

District of Barriere

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Request for Decision

Date: March 30, 2026	File:
To: Council	From: Fire Chief
Re: Green Space – 4976 Barriere Town Road	
Recommendation: THAT Council directs Staff to create a natural FireSmart Showcase at 4976 Barriere Town Road as outlined in the report.	

Purpose

For Council to consider creating a natural FireSmart Showcase at 4976 Barriere Town Road.

Background

At the March 9, 2026, Council meeting, Council directed Staff to undertake FireSmart treatment for the green space at 4976 Barriere Town Road. Equally Council asked Staff to bring back a report at a future meeting to utilize the space as a “FireSmart Showcase”. The following is the resolutions from that meeting:

THAT Council directs staff to undertake wildfire mitigation (FireSmart treatment) to the green space at 4976 on Barriere Town Road; AND THAT Staff bring back low-cost options to utilize the property as a “FireSmart Showcase”.

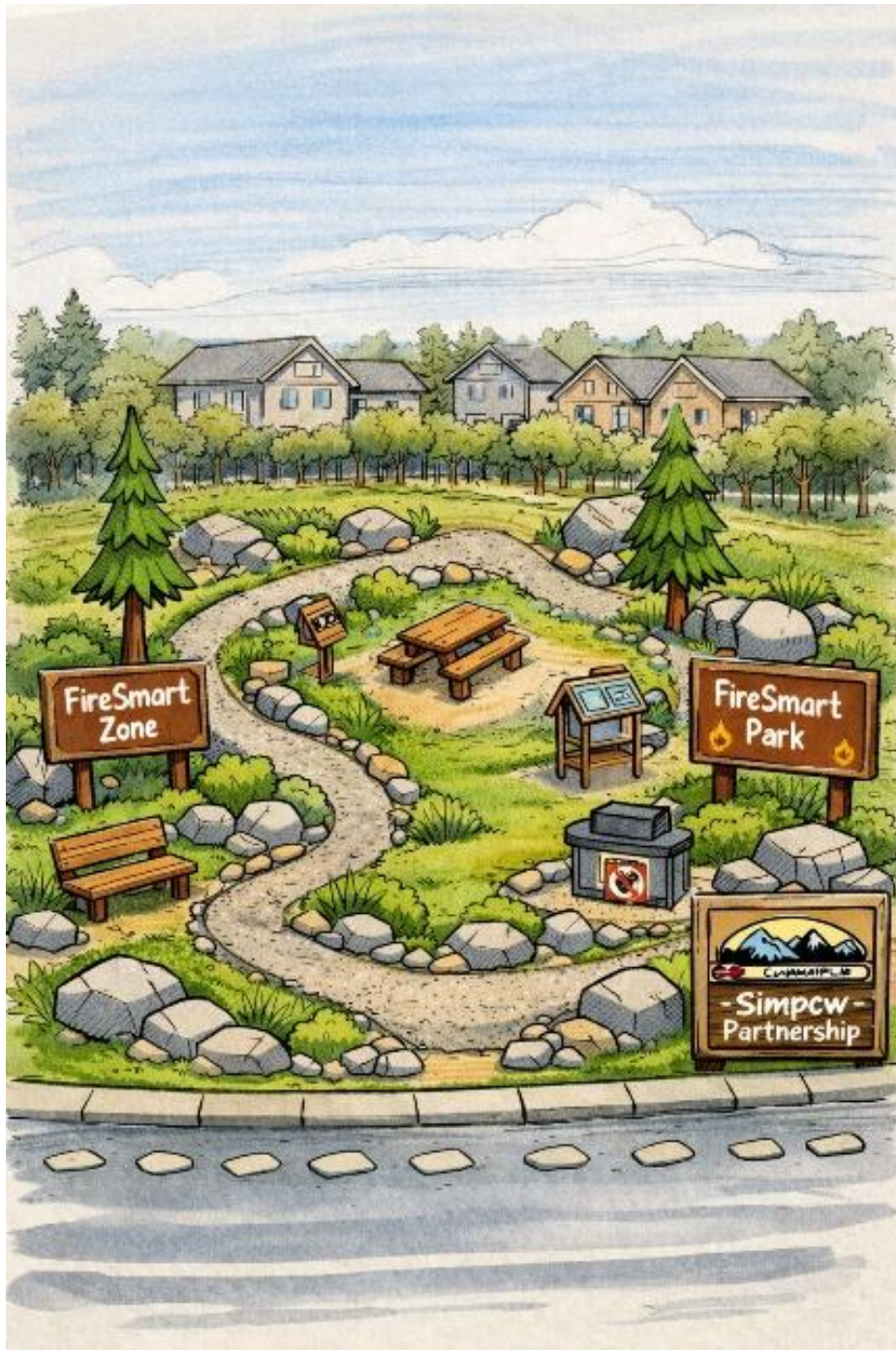
Staff have reviewed the property in more detail to consider this opportunity, which would allow for the FireSmart Program to showcase to residents how beauty can be maintained while using FireSmart Principles.

