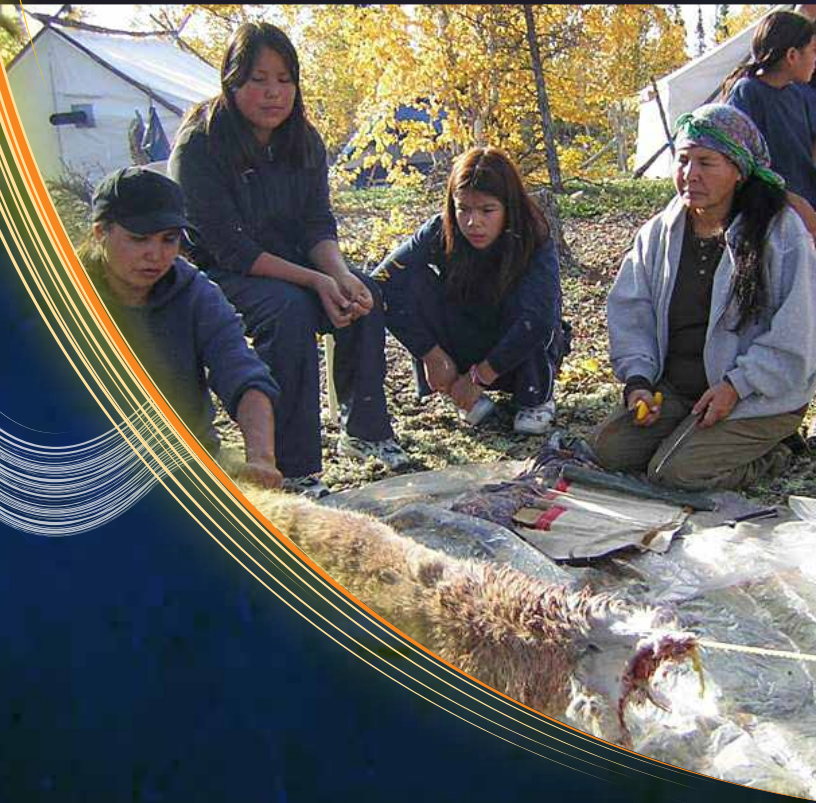


# *In Tłıchq Unity...*

## **A Strategic Framework and Intentions**

2013-2017





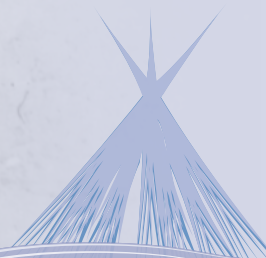
“ *Itè dò gha gòta...*  
*In Tłıchọ Unity...* ”

A Strategic Framework and Intentions 2013 to 2017  
for the Tłıchọ Government

**Sustaining Our Lands, Language, Culture and Way of Life**

Behchokò, Northwest Territories, Canada

[www.tlicho.ca](http://www.tlicho.ca)



## “Hè dọ gha gọta... In Tịchọ Unity...”

A Strategic Framework and Intentions 2013 to 2017 for the Tịchọ Government

Masi cho to contributors/reviewers: Grand Chief Edward Erasmus, Chief Clifford Daniels, Chief Alfonz Nitsiza, Chief David Wedawin, Chief Johnny Arrowmaker, Kevin Armstrong, Shirley Beaverho, Garry Bekale, Noel Bishop, Anita Daniels, Janita Etsemba, Laura Duncan, Vickie Francisco, Adeline Football, Kerri Garner, Henry Gon, Joseph Judas, Robin Laboline, Lisi Lafferty, Rosa Mantla, Marjorie Matheson-Maund, Charlie Jim Nitsiza, George Nitsiza, Cecilia Rabesca, Joe Rabesca, Nancy Rabesca, Tony Rabesca, Louise Richardson, Nora Wedzin, Jennifer Wetrade, Bertha Rabesca Zoe, Celine Zoe, Henry Zoe, John B. Zoe, Sherri Zoe and Sonny Zoe.

Planning Coordinator and Writer: Jim Martin

Editing: Jim Martin, Bertha Rabesca Zoe, John B. Zoe, Bill Hoggarth, Marjorie Matheson-Maund and Laura Duncan

Design: INKIT Ltd. of Yellowknife

Photographs: Tessa MacIntosh, except where noted

Cover graphics represent the words of Monfwi in 1921:

*“Du sa naet’aa, du deh nịlịlị, du dè nàgoèhdọ-le nịdè asù wets’à goet’ọ họlị ha-le.”*

*“As long as the sun rises, the river flows, and the land does not move, we will not be restricted from our way of life.”*

The cover pictures represent important values, including elders teaching our young people and celebrating our identity as Tịchọ people.

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Copies are available from:

Tịchọ Government

P.O. Box 412

Behchokò, NT X0E 0Y0

Telephone: 1-867-392-6381

Facsimile: 1-867-392-6389

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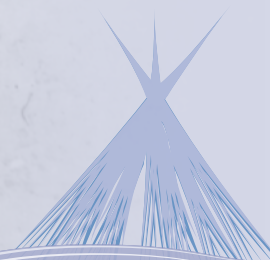
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“As long as the sun rises,  
the river flows and the land  
does not move, we will not  
be restricted from our  
way of life.”

Chief Monfwi, 1921



Monfwi (1866-1936)





## Message from the Grand Chief

We have been a self-governing people on our lands since time immemorial and, since 2005, we have expanded our government to include partnerships with the Canadian and NWT governments. It is important to remember that the purpose of our Tłı̨chǫ Government is to protect and preserve our lands, language, culture and way of life, while the purpose of the position of Grand Chief is to maintain the unity of our people.

These themes frame our Government's work over the 3rd Assembly. In this spirit, I am pleased to put forward this renewed planning document for the Tłı̨chǫ Government.

It contains a revised Strategic Framework and Intentions for the 2013-2017 session of the 3rd Tłı̨chǫ Assembly. The vision for our strategic framework continues to be "Hè dǫ gha gǫta... In Tłı̨chǫ Unity". Hè dǫ gha gǫta speaks to being one Tłı̨chǫ people, one nation with a shared language, culture and way of life. This framework emerges from the beliefs and words of our elders, which provides guidance to our leadership and our staff. The intentions express what we want to accomplish.

The Tłı̨chǫ Government owns, manages and controls over 39,000 square kilometres of lands in the Northwest Territories. Under the Tłı̨chǫ Constitution we acknowledge our responsibility to serve for all time as custodians of these lands. The first intention of our Government must be to "sustain our lands and environment," as Monfwi said, "for as long as this land shall last."

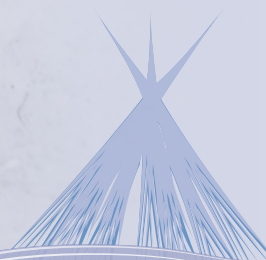
The second most important intention of the Tłı̨chǫ Government is to protect and preserve our unity as one people by sustaining our language, culture and way of life. We have developed award-winning programs for youth, and our "cultural practices" programs all contribute to an active, cultural life in our communities.



Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus

*“We have been a self-governing people on our lands since time immemorial and, since 2005, we have expanded our government to include partnerships with the Canadian and NWT governments. It is important to remember that the purpose of our Tłı̨chǫ Government is to protect and preserve our lands, language, culture and way of life...”*

Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus, 2014



“The Tł̥ch̥o Government strives to improve the lives of our people by making contributions that fill gaps and supplement many existing programs and services. These contributions are intended to promote wellness, spirituality, youth and our traditional cultural activities.”

Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus, 2014

The Tł̥ch̥o Government strives to improve the lives of our people by making contributions that fill gaps and supplement many existing programs and services. These contributions are intended to promote wellness, spirituality, youth and our traditional cultural activities. The Tł̥ch̥o Government also seeks to increase the financial strength and economic development of our communities. As leaders, we entrust this responsibility to the Tł̥ch̥o Investment Corporation. We encourage our people to have jobs and we support our communities to have the good things that can come with responsible economic development. However, we understand this has to be done in a way that protects our lands, as the elders who have come before us have protected our lands. We cannot afford to have development at any cost.

The leadership of our elders continues to inspire us today. By following their example, I believe we will be able to continue building a strong government that will protect and sustain our lands and our language, culture and way of life.

I am always very interested to hear your comments on what you believe this Government must do during its mandate, and I welcome a conversation with you on the work of the Tł̥ch̥o Government.

In Tł̥ch̥o Unity,



Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus



# Part 1

## A Strategic Framework

### *“Itè dọ gha gọta... In Tłıchọ Unity...”*

*“Our language is important... the words we use and what we mean by our words. When our language is strong we will be strong as a nation... we have been taught by our elders because of Tłıchọ unity; in Tłıchọ Unity means we have been taught as one person. We have to use this vision from our elders and make it a good path, a good road for us to travel along.”*

Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013.

*“Unity is the cornerstone of who we are as a Tłıchọ people. Unity has been the cornerstone of what we have been doing since we began working together in 1992 when we said that the four communities were together “in Tłıchọ Unity”. At that time, we talked about what we should do; we talked about building our communities; we talked about how our language, culture and way of life must be woven into the Agreement everywhere.”*

Bertha Rabesca Zoe, Laws Guardian at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013.

