with First Nations, municipalities, senior governments, regional agencies, community organizations, and external partners.
- Advances meaningful government-to-government relationships with Indigenous communities and supports reconciliation efforts.
- Represents and advocates for the Regional District's interests with senior governments, funding agencies, external organizations, and regional partners.
- Communicates clearly, consistently, and transparently with residents, interested parties, staff, and the media, particularly during periods of uncertainty, controversy, or community concern.
- Integrates climate resilience, environmental stewardship, and sustainability considerations into organizational planning, policy development, and service delivery.

- Ensures Board direction is translated into measurable organizational outcomes through effective implementation, performance management, accountability, and transparent reporting.
- Attends Board, Committee, and interested party meetings as required and serves as the Regional District's administrative representative on external committees, organizations, and initiatives.
- Performs other related duties as directed by the Regional Board.

PREFFERED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Graduate degree in public administration, business administration, planning, law, engineering, finance, or a related discipline,

Significant senior executive leadership experience in a complex local government, regional district, or comparable public sector environment; or an equivalent combination of education, executive leadership experience, and professional qualifications.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate:

- Extensive experience advising elected officials in politically sensitive environments.
- Demonstrated success balancing competing urban and rural interests and navigating multi-jurisdictional governance structures.
- Significant experience leading large, complex organizations through periods of change, community concern, or heightened public scrutiny.
- Exceptional communication, facilitation, negotiation, and consensus-building skills.
- Demonstrated ability to provide candid, evidence-based advice while maintaining trust and credibility.
- Experience building productive relationships with Indigenous governments, municipalities, senior levels of government, and community partners.
- A proven track record of fostering strong organizational culture, accountability, financial stewardship, and service excellence.
- Strong knowledge of local government legislation, governance, finance, labour relations, infrastructure, growth management, environmental stewardship, emergency management, and community planning.
- Demonstrated success in strategic planning, policy development, organizational change, and implementation.
- Strong understanding of climate resilience, sustainability, and regional service delivery models.
- Experience leading unionized organizations and maintaining productive labour relations.

A valid BC Class 5 Driver's Licence is required.
A satisfactory Criminal Records Check is required for all RDN positions.