Natural Landscape Park

As outlined in the last report, there has been limited interest within the community regarding implementing FireSmart principles for properties as the common assumption seems to be that by FireSmarting a property the beauty will be lost. As such, this highly visible, District-owned property may provide a great opportunity to showcase the FireSmart principles to the community. The following items have been considered which could be highlighted in a FireSmart Showcase:

- Educational FireSmart signage
- Partnerships with local mills, contractors, or community groups
- Small walking trail development
- Park benches or picnic tables
- Low-maintenance xeriscape design
- Community education sessions
- Exploration of gathering space options (picnic tables – if they can be donated etc.)
- Introduce FireSmart/xeriscape vegetation for long-term resilience

Below is a sketch that incorporates some of these elements that could be implemented for the parcel:



The intent would be to have an educational space that is self-sustainable and will require little or no District money outside of the FireSmart funding stream, while equally providing partnership opportunities with other community partners. The FireSmart Coordinator has reached out to local businesses to ask for partnership, including the Trail Society, Men Shed, Gilbert Smith and Woodco to participate in this potential community project. Additionally, local residents (whose properties back into the space) have been approached, and no concerns were brought forward.

At this time, there are no parks or showcases like this one that could be found through research, meaning Barriere could pave the way to something innovative in FireSmart education.

Financial Impact:

\$0 to the District of Barriere for the next two years. Labour costs are covered under the Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) funding stream. A local horticulturist has volunteered to assist in ensuring ecological sustainability.

Future costs (if FireSmart Funding were to dissipate) would include a monthly walk through to clean the space as needed. The intention of the “showcase” is to allow for xero-scaping, meaning low maintenance. The area will be landscaped in a way that fire resistant plants and vegetation is used, which should not majorly contribute to fire spread if no future staff time can be allocated for maintenance of the space.

Future stewardship agreements with community groups like the Trails Society may also provide low-cost benefits to maintain this space.

Summary

Council is asked to consider the implementation of a FireSmart Showcase by Staff, which would result in the FireSmart program to enhance the space with FireSmart educational activities for the community.

Benefits or Impact

General

Wildfire mitigation of District-owned property. Exploring other FireSmart educational activities.

Finances

No costs to the District at this point as funding is provided through the FireSmart program for any mitigation activities. If FireSmart funding were cease to exist, a monthly walk through of the park to manage any litter (which should be the case right now) would need to occur by park staff.

Strategic Impact

Potential Partnership with Simpcw and other community groups, such as, but not limited to, Trails Society, Men Shed, etc.

Risk Assessment

Compliance: FireSmart Funding agreement, Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (CWRP)

Risk Impact: Low to medium. Wildfire mitigation risks will be reduced regardless, however, a new “park” will be created which may require future other maintenance costs, most of which can be minimized with the support of other community groups, but as the owner of the property, the District will ultimately be responsible for the space.

Internal Control Process: Staff are following standard processes.

Next Steps / Communication

- If approved, Staff will begin work on the project and engage with other community groups.
- Opportunities will be used to highlight the FireSmart Showcase as a innovative approach to education with our funding partners.

Attachments

N/A

Recommendation

THAT Council directs Staff to create a natural FireSmart Showcase at 4976 Barriere Town Road as outlined in the report.

Alternative Options

1. Council could determine not to proceed with the Showcase. Staff would still continue to apply FireSmart mitigation to the property but no additional educational opportunity will be created.

Prepared by:

Fire Chief, A. Hovenkamp