**O**ur elders have always spoken of the importance of unity. Unity speaks to the nature of our relationships, of seeing ourselves as connected and interdependent with our land and the animals, our family and friends, our communities, and with those who live around us. Unity also speaks to our relationship with our elders who have come before us. They have woven this cultural fabric that gives to each one of us our unique identity, our language and our shared experience as a people. Unity also speaks to working together as a way of living and working together as one for our common good. In their wisdom, our elders have given us a gift with their words that we remember when we speak of “Itè dọ gha gọta... In Tłıchọ Unity...”. We have made that gift our vision for the future.



*“Now that the Tłıchọ Government exists, what will it do today and tomorrow? What will it do next year and in the years ahead? What kinds of things will our Tłıchọ leaders be talking about? What tasks will they take on for the new government? Will they take on the things in five years that we have not been able to accomplish before?”*

Alexis Arrowmaker in conversation with Bertha Rabesca Zoe and Rick Salter (August 2005)



Alexis Arrowmaker (1920-2005)  
Photo Credit: Native Communications Society

“ In this present age it is important for us to listen to our elders. We can talk about them and their words when discussing other topics. Those who have worked a long time, and have many experiences, are like those who are very educated...

While we are still healthy and there are some elders still among us, we should quickly teach the children using the words of the elders! ”

Translated from  
the Tłı̨chǫ oral record.  
Harry Simpson (1990)  
in Strong Like Two People  
page 16-27

## Our Vision

A vision is our guide to what we believe is most important. Our elders provide the vision for the Tłı̨chǫ Government. Their vision “**İ̀hè dǫ gha gǫta**” or “**In Tłı̨chǫ Unity**” speaks to being one people, one nation where we continue to celebrate our shared language, culture and way of life into the future.

Tłı̨chǫ Unity will ensure:

- our land and environment will endure;
- our language, culture and way of life will be sustained;
- our people, our families and our communities remain strong; and
- our nation will prosper.



## Mission of the Tłı̨chǫ Government

Our mission expresses the purpose of our Government. Like our vision, it is timeless. Our mission is spelled out in the Tłı̨chǫ Constitution, which says, “The purpose of the Tłı̨chǫ Government is to preserve, protect and promote our Aboriginal and Treaty rights and way of life – including our culture, language, heritage, lands, economy and resources – for all Tłı̨chǫ today and for future generations to come for as long as the land shall last.” (2000. Tłı̨chǫ Constitution Section 2.1) Thus...

- **Our mission is to preserve, protect and promote our land, and our language, culture and way of life... as long as this land shall last.**

Monfwi recognized that we are a distinct people. In his certainty that we will continue to endure despite great challenges “as long as the rivers flow and the sun rises... as long as this land shall last...” we find the strength and determination to work together to build our Tłı̨chǫ Government.



“That way of life is the elder’s culture. When our forefathers lived on this earth, from the time they woke up until the time they went to sleep they worked in the bush. Even though they didn’t speak English, when they spoke it was a great education for us. Chief Jimmy Bruneau didn’t know how to read and he didn’t understand English, but he spoke as if he was a wise man. What kind of way was he talking about? He was talking about the strong traditions in which he worked. He said he spoke by the words of his father and his grandfather... Since this is the work of our elders we cannot throw it away. We are just working in their ways. Today, we are talking about their traditions. We are talking about how we can make them strong within our people once again!”

Translated from  
the Tłı̨chǫ oral record.  
Jimmy B. Rabesca (1990)  
in Strong Like Two People  
page 33-35

“ We mentioned that our elders and our young people have separated. This is true. We are separated far from each other in our culture. It is right to say we want to get back together. If those of us who live in one place don't support each other, it will not be easy. It is good only if we help each other. If our parents are not alive, we have to listen to those who are not our mother and father. We have to listen to our older brother. When our parents are not alive, we have to listen to the elders, even though the elder is not our father or our mother. We have to respect those people by word and attitude. We haven't yet benefitted from our own experiences. If we keep their words well, we will save ourselves through them. They relate to us their experiences of how they lived and worked.”

Translated from the Tɔ̀chɔ̀ oral record. Jimmy B. Rabesca (1990) in Strong Like Two People page 20

## Guiding Principles and Values

Guiding principles emerge from the Tɔ̀chɔ̀ gonàowo. Gonàowo is our way of knowing as a people. These principles have been written into our Constitution. Our Government is committed to make use of these principles as the foundation from which our legislation, our policies and our actions as a Government take their strength and direction.

Principles from the Tɔ̀chɔ̀ Constitution include:

<b>Nɔ̀htsì eyìtsò asìi hazòò...</b>	The expression of our relationship with the Creator and respect for the interconnectedness of all living things.
<b>Tɔ̀ eyìts'ò ndɛ̀ wek'e ts'ɛ̀dì...</b>	To act as custodian of our lands, water and resources.
<b>Goyatì gonàowo wek'e ts'ɛ̀dì...</b>	To protect our language, culture and way of life.
<b>Hazòò ɛ̀le k'e ahts'ɔ̀wo...</b>	To strive for representation and work towards consensus.
<b>Èlɛ̀see ts'ìdì...</b>	To act with respect and fairness without discrimination or abuse.
<b>Èlɛ̀xê eghàlɛ̀ts'ɛ̀da...</b>	The importance of cooperation and working together.
<b>Dets'ò ts'ewhɔ̀ ts'eda...</b>	The importance of healing, harmony and self-sufficiency.
<b>Edà ts'ɔ̀wò sìi wek'a yàhts'e Tɔ̀ ha goʔo</b>	The full free expression and participation of Tɔ̀chɔ̀ citizens in their government.
<b>Dedaa ho ts'ìdì...</b>	Respecting the needs and interests of other peoples.

## Background of the Tłıchǫ Government

We were not given our lands, they were always ours. We were not given our self-government, we have always been self-governing. The Tłıchǫ Agreement represents a recognition by Canada that we, the Tłıchǫ people, are one of the first peoples of Canada who have lived on our lands from time immemorial.

Who we are as a people emerges from what has been called the Tłıchǫ Nàowo. Nàowo is our elders' understanding of who we are and how we came to be. It includes our relationship to the earth, to animals, to each other, to our neighbours and to newcomers. It emerges out of the life experiences of our people. It is our description of how we understand our culture and our history. These understandings are embedded in the stories, legends and myths that we tell our children and each other. The nàowo has been described in overlapping periods. It moves through time not connected to years and dates as well as to the historical events after contact with outsiders. From each period emerge specific stories, songs and legends that describe the relationships created between our people and others, which includes the land, animals and other Dene peoples. These relationships seek harmony and balance through mutual respect for each other, coexistence, reciprocity and, as necessary, reconciliation and forgiveness.

Much of the 20th century for Tłıchǫ people has been called "a time of darkness". It was a period that saw colonization, sickness and death from epidemics, and later, residential schooling, addictions and a loss of power and autonomy. However, this period also contained the seeds of change, for it included the signing of the treaty with Canada by Monfwi in 1921, and the gradual regaining of some measure of our local control through the work of organizations such as the Treaty 11 Council as well as community groups such as the Rae-Edzo School Society. This regaining of control resulted in the establishment of the Tłıchǫ Government in 2005 as well as the Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency.

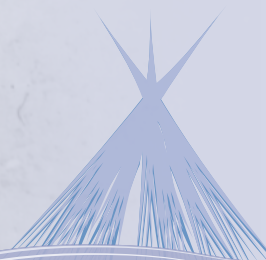
The recognition date of the Tłıchǫ Government was on August 4, 2005. The work of the next two Assemblies (2005-2013) was to develop the governance and administration framework for the new government. Also as a result of the Tłıchǫ Agreement there were two new co-management authorities to be established, the Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board, and the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resource Board. The Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency was also established as a result of the Tłıchǫ Intergovernmental Services Agreement. The former business interests of the Band Councils also needed to be brought together under the new Tłıchǫ Investment Corporation.

*“This self-government nàowo (our laws and way of doing things) is not from recent times. Before the coming of the molà (outsiders), our ancestors were self-governing in their time on the land and we continue to live by that system, and we do not want to do away with it, nor did we say we would proceed without it.”*

Nick Black in a presentation to the Government of Canada Negotiating Team in Gamètì, October 19, 1994

*“Ours is a story that goes way back to the beginning of our time, back to a time of co-existing with the animals, storied into the landscape. The story itself is timeless. It follows us wherever we are.”*

John B. Zoe in Pimatisiwin Volume 10:3 2012  
The Story That Was in Danger of Being Left Behind



## The 1st and 2nd Tłıchǫ Assemblies 2005-2013

The major task of the 1st Tłıchǫ Assembly, 2005-2009, was to establish a new Government. A budget and a starter kit of laws were passed to allow the Assembly to conduct its work and to set up the administration to do that work in the four Tłıchǫ communities. Reorganizing the Tłıchǫ businesses was another major task, where over 40 companies were brought together into a unified investment corporation.

Throughout the 2nd Tłıchǫ Assembly, 2009-2013, the Government began to organize its work agenda into a formal strategic plan. The first strategic framework set out a vision, mission and intentions for the new Government. The Assembly established a moratorium on the development of Tłıchǫ lands and began working on the land use plan Tłıchǫ Wenek'e. The Kwe Beh Working Group was established to manage the implementation of the impact and benefit agreements, and mining industry and roads files. As well, the Assembly began developing infrastructure in the communities, and cultural and heritage activities to strengthen our cultural life. Tłıchǫ Government programs and services delivered by the Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency, under the Intergovernmental Services Agreement, were returned to the Tłıchǫ Government in 2013. Finally, a major restructuring of the Government began with the creation of four new departments: the Departments of Corporate Services, Culture and Lands Protection, Community Programs, and Community Services.

