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## Chief and Council Nominee Bios

### *Paula Olmstead – Housing Officer (Sumas First Nation)*

Paula Olmstead, born in Abbotsford to Irene Silver (Miller) and Dr. Ray Silver Xaytèlq, is a proud mother, grandmother, wife, and aunt. At 55, she has been married to her husband, Owen, for 16 years but started the journey 30 years ago. Together they have a blended family of six adult children and six grandchildren, two of whom live with them. Family has always been a cornerstone of Paula's life.

Raised on reserve, Paula was deeply influenced by her parents, who instilled in her values of hard work, community service, and a strong connection to her Indigenous roots. From an early age, she was involved in volunteering and community boards, including her work with the elders group, fundraising, and events. Paula has also been actively involved with the Semá:th Longhouse for many years, stepping back in 2015 to allow younger generations to take the lead.

As a young mother, Paula fought for her rights to fish and hunt, challenging traditional expectations, and proudly continues to provide sustenance for her family while teaching the next generation the importance of these rights and the cultural protocols they carry.

Currently, Paula serves as the Housing Officer for Semá:th, a position she has held for the past four years. She has also assisted with Capital Public Works projects and has a background in health and administration within her Nation. In 2023, she earned her Housing Manager Certificate from Vancouver Island University and is currently pursuing an Indigenous Business Leadership Executive MBA through Simon Fraser University.

Beyond her professional work, Paula serves on several boards, including Tourism Abbotsford events advisory committee, Sto:lo Spa:th Matriarch advisor, and the Abbotsford Police Department Board of Directors (2021-2026). She has also served on the Xyolhemeylh Board for six years.

Paula's philosophy is rooted in family, education, and service. As a council candidate, she brings a wealth of experience and a strong passion for helping her community become self-sustaining and self-governed. Paula is committed to continuing the legacy of leadership and hard work that has shaped her life and looks forward to contributing to the future of Semá:th.