The 3rd Tłıchǫ Assembly began their work in the fall of 2013 and validated six planning themes from the previous strategic framework: Sustaining Our Lands and Environment; Sustaining Our Language, Culture and Way of Life; Strengthening Our Communities, Our People; Increasing Our Financial Strength and Economic Development; Strengthening Tłıchǫ Governance, Institutions and Organizations; and Managing Effective Intergovernmental Relationships.



“As long as we shall last and as long as our descendants shall last and as long as our children shall last, we want them to use this land as their mother and father; this is what we think about this land... We love this land. It's like a mother to us and a father to us.”

Translated from the Tłıchǫ oral record. Margaret Lafferty (1995) in *Trails of Our Ancestors: Building a Nation* page 37

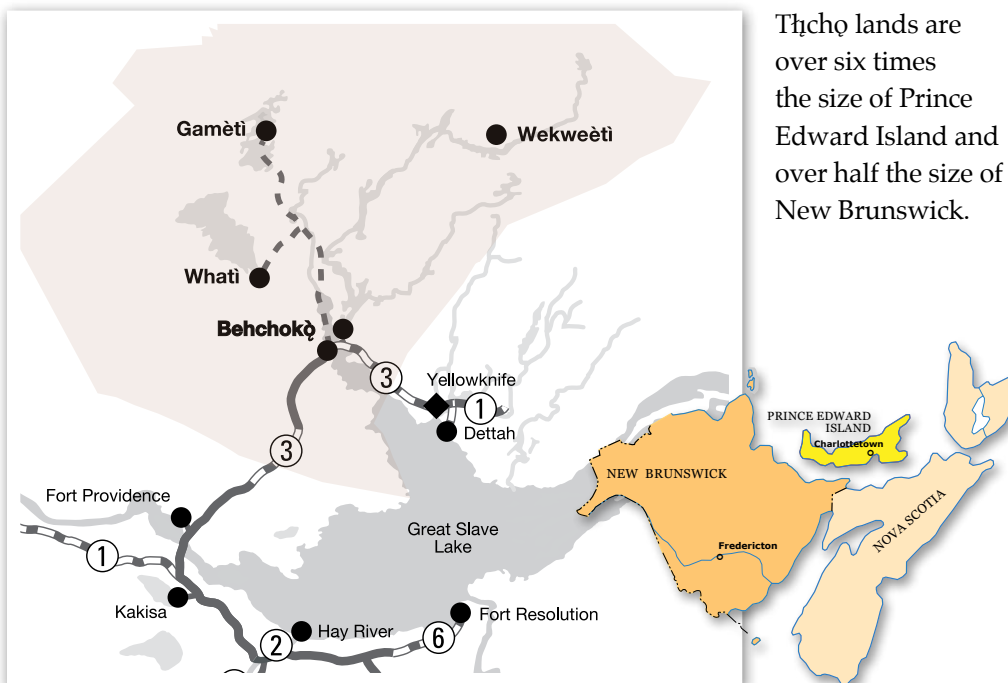
## Governance and Administration

The Tłı̨chǫ Government is governed by the Tłı̨chǫ Constitution. The Constitution establishes our government under the authority of an Assembly. The Grand Chief, community Chiefs and representative Councillors of Behchokò, Gamètì, Wekweètì and Whatì sit on the Assembly. The Chiefs Executive Council oversee the administration of the Government through the work of the Tłı̨chǫ Executive Officer.

### The Tłı̨chǫ Agreement

The Tłı̨chǫ Agreement, the first comprehensive land claim and self-government agreement in the NWT, came as a result of many years of work by community elders and leadership. They were inspired by Monfwi's (1866-1936) leadership entering into Treaty 11 with the Government of Canada in 1921.

The Tłı̨chǫ Government was established on August 4, 2005, with full powers and jurisdiction over the items listed in the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement and the Tłı̨chǫ Constitution. The major responsibilities of the government include management control over 39,000 square kilometres of Tłı̨chǫ lands, wildlife and resources. The Agreement creates the Tłı̨chǫ Government to preserve, protect and promote our Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and way of life. That includes our culture, language, heritage, lands, economy and resources – for all Tłı̨chǫ today and for future generations.



“How did we survive as a Tłı̨chǫ people? How did our forefathers and grandfathers live? What is our history to the present day? What will be our future? It would be good if the young people knew about our history!”

Translated from the Tłı̨chǫ oral record.  
Eddie Erasmus (1990)  
in Strong Like Two People  
page 7

“God made the thousands of things we see in this world. We think about all of our world when we work in the midst of it. We use these experiences in our speech. God didn't create the world so that only man can teach us.”

Translated from  
the Tłchq̓ oral record.  
Jimmy B. Rabesca (1990)  
in Strong Like Two People  
page 35

## Tłchq̓ Constitution

The Tłchq̓ Constitution is the Tłchq̓ Nation's highest law. All other Tłchq̓ laws must be consistent with the Constitution or they must be changed. The Constitution governs the operation of the Tłchq̓ Government. It sets out the powers, authorities and responsibilities of the institutions of our Government, including the Annual Gathering, the Assembly and the Chiefs Executive Council.

**Annual Gathering:** The Assembly is required to convene an annual gathering circulating through each of the Tłchq̓ communities. The Gathering provides an opportunity for Tłchq̓ citizens to ask questions, provide recommendations and offer broad policy direction. As well, proposed amendments to the Constitution or other laws and agreements can be made. Annual and financial reports are presented and nominations are made for the Grand Chief in the year of the election for the Grand Chief.

**Tłchq̓ Assembly:** The Assembly is the lawmaking authority of the Tłchq̓ Government. It is composed of 13 members, including the Grand Chief, the Chiefs of the four Tłchq̓ communities and two Councillors from each community. The Assembly meets a minimum of five times a year.

**Chiefs Executive Council:** The CEC includes the Grand Chief and the Chiefs of the four Tłchq̓ communities. The Chiefs Executive Council oversees the management and administration of the Tłchq̓ Government to ensure good government. The Chiefs take direction from, and report regularly to, the Tłchq̓ Assembly.

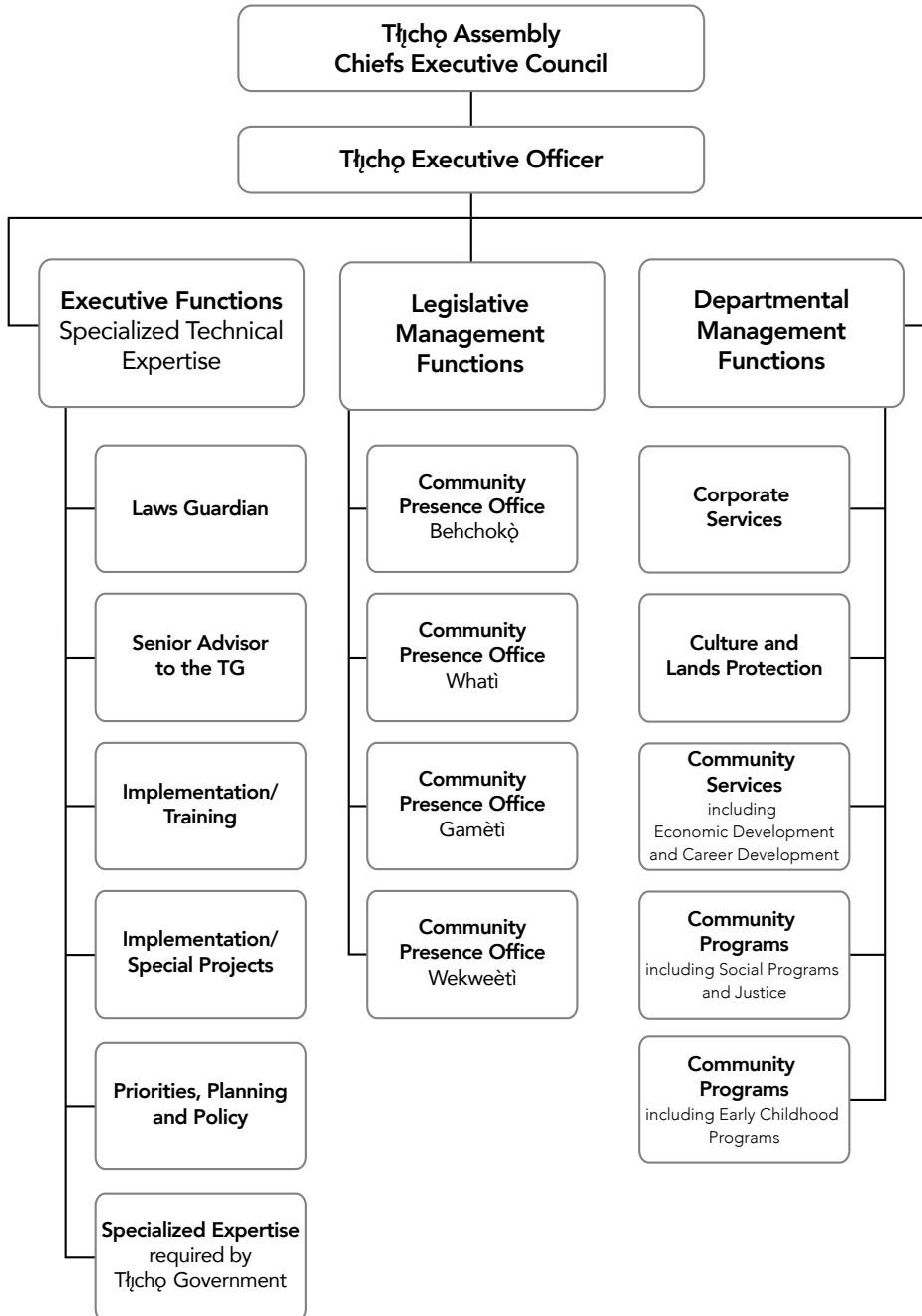
## Administration of Our Government

The headquarters of the Tłchq̓ Government is located in Behchokò, Northwest Territories. The Government maintains Community Presence offices in Behchokò, Gamètì, Wekweètì and Whatì, and a satellite office in Yellowknife. The Government has approximately 100 employees and an annual operating budget of approximately \$27 million.

Reporting to the Chiefs Executive Council, the Tłchq̓ Executive Officer directs the activities of the Tłchq̓ Government through an Executive staff. A senior Director of Administration oversees the departments of Corporate Services, Culture and Lands Protection, Community Programs and Community Services. A senior Community Director presides over the organization of the Assembly and support services to the Chiefs and the Community Presence offices.



## Departmental Functions of the Tłıchǫ Government



“The stories never die. We are still using the story. We live our lives like the stories. These stories are from my grandmothers, my grandfathers. I am talking with my grandparents’ stories. Their words are very important because they will help you live in the future. Their words will help you to think for yourselves.”

Translated from the Tłıchǫ oral record. Madeline Drybone (1994) in *Trails of Our Ancestors: Building a Nation* page 37

“If we replace something with something new we should make sure that what is good from the old is added to the new.”

Translated from the Tłıchǫ oral record. John B. Zoe (1990) in Strong Like Two People page 67

## Wildlife and Environmental Co-management

The Tłıchǫ Agreement provides for the establishment of two co-management authorities with the GNWT and the Government of Canada. Their task is to oversee and regulate on issues related to land, waters and renewable resources.

- The Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board is the management authority established by the Tłıchǫ Agreement to oversee the use of land, water and the deposit of waste throughout Mǫwhì Gogha Dè Nı̀tlèè on Tłıchǫ lands.



The WLWB is part of the regional panel of the larger Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. As an institution of public government, it must act in the public interest. It must carry out its duties using a co-management approach, which stresses cooperation between groups.

- The Wek'èezhì Renewable Resource Board is the management authority established by the Tłıchǫ Agreement to oversee the management of wildlife and habitat.



It makes recommendations on wildlife, forest and plant resources, and commercial activities throughout Mǫwhì Gogha Dè Nı̀tlèè on Tłıchǫ lands. Like the WLWB, the Renewable Resource Board is an institution of public government and must act in the public interest by using a co-management approach.

- The Agreement also provides for Tłıchǫ representation on the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board, which conducts environmental assessments and reviews of development projects in the Mackenzie Valley. Collectively, the Boards ensure that environmental impacts, and the concerns of Aboriginal people and other members of the public are considered carefully during the assessment of proposed developments.



## Intergovernmental Services and Tłıchǵ Self-government



Chapter 7.10 of the Tłıchǵ Agreement provides for the creation of an Intergovernmental Services Agreement, or ISA, between the Tłıchǵ Government, the Government of the NWT and the Government of Canada. The ISA is a government-to-government agreement establishing the Tłıchǵ Community Services Agency as an interim or temporary “body” through which the Tłıchǵ Government will exercise our right to self-government, and assume responsibility and accountability for the delivery of current GNWT programs and services:

- The ISA is an agreement signed on August 25, 2003, by the Treaty 11 Council, the Government of the NWT and the Government of Canada. The ISA created the Tłıchǵ Community Services Agency to manage, administer and deliver health, education and social programs and services.
- Although the TCSA is a creation of the land claim and self-government agreement, it is also a direct descendent of our community-based authorities. These include the Rae-Edzo School Society (1972-1989), the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education (1989-1997) and the Dogrib Community Services Board (1997-2005).
- The Intergovernmental Services Agreement enables the Tłıchǵ Government to initiate self-government powers or responsibility by drawing down on specific programs and services identified in the Tłıchǵ Agreement. The drawdown of programs and services enables the Tłıchǵ Government to establish our own legislation and policies to guide the development and delivery of what are now GNWT programs and services.

**Figure: Employment and Financial Highlights for the Tłıchǵ Community Services Agency**

Employment Overview 2013 <i>Total/Tłıchǵ/percentage of total</i>	Revenue in 2014/2015	Some Indicators
264/172/65% Tłıchǵ citizens	Total: \$30,0091,189 Education Programs \$16,762,796 Health and Social Services \$13,328,393	The TCSA operates 5 schools, 4 health clinics and an elders’ facility 733 students enrolled in K-12 10,000 clinic visits in 2014

“If we worked according to his word (Chief Jimmy Bruneau) we would be like two groups of people. One person would be like two persons. One knowing everything of the white culture and one knowing of our ancestors’ culture. That person would become very strong, for if we know everything like two persons, though we are only one person, there may be no one greater than us... So, if the children were taught in both cultures equally, they would be strong like two people.”

Translated from the Tłıchǵ oral record. Elizabeth Mackenzie (1990) in Strong Like Two People page 40-43



Elizabeth Mackenzie

“It is the land that keeps things for us. It is our home. Being our home, it is important for us to take good care of our dwelling – our land. Wherever we travel in Tłı̨chǫ n̄èèk’è is our home.”

Rosalie Tailbone (1998)  
in Trails of Our Ancestors;  
Building a Nation  
page 33

## Economic Development and the Tłı̨chǫ Businesses



When the Tłı̨chǫ Government was established on August 4, 2005, the Band Councils of Behchokǫ, Gamètì, Wekweètì and Whatì, and the Treaty 11 Council business interests were brought together under the umbrella of the Tłı̨chǫ Investment Corporation (TIC).

The Tłı̨chǫ Investment Corporation is owned by the Tłı̨chǫ Government for the Tłı̨chǫ people. TIC has a large number of businesses and several joint venture partnerships with other groups and companies. It is active in many sectors of the economy, including mining, transportation, remediation, construction, hospitality, retail, business services and power generation. TIC goals include enhancing the economic self-reliance, prosperity and certainty for Tłı̨chǫ citizens by creating sustainable economic development.

**Figure: Employment and Financial Highlights for the Tłı̨chǫ Investment Corporation**

Employment Overview 2013 <i>Total/Tłı̨chǫ/percentage of total</i>	Earnings in 2013	Revenue/Assets for the 2013 Fiscal Year
502/237/47% Tłı̨chǫ citizens	\$2,569,206	\$180,155,663 / \$195,591,604



Staff of the Tłı̨chǫ Construction Company Ltd.

## An Assessment of the Economic Impact of the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement: The 2014 Mehaffey Study

In 2014, the Tłı̨chǫ Government, with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, hired Mehaffey Consulting of Whitehorse, YT, to complete one of the most comprehensive land claim assessments to date. The analysis demonstrates that the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement has improved the Tłı̨chǫ economy and has had a significant impact on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the NWT. GDP for the NWT includes everything produced by all the people and companies in the territory. By evaluating financial information of the Tłı̨chǫ Government and Tłı̨chǫ companies, this report quantified the financial and employment benefits incurred since the Agreement was signed almost a decade ago.

Some highlights include:

- The Tłı̨chǫ are among the most self-sufficient governments in the North. We generate over 75% of our own revenues.
- More than \$135 million in wages and salaries have been paid by the Tłı̨chǫ Government and its corporations since the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement came into effect in 2005.
- In the 8-year period evaluated, the Tłı̨chǫ Government and Tłı̨chǫ Investment Corporation companies contributed more than \$450 million to the GDP of the NWT.
- The Tłı̨chǫ's impact on the GDP of the Northwest Territories increased by more than 250% during the 2005-2013 time period, while the GDP of the NWT declined by close to 12%.



“ All the world has laws. There are many thousands of different animals on this earth and they all have their own laws. Look at the different kinds of trees; they all have their own laws. When we walk in the bush we think about all of them. This is how we learn the way of all life and the things we don't know we get to know...”

Translated from the Tłı̨chǫ oral record. Jimmy B. Rabesca (1990) in Strong Like Two People page 35



2014 Mehaffey Study

*A Planning Framework  
for the Tłıchǫ  
Government is based  
upon and emerges  
from our shared values  
and experiences as a  
people... our shared  
lands, our communities...  
and the application of  
Tłıchǫ language, culture  
and way of life.*

## **Nàdàa Gètsètı (Looking Forward): Planning for the Tłıchǫ Government**

Nàdàa Gètsètı “Looking Forward” speaks to the development of a planning framework and processes for the Tłıchǫ Government.

There have been three Tłıchǫ Assemblies since the creation of the Tłıchǫ Government in 2005. The planning work from both the 1st and 2nd Assemblies was rolled up and explained in the document “Hè dǫ gha gǫita... In Tłıchǫ Unity”: A Strategic Framework and Intentions 2009-2013 for the Tłıchǫ Government. The 2nd Assembly approved a vision, mission, guiding principles and a series of core and supporting goals and objectives. The 3rd Assembly validated much of this work in a planning workshop in the fall of 2013 and an Assembly session in the winter of 2013.

### **“Nàdàa Gètsètı”... Looking Forward: Principles of a Planning Framework for the Tłıchǫ Government**

Our planning framework is:

- Based upon and emerges from our shared values and experiences as a people.
- Based upon and emerges from our shared lands, our communities.
- Application of Tłıchǫ language, culture and way of life.
- Intergenerational participation and consensus in development and implementation by elders, youth and citizens.
- Based on a long-term view, not short-term expediency – sometimes called a seven-generation planning model.

## Context for Our Planning

The present context or scan of our environment describes the major trends and issues that influence the need, development and implementation of our intentions, strategies and key initiatives. The context may also describe the strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities that arise or the risks and threats that may impede the progress of these plans (SWOT analysis) over the four-year planning cycle. The following factors are not necessarily placed in order of their importance. At any given time one element may take precedence over another. Sometimes opportunities may arise that may not have existed before and may not exist soon after. So too, previously unseen risks or threats may arise that need to be addressed immediately, involving:

- Our lands, waters and wildlife;
- Our Tłı̨chǫ language, culture and way of life;
- Our economic circumstances and labour markets;
- Legislation and policies of the Canadian Government, Government of the NWT;
- Demographic changes in our communities;
- Capacity, education and training; and
- Social conditions, including health and wellness, housing and justice.

*The present context or scan of our environment describes the major trends and issues that influence the need, development and implementation of our intentions, strategies and key initiatives.*

**Figure: Context for Our Planning**



*The establishment of mineral resource mining industries, climate change and its effects on our traditional way of life and wildlife continue to occupy the attention of the Tłıchǫ Government.*

## **Our Lands, Water and Wildlife**

The establishment of mineral resource mining industries, climate change and its effects on our traditional way of life and wildlife continue to occupy the attention of the Tłıchǫ Government. These include the environmental impact of the establishment of three diamond mines in the region, the dramatic decline of the Bathurst caribou herd, global warming and its effects on the environment, the status of endangered and threatened species at risk and government actions to use and conserve resources.

Tłıchǫ lands represent both a trust and a resource for Tłıchǫ people. Tłıchǫ lands are a trust that must be respected to ensure that traditional land use and occupancy remain unimpaired for future generations, and a resource where new industrial activity may be possible and acceptable if projects are developed carefully. Avoiding careless abandonment practices and the contamination of past decades, as occurred at the Rae Rock Mine, will be imperative. The Tłıchǫ Government and the GNWT have overlapping responsibilities and management authority for the conservation of the Bathurst caribou herd and protection of its habitat.





## Our Tłıchǫ Language, Culture and Way of Life

Culture is one of the 12 social determinants of health according to the Public Health Agency of Canada. We believe strengthening our culture will promote physical and mental well-being for all ages. Partnerships with the Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency and the GNWT to work together to implement an action plan for health and wellness in our communities include healing on the land and an immersion in cultural activities. The practice of our Tłıchǫ way of life remains important in many families. Tłıchǫ communities have relied more heavily on country food than the NWT as a whole. The decline in the caribou herds, and the restrictions placed on hunting, are causing great hardship for our people, with no relief in sight.

The establishment in 2013 of Dedats'eetsaa: The Tłıchǫ Research and Training Institute is intended to advance the study of Tłıchǫ lands, language, culture and way of life through the promotion of research, and its use for training, education and monitoring Government commitments and responsibilities.

The Tłıchǫ Research and Training Institute (TRTI) will promote research of value to the Tłıchǫ communities and



**Dedats'eetsaa:**  
Tłıchǫ Research & Training Institute

the Tłıchǫ Government. TRTI is especially interested in inquiry that studies the traditional knowledge of our elders and builds capacity by supporting the education and training of Tłıchǫ youth by Tłıchǫ elders, while encouraging research projects across Mǫwhì Gogha Dè Nǫttèè on Tłıchǫ priorities.

*Culture is one of the 12 social determinants of health according to the Public Health Agency of Canada. We believe strengthening our culture will promote physical and mental well-being for all ages.*



*Following the Constitution, the Tłı̨chǫ Government deposited all the capital transfers received so far from the federal government in a trust, which was established under the Tłı̨chǫ Capital Transfer Protection Law and is now invested as a perpetual endowment for the benefit of all Tłı̨chǫ.*

## **Our Economic Circumstances and Labour Markets**

The Tłı̨chǫ Government is financed from base funding from the federal government; “own-source-revenue” sources; impact benefit agreement payments from the mining companies, Personal Income Tax, Goods and Services Tax, mineral royalties and revenue from the federal and territorial governments for the delivery of programs targeted towards Aboriginal people on terms set by those governments. In the future, funds will also be available from the Tłı̨chǫ Capital Trust.

The Tłı̨chǫ Financing Agreement (TFA) requires that before the fifth anniversary of the TFA, Canada and the Tłı̨chǫ Government conduct a review of the first four years of the Financing Agreement’s operation and renegotiate the TFA. Ten years on, the federal government is still engaged in negotiating a new Financing Agreement with the Tłı̨chǫ Government. The review has shown that while the Tłı̨chǫ Government has significant own-source-revenues and has used those revenues to make the Tłı̨chǫ Government work, the Tłı̨chǫ Government requires an increase in TFA funding to meet its future needs. These include such things as a land administration and registry system.

Following the Constitution, the Tłı̨chǫ Government deposited all the capital transfers received so far from the federal government in a trust called the “Tłı̨chǫ Capital Trust”. The Trust was established under the Tłı̨chǫ Capital Transfer Protection Law and is now invested as a perpetual endowment for the benefit of all Tłı̨chǫ. As of March 31, 2015, the value of the Tłı̨chǫ Capital Trust was \$48,173,291. So far, the Tłı̨chǫ Government has received \$44,577,555 of Capital Transfers and made \$3,595,736 in investment income on those amounts since being invested last year. Another Capital Transfer in the amount of \$15,168,787 will be added to Capital Trust in August 2015. The Tłı̨chǫ Government will receive its last Capital Transfer from Canada in August of 2019. At that time the total amount received from Canada will be \$134,211,195.

Section 18 of the Tłı̨chǫ Capital Transfer Protection Law says that all the investment income shall be retained in the Trust until 2019 and re-invested to build up the funds in the Trust. The Tłı̨chǫ Government will be able to start spending eligible income from the fund in the year 2020.

**Figure: TG Revenue 2014 to 2015**

Financial Transfer Agreement	\$2,200,000
OSR	\$9,800,000
Devolution	\$2,250,000
Programs and Services	\$5,500,000
IBA Agreements	\$6,600,000
Interest and Other	\$800,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$27,150,000</b>

Sustainable economic development is needed to reduce the high levels of unemployment in the Tłı̨chǫ communities. The unemployment rate for the Tłı̨chǫ region in 2011 was three times higher than for the NWT as a whole – 31.5% compared with 11.4%. Similarly, the employment rate for the region was only 39.7%, compared with 66.8% for the NWT. These two factors probably account for the lower participation rate of Tłı̨chǫ citizens in the labour market. High unemployment and low employment rates discourage people from seeking work.

### **Legislation and Policies of the Government of Canada, Government of the NWT**

The GNWT and the federal government have a significant impact on Tłı̨chǫ Government activities. Federal government intentions to streamline the regulatory process in the NWT by eliminating the Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board have potentially serious impacts on the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement. These actions require responses and interventions by the Tłı̨chǫ Government, which can be costly and time-consuming.

It remains to be seen what impact the devolution of responsibilities for federal lands to the Government of the NWT will have on the Tłı̨chǫ Government.



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*The Tłıchǫ Government needs to develop the ability to collect and analyze statistics regarding the Tłıchǫ population, especially in areas that are not well represented by Statistics Canada or GNWT data sources such as language use and cultural vitality.*

## **Demographic Changes in Our Communities**

There are changes in the characteristics of the populations of the Tłıchǫ communities, and in the NWT and Canada, that have an impact on the development of policy at all levels of government. The Tłıchǫ Government needs to develop the ability to collect and analyze statistics regarding characteristics of the Tłıchǫ population, especially in areas that are not well represented by Statistics Canada or GNWT data sources such as language use and cultural vitality.

The NWT is the second youngest jurisdiction in Canada, after Nunavut, and the Tłıchǫ region is younger than the NWT population overall (Statistics Canada 2011 Census Profile). The median age of the Tłıchǫ population – the age at which half the population is younger and the other half is older – was 26.0 years in 2011. This compared with 32.3 years for the NWT and 39.0 years for Canada. The Tłıchǫ population is also aging much more slowly than the populations of the NWT and Canada. These population characteristics have implications for Tłıchǫ Government policies towards early childhood and education, language and culture, future housing needs, and economic development efforts.



## Capacity, Education and Training

The success of the Tłı̨chǫ Government in the long run will depend on having competent Tłı̨chǫ managers and administrators, program specialists and technical support staff. Ideally, these personnel should be bilingual, able to communicate with other governments in English and with Tłı̨chǫ residents in Tłı̨chǫ. The drawdown of government programs and services in future will require employees to have specialized skills.

Education levels are an indicator of employability in the labour market. Rising rates of high school graduation and participation in post-secondary education will be critical determinants of success for the Tłı̨chǫ Government's economic objectives. The employment rate for Tłı̨chǫ citizens with less than a high school diploma in 2009 was 27.3%, compared with 65.1% for those with a high school diploma or higher.

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*Social conditions in the communities have a huge impact on the kinds of issues that are brought forward to the Tłı̨chǫ Government, as these are the issues that frequently touch peoples' lives most deeply.*

## **Social Conditions, including Education, Health and Wellness, Housing and Justice**

Social conditions in the communities have a huge impact on the kinds of issues that are brought forward to the Tłı̨chǫ Government, as these are the issues that frequently touch peoples' lives most deeply. The programs that address social conditions are largely the responsibility of the Government of the NWT, but through the connections to the Tłı̨chǫ Community Services Agency, and through funding received for First Nations social programs, the Tłı̨chǫ Government can have some influence.

Average personal income for the Tłı̨chǫ region grew from \$32,150 in 2006 to \$36,471 in 2010, an increase of \$4,321. This compared with an average income for the NWT of \$48,396 in 2006 and \$53,978 in 2010 – an increase of \$5,582. Perhaps more significantly, the regional average increase was not distributed evenly across the Tłı̨chǫ communities; the regional average personal income hides disparities by community. The data point to a challenge for the Tłı̨chǫ Government's economic development policies. There is a need to close the income gap both within the region and with the NWT.

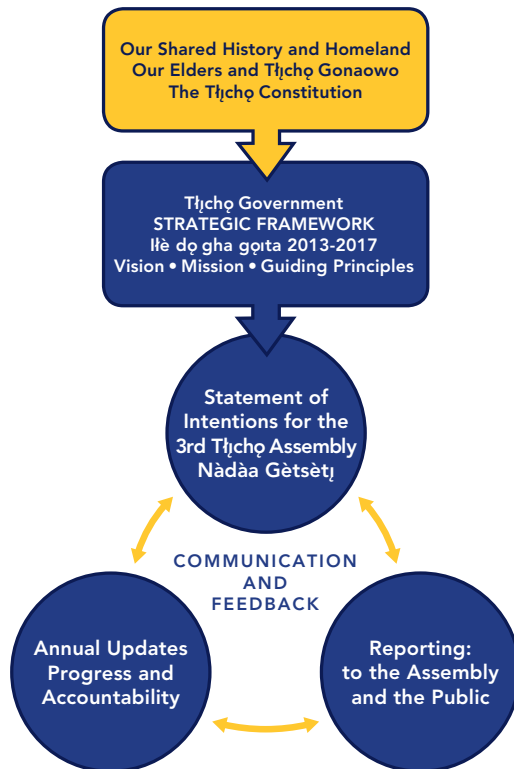
Many Tłı̨chǫ households are described by Statistics Canada as being in "core need". The proportion of Tłı̨chǫ households in core need has declined significantly since 1996, but remains high as measured by households with six or more persons. For the Tłı̨chǫ region as a whole in 2011, 25.0% of households had six or more persons, compared to 5.6% for the NWT and 2.9% for Canada. This means that Tłı̨chǫ households are 4.5 times more likely to be overcrowded than the average NWT household and 8.6 times more than the average for Canada. Moreover, the gap between the Tłı̨chǫ region and the NWT grew somewhat larger between 2001 and 2011. Overcrowding is associated with personal and family distress, health problems, lower educational achievement, interaction with the justice system, and child and family services interventions. The current housing shortfall and the youthful Tłı̨chǫ population suggest that housing will continue to be an ongoing issue between the Tłı̨chǫ Government and the Government of the NWT.

## Achieving Our Intentions, Strategies and Initiatives

Everything begins with our shared history and homeland... our elders and Tłıchọ Gonàowo... This reality is reflected in our Tłıchọ Constitution and provides the context for the Strategic Framework. The Strategic Framework contains our vision, mission and guiding principles. These describe what is important to us as a Government. They also provide broad general guidance on how the work will be achieved. The statement of intentions for the 3rd Tłıchọ Assembly describes what we are committed to doing and the strategies we will use:

- Annual updates enable the Tłıchọ Government to review our progress and make changes to our intentions as necessary.
- Reporting to the Assembly provides the Tłıchọ Government the opportunity to account for doing what we said we “intended” to do. It also allows for communication and feedback from our citizens, which, in turn, will be used to shape existing intentions and create new ones.
- Annual updates enable the Tłıchọ Government to review progress and make changes as necessary.
- Organizational development of systems of accountability, which include outcomes and indicators of performance.

**Figure: Planning for the Tłıchọ Government**



*Everything begins with our shared history and homeland... our elders and Tłıchọ Gonàowo... This reality is reflected in our Tłıchọ Constitution and provides the context for the Strategic Framework. The Strategic Framework contains our vision, mission and guiding principles.*





# Part 2

## Our Intentions 2013 to 2017

### *Nàdàa Gètsètı... Looking Forward...*

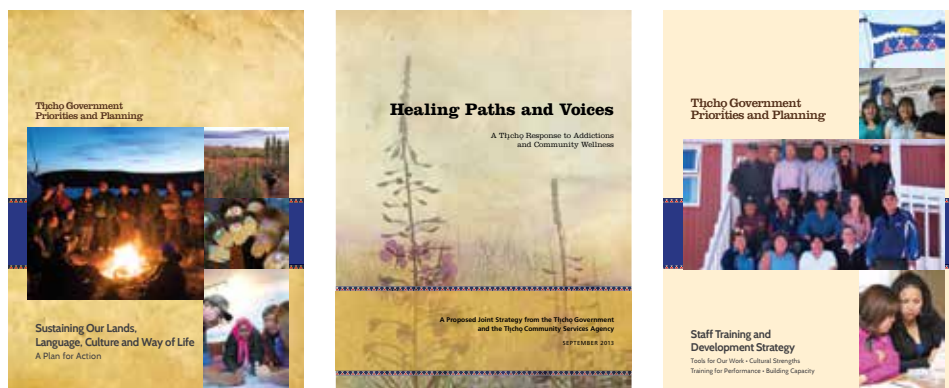
These multi-year plans of the 3rd Tłıchǫ Assembly are intended to capture Nàdàa Gètsètı, the “view forward” of the intentions of the Tłıchǫ Government. The plans describe what our Government seeks to accomplish within the mandate of the 3rd Tłıchǫ Assembly from 2013-2017. The Intentions approved by the Tłıchǫ Assembly of the Tłıchǫ Government are the following:

1. Sustaining Our Lands and Environment
2. Sustaining Our Language, Culture and Way of Life
3. Strengthening Our Communities, Our People
4. Increasing Our Financial Strength and Economic Development
5. Strengthening Tłıchǫ Governance, Institutions and Organizations
6. Managing Effective Intergovernmental Relationships

These six Intentions emerge from and consolidate the four core and four supporting Intentions and Priorities of the 2009-2013 Strategic Framework. They are supported by a series of strategies and initiatives specific to each, which further explain the type of actions necessary to help us achieve our mandate. The Intentions are the foundation of our work, and some, like the Constitution from which they emerge, are timeless. The Strategies provide a more focused description of how the Intentions will be achieved. Finally, the Initiatives focus on specific activities within a strategy.

The Tłıchǫ Government is also developing comprehensive workplans to further support specific intentions and strategies relating to language, culture and way of life, healing and wellness, early childhood education, staff and leadership training, and lands protection and mining development.

**Figure: Specific Initiatives that Support the Intentions of the Tłıchǫ Government**



*“ It is important to determine our priorities. It is important to plan. We need to let our people know what the Tłıchǫ Government is all about. We need to let them know our plans by writing them down, speaking on the radio and in meetings...”*

Sonny Zoe, Councillor from Whatı at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

“Our ancestors made the path for us. The land must be protected. Our ancestors told us that we must always protect the land. We worry about it. Will the land still be the same after the mines?”

Noel Bishop, Behchokò  
Councillor at a meeting to plan  
for the 3rd Assembly,  
November 26, 2013

## 1. Sustaining Our Lands and Environment

The Tłı̨chǫ Government has a responsibility to manage approximately 39,000 square kilometres of Tłı̨chǫ lands, including both surface and subsurface rights. This land is one of the largest single blocks of privately owned land in Canada. The preamble of the Tłı̨chǫ Constitution, “Affirms our relationship with God and respects the inter-connection of all living things. We acknowledge our responsibility to serve for all time as custodians of our lands, including our waters and resources.” It is from this primary commitment in our Constitution that the Tłı̨chǫ Government is committed to the Intention of sustaining our lands and environment for... “as long as this land shall last...”.



## Strategies:

The Tłıchǫ Government is committed to:

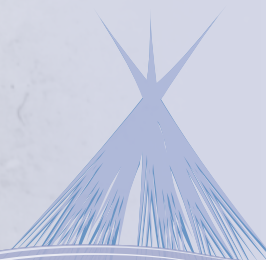
- i) Protecting Tłıchǫ lands and wildlife according to Tłıchǫ traditional, ecological and social values for future generations;
- ii) Promoting a Tłıchǫ approach to sustainable land management through research of traditional knowledge of land occupancy and use, and its application to current issues;
- iii) Working in partnership with other governments and agencies to use western science as a research tool to protect Tłıchǫ lands and wildlife;
- iv) Raising awareness of and involvement in environmental issues affecting our lands and wildlife, especially amongst our youth; and
- v) Supporting the development and implementation of environmentally sustainable practices in our communities, homes and offices.

## Key Initiatives 2013-2017:

- Implement the Tłıchǫ Wenek'e (Land Use Plan) and our administration and registry systems to effectively process industrial and other applications for the use of our lands;
- Implement an Environmental Monitoring Training Program, rotating between the Tłıchǫ communities, to train citizens to participate in environmental monitoring on Tłıchǫ lands;
- Monitor the Tłıchǫ aquatic ecosystem for fish, fish habitat and water quality, and the Marion watershed for fish, water and sediment, to establish baseline information, in partnership with the Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board and the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resource Board, using both traditional knowledge and western science;
- Protect areas of cultural and natural importance such as Dìnàgà Wek'èhodì on the North Arm of Great Slave Lake by working collaboratively with Canada, the NWT and other Aboriginal governments;
- Research environmental, social and cultural impacts of a proposed all-weather road to Whatì and adjacent mining development;
- Participate with the GNWT in the development and implementation of strategies for species at risk, such as the Bathurst caribou, and protected areas, including Dìnàgà Wek'èhodì and Yambahtì;
- Research and pilot development of alternative energy sources for communities;
- Develop and implement environmentally sustainable practices in Tłıchǫ Government operations, programs and services, especially those involving Tłıchǫ youth, including Trails of Our Ancestors and Ìmbè summer programs; and
- Protect against violations of the co-management provisions of the Tłıchǫ Agreement from proposed federal changes to the MVRMA.

“As a people, we have to work on our lands and waters. This is where our language, culture and way of life come from. In the past, people were prepared and knew the land. Today, many of our young people are not prepared and not strong to go out on the land. As a Government, we need to work on that. We need on-the-land certifications to prepare people to work on the land, and work for people who have no work...”

Chief Clifford Daniels from Behchokò at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013



“In 1955, when the school opened in Whatì, even people who did not know how to read, knew that great changes were coming. Now, the children at school do not know what we are talking about when we talk about our way of life. We need to be talking to our children about our language, culture and way of life; about the Tłıchǫ Government...”

Chief Alfonz Nitsiza from Whatì at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

## 2. Sustaining Our Language, Culture and Way of Life

The Tłıchǫ Constitution states that the purpose of the Tłıchǫ Government is... “To preserve, protect and promote our Aboriginal and Treaty rights and way of life, including our culture, language, heritage.” Thus, a major Intention of our Government must be to implement and support a variety of strategies and initiatives that will sustain our Tłıchǫ language, culture and way of life.

### Strategies:

The Tłıchǫ Government is committed to:

- i) Initiating and supporting activities that maintain the practice of our language, culture and way of life, including promotion of the use of Tłıchǫ language in workplaces and public spaces in Mǫwhì Gogha Dè Nı̀łdèè;
- ii) Protecting, creating and promoting Tłıchǫ heritage resources to ensure that Tłıchǫ people have access to our shared heritage through film and video, pictures, documents and audio recordings;
- iii) Fostering research that serves to preserve, protect and promote our language, culture and way of life; and
- iv) Protecting our Tłıchǫ language, culture and way of life when legislative or other actions by the territorial or federal governments endanger our interests.



### Key Initiatives 2013-2017:

- Promote traditional cultural practices, including assistance to hunters and trappers to enable them to work on the land in a sustainable, culturally appropriate manner;
- Promote support for artists, and especially women's traditional activities, through an online market for the worldwide promotion of Tłıchǫ art and handcrafts;
- Support annual celebrations, including the cultural activities surrounding the Annual gatherings, adult and youth hand games tournaments, and spiritual gatherings in Russell Lake, Lac St. Ann, Dèl̄ne and elsewhere;
- Support seasonal cultural practices for men, women and youth such as annual canoe trips with elders and youth from their communities to the Annual Gathering (Trails of Our Ancestors) and the regional Įmbè summer culture programs for youth;
- Implement Tłıchǫ language literacy and terminology workshops to build capacity within the staff of the Tłıchǫ Government and improve Tłıchǫ communication for interpreter / translators and other language activists;
- Develop and implement the legislative and policy framework necessary for the protection and revitalization of our language, culture and way of life;
- Establish a Tłıchǫ Research and Training Institute to promote, coordinate and consolidate research in the region, especially that identifies and seeks to fill gaps in existing knowledge as well as developing research skills and capacities in our young people;
- Review outside research proposals to ensure they meet acceptable standards related to appropriate ethical standards, the inclusion of a Tłıchǫ community voice, the building of community-based research capacity and the return of the results to our communities;
- Develop learning resources for Tłıchǫ citizens, especially young people, to learn and celebrate their identity and language, culture and way of life;
- Create, develop and maintain the Tłıchǫ Cultural Commons Digital Archives to safeguard, integrate and ensure ease of access to our heritage resources in language, culture and way of life;
- Create tools for increasing the use of language in the workplace as well as tools for assessing language vitality, endangerment and the measurement and analysis of trends of our cultural strengths as well as for the design, and delivery of government programs and services; and
- Develop and manage new media sites such as [www.tlichoc.ca](http://www.tlichoc.ca), [www.research.tlichoc.ca](http://www.research.tlichoc.ca), [www.cjbs.tlichoc.ca](http://www.cjbs.tlichoc.ca) and Facebook web presence at [www.facebook.com/Tlichoc](http://www.facebook.com/Tlichoc) to enhance Tłıchǫ cultural identity and improve communication and access by Tłıchǫ citizens to information about their heritage and programs and services of the Government.

“Everyone at this meeting has spoken about the importance of education and the youth. As a youth, I spoke Tłıchǫ well. Once I went to school, I learned math, English, science. The more I learned in school, the more I learned English. Our Tłıchǫ language is important for the youth too...”

Robin Laboline, Councillor from Wekweèti at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

“Residential schools have made a big impact in the way we parent our children, but we can change that. In a child's life, it is the parent who is the First Teacher. It is there that we teach our language and culture. Being on the land gives meaning to our lives. On the land healing is a way to connect to who we once were. As a child's teachers we have to promote it. We have to live it...”

Anita Daniels, TG Director of Social Programs from Behchokǫ' at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

“Elders always talked about living on the land. How we live is changing so much. Our food is changing. Our work is changing. We have to think about that. We have spoken about the problems in our communities. The unity is broken. We need to work together...”

Lisi Lafferty, TG Cultural Coordinator from Behchokoq at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013



Lisi Lafferty

### 3. Strengthening Our Communities, Our People

Our people expect that the actions of the Tłı̨chǫ Government will strengthen our communities and our people. Where possible, the Tłı̨chǫ Government will make financial contributions to fill gaps and supplement existing programs and services to people. Our Intention is to improve the life of our communities and build strengths in our families and people.

#### Strategies:

The Tłı̨chǫ Government is committed to:

- i) Encouraging Tłı̨chǫ citizens to participate in community-based training to increase their employability as well as post-secondary education and the training needed to build our communities, our government and businesses;
- ii) Promoting healthy living by supporting the delivery of wellness programs and services that focus on healing and incorporate Tłı̨chǫ culture as well as connect elders and youth and our communities;
- iii) Providing compassionate funding to support the traditional activities of our people and their families related to illness and deaths in the family within the Tłı̨chǫ communities;



- iv) Providing resources for worthy projects that make a significant contribution to the promotion of spirituality, wellness, recreation or traditional activities in the Tłı̨chǫ communities, and for which there are gaps in funding;
- v) Assisting Tłı̨chǫ youth to participate in activities related to recreation, wellness or education;
- vi) Assisting Tłı̨chǫ elders where they have needs that cannot be met because of gaps in existing programs and services; and
- vii) Advocacy on behalf of Tłı̨chǫ people for improved programs and services delivered by the GNWT and Canada.

**Key Initiatives 2013-2017:**

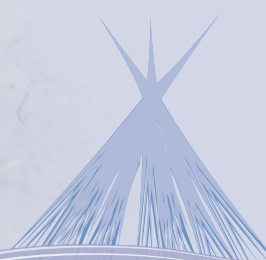
- Provide financial assistance to Tłı̨chǫ post-secondary students through the ONE post-secondary financial support funding program;
- Provide training and education courses in each Tłı̨chǫ community to prepare people for employment and/or improve their employability;
- Provide information programs and services in prenatal nutrition and maternal child health, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, youth suicide prevention, Aboriginal diabetes, and mental health and addictions;
- Provide early childhood programs and services in all communities that build healthy children and families through Aboriginal Headstart pre-school, daycare services and parenting support;
- Provide financial support for families to care for family members in hospitals in Yellowknife and Edmonton;
- Provide a Tłı̨chǫ Citizen Harvester's Subsidy program;
- Provide financial support to bring elders and family members together for funerals in the four communities; and
- Provide special financial support for elders for extraordinary living expenses, especially in regards to fuel subsidies.

“What did the GNWT give us? They gave us dependency. They gave us food, housing and, now for many people, they think this is the way it should be. The government made us dependent on them. Our Government needs to be different. We need to help our people become independent and self-governing...”

Chief Alfonz Nitsiza from Whati at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

“We hear people talking. They expect the Government to give them money. It is not like that. When we are talking to our people, we need to tell our people to go back to school... to work hard... to do something for yourself...”

Sonny Zoe, Councillor from Whati at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013



“ Our people worked very hard to put together our land claim agreements. We are here to teach our people and we are here to create more jobs for our people. Healing and counselling are also very important. When people are down, it is important that we don't put them down any further...”

Nora Wedzin, former TG Councillor from Behchokò, at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

## 4. Increasing Our Financial Strength and Economic Development

The Tłıchǫ Government increases the financial strength and economic development of our communities primarily through the Tłıchǫ Investment Corporation (TIC), which undertakes commercial activities on behalf of our Government. The Intentions of the Tłıchǫ Investment Corporation are to ensure economic self-reliance, prosperity and future certainty for Tłıchǫ citizens by creating sustainable economic development.

### Strategies:

The Tłıchǫ Government is committed to:

- i) Enhancing economic independence, prosperity and future certainty for Tłıchǫ citizens by creating sustainable economic development in the region;
- ii) Protecting the Capital Transfers under Chapter 24 of the Tłıchǫ Agreement as a perpetual endowment for the benefits of all Tłıchǫ citizens, now and in the future; and
- iii) Supporting the development of a strong Tłıchǫ traditional economy;





### Key Initiatives 2013-2017:

- Sustain the Kwe Beh Working Group to ensure successful implementation of benefit agreements and for the scoping of future business opportunities with the mining industry;
- Establish regular CEC meetings and briefings with the Tłıchǝ Investment Corporation Board of Directors;
- Develop a comprehensive economic strategy to determine acquisitions that benefit the Tłıchǝ Government and the Tłıchǝ communities;
- Develop and implement legislation for a Capital Trust fund to preserve the value of the Capital Trust for future generations;
- Invest in community facilities that have the potential to improve the quality of life in the region such as recreation facilities and the elders' home in Rae;
- Invest in innovative services to support the development and expansion of potential culture-based industries such as handcrafts ([www.onlinestore.tlıcho.ca/](http://www.onlinestore.tlıcho.ca/)) and working on the land with the Environmental Monitoring Program and certifications from the Wilderness Safety training program; and
- Provide financial support for the construction for community infrastructure, including Tłıchǝ Community Presence offices, recreational facilities, office infrastructure for the TG and other necessary facilities in the communities.

*“...Since the election, people have divided. Regardless of who people voted for, we have to work with everyone. We have to face them and we have to work together... after all, we are all Aboriginal people and we are all related...”*

Shirley Beaverho, TG  
Community Director from Whatı  
at a meeting to plan  
for the 3rd Assembly,  
November 26, 2013



Photo credit: Laura Duncan

“...We worry about these struggles, but these struggles will make us stronger. We get criticized for many things... for being related. We get criticized by association. We need changes within. We try to be strong like two people. We need to tie in our education with our traditional lifestyle...”

Jennifer Wetrade, Community Director from Gamèti at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

## 5. Strengthening Tłıchǫ Governance: Institutions and Organizations

The Tłıchǫ Government is one of four levels of government in the Tłıchǫ region, the other three being the Government of Canada, the Government of the NWT and the Community Governments. The GNWT delivers public programs and services that are available equally to all citizens of the Northwest Territories. There are also First Nations programs and services that are funded by the government of Canada and only available to Tłıchǫ citizens. These programs and services are delivered through the Tłıchǫ Government. Community Governments typically deliver municipal services funded through the Government of the NWT.

The Tłıchǫ Government is still a “young” government. From no visible presence on the ground in 2005, it has grown to almost 100 staff, with facilities in five communities. We need to grow our capacity to deliver programs and services by continuously working to strengthen our governance, institutional and organizational framework.

### Strategies:

The Tłıchǫ Government is committed to:

- i) The development and application of a governance framework based on our Tłıchǫ language, culture and way of life;
- ii) The development of an efficient, effective organization that can implement the work of the Tłıchǫ Government;
- iii) The development of a representative, skilled and effective workforce within our Government, and in the associated boards, agencies and businesses, and with other associated government and business partners operating in Mǫwhi Gogha Dè Nı̀tlèè; and
- iv) The development of the necessary policies and other tools to support employees and managers in the workplace.



Photo Credit: Tony Rabesca

### Key Initiatives 2013-2017:

- Develop and implement necessary policies and procedures for the effective, efficient operation of the Assembly and Chiefs Executive Council;
- Develop and implement Administration Policies and Procedures, especially financial policies for donations and an appeals procedure for TG Decisions, workplace and wilderness safety for TG programs;
- Develop strategies to increase the legislative capacity of the Tłı̨chǫ Government through a review and development of legislative committee work processes;
- Upgrade information technology infrastructure and practices to ensure effective, secure communications, data storage and information management functions in all our communities;
- Develop comprehensive, long-term, professional development and training initiatives for all TG staff, which includes individual training plans, a leadership development strategy and the resources needed to strengthen the performance of the Government;
- Develop a comprehensive initiative for knowledge transfer from outside expert consultants to Tłı̨chǫ Government staff, wherever possible;
- Provide to TG staff, Tłı̨chǫ cultural training and awareness of the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement, including Tłı̨chǫ cultural and language skills such as literacy and experiential learning on the land;
- Develop and implement a Tłı̨chǫ Employment Plan that deals with barriers, orientation, internships, summer student workplace placements, mentorship, education leave and includes a review of pre-employment initiatives such as the development of a priority hiring policy, summer student equity program, casual employment and scholarships.
- Encourage associated, regional-based organizations such as TIC, TCSA, WLWB and WRRB to set and meet specific Tłı̨chǫ employment targets by developing and implementing appropriate human resource strategies; and
- Convene regular summit meetings with regional service providers to determine what works with successful program delivery.

*“Training is so important. We need to train our people so that they can do the work that needs to be done in our Government. We rely on outside consultants and I am very thankful for their help and support. They are very good, very skilled and reliable, but we need to be training our own people to do many of these jobs...”*

Nancy Rabesca, TG  
Director of Corporate Services  
at a meeting to plan  
for the 3rd Assembly,  
November 26, 2013

“The words of our elders were very, very strong. They were poor in material things, but their words were very strong. You can use their words throughout your life. I think about how we are going to make the Tłıchǫ Government stronger. We need to make our policies stronger, we need to work on capital planning and training, and many other things. We need to work together...”

Henry Gon, Councillor from Gamètı at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013

## 6. Managing Effective Intergovernmental Relationships

The Tłıchǫ Government engages with the Government of the NWT and the Government of Canada in a broad range of activities. The Tłıchǫ Government reviews and provides commentary on proposed legislation, policy, and program and services of both the federal and territorial governments, and intervenes as necessary. The Tłıchǫ Government also participates in activities for the protection and support of Aboriginal rights in Canada.

The Tłıchǫ Government is signatory to the Devolution Agreement with the GNWT and Canada, along with several Aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories. Canada devolved the administration and control of public lands, resources and rights in respect to waters in the Northwest Territories to the GNWT. The Devolution Agreement establishes a framework for a cooperative and coordinated management regime for lands, resources and rights in respect to waters in the NWT.

The Tłıchǫ Government is also a signatory to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Lands and Resource Management with the GNWT and several other Aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories. This bilateral agreement formalized government-to-government relationship and established the Intergovernmental Council of Leaders. The purpose of the Council is to work collaboratively on coordination and cooperation with respect to the management of public lands and settlement lands and rights in respect to waters. The bilateral agreement also established the Secretariat to assist the Leaders' Council with work that is required to meet the purpose and objectives of the Council.

### Strategies:

The Tłıchǫ Government is committed to:

- i) Participating actively in a review and intervention process, where necessary, in regards to Canadian and GNWT legislation and policy;
- ii) The improvement of federal and territorial programs and services by working with Canada/GNWT on a government-to-government basis; and
- iii) Involvement with Aboriginal treaty groups and other organizations, as appropriate, to strengthen coalitions and further our key interests as Aboriginal people in regards to Treaty rights and Aboriginal rights.

### Key Initiatives 2013-2017:

- Review and renewal of the Tłı̨chǫ Financing Agreement (TFA) with Canada to seek adequate resources for the operation of the Tłı̨chǫ Government.
- Review and renewal of the Tłı̨chǫ Intergovernmental Services Agreement with Canada and the Government of the NWT to seek more authority in the direction and management of the TCSA;
- Meet regularly with the GNWT Premier and Cabinet, as per the Working Together Memorandum of Understanding, and individual Ministers, as appropriate, to raise the profile of concerns regarding GNWT program and service delivery;
- Negotiate with Canada and the GNWT more favourable funding agreements in health and wellness, early education and culture as befitting a government-to-government relationship, including stacked agreements as well as options regarding the drawdown of programs and services to the TG, beginning with early childhood;
- Participate and provide Tłı̨chǫ commentary on federal and territorial legislation and policy reviews, as appropriate and necessary; and
- Participate in the Land Claims Agreements Coalition (LCAC at <http://www.landclaimscoalition.ca/>) to address ongoing concerns related to the implementation of modern treaties.

“ We have talked about so many things. It is important that we don't leave these words here, but that we do something with them. Many changes are coming. We need to be ready and prepare ourselves for what is coming. We need education and training. We need to help the youth, who are struggling with addictions and other issues in their lives. We need healing on our land...”

Chief Johnny Arrowmaker from Wekweeti at a meeting to plan for the 3rd Assembly, November 26, 2013



The 3rd Assembly of the Tłı̨chǫ Government (L-R): Noel Bishop, Rosa Mantla, Chief Clifford Daniels, George Nitsiza, Sonny Zoe, Chief Alfonz Nitsiza, Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus, James Wahshee, Chief David Wedawin, Henry Gon, Garry Bekale, Chief Johnny Arrowmaker, Joseph Judas, Robin Lamouelle

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**Tłı̨chǫ Government**  
Box 412  
Behchokǫ, NT X0E 0Y0  
Canada  
Phone: (867) 392-6381  
Fax: (867) 392-6389

[www.tlicho.ca](http://www.tlicho.ca)