

District of Barriere

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Request for Decision

Date: October 6, 2025	File: 530.20/Rpts
To: Council	From: Chief Administrative Officer
Re: Wayfinding Signage	
Recommendation: THAT Council supports the Wayfinding project in the amount of up to \$20,000 to be funded from Surplus; AND THAT Council instructs Staff to amend the Financial Plan accordingly.	

Purpose

To provide Council with an update on the Wayfinding grant that the Chamber of Commerce is managing; and for Council to determine whether to fund the project or not.

Background

On October 7, 2024, Council discussed for the Chamber to apply to ETSI-BC for a \$50,000 Wayfinding Master Plan project, with \$25,000 funded from the grant, \$2,500 to be contributed in kind by the Chamber, and that the remainder (\$22,500) to be funded either by other organizations or the District. At that meeting, Council passed the following resolution:

THAT Council authorize the Barriere Chamber of Commerce to apply for funding in the amount of \$50,000 on behalf of the District of Barriere to the ETSI-BC Building Economic Development Capacity Program to facilitate a community Wayfinding Strategy/Plan with the District of Barriere's portion of \$25,000 to be allocated in the 2025 budget process should the grant application be successful.

The Chamber was awarded the grant in December of 2024, and final approval was provided in February 2025. The Chamber has since been working on securing other funding by connecting with community partners like Simpcw, Paradigm, and Taseko, but also applying to other grant opportunities through Canadian National (CN) Rail and the Thompson Nicola Regional District (TNRD).

As part of the 2025 budget process, Council deliberated dedicating funding within the 2025 Financial Plan towards the project. However, to balance the 2025 budget, Council elected to hold off with financially supporting the Wayfinding Master Plan project until additional funding amounts from other organizations could be confirmed. The intent was to make a final determination at a later date in 2025 once some certainty on District funds and other contributions could be achieved.

From the community partners, only Simpcw has verbally committed \$5,000 towards the project. Other organizations have indicated that they would be willing to support physical signage projects in the future once that step is reached.

The Chamber was also advised by CN and the TNRD that the respective grant applications were unsuccessful. The Chamber intends to reapply for the next grant intake later this year; however, in the meantime the project has stalled out until the remainder of the funds can be secured.

As such, the remainder to be funded once considering the contribution from Simpcw is estimated at **\$17,500**.

Project Timeline

The final grant agreement outlines that the project must be completed by May 31, 2026; however, the intent was to have a contract for the work awarded by the Chamber by the middle of August 2025 at the latest. Subsequently, this project is slightly delayed at this stage. As indicated above, all efforts were made to secure 3rd party funding so it would not impact District taxpayers which is the primary reason why the project is now slightly behind schedule.

Options

At this time, Council has two main options to consider.

1. Not fund the project – This would result in the Chamber having to return the funds, there will also be a risk that future ETSI-BC grant applications may not be considered favourably. The community would not be in a position to apply for grant funding relating to physical signage, for example through the Rural Economic Development and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) program. Other organizations have also indicated a willingness to financially support such a physical signage project.
2. Fund the remaining costs of the project – This would result in the project being able to be completed. The Chamber may need to ask for a small extension towards the end of the project if they are unsuccessful in procuring a qualified professional in a reasonable amount of time. Council would then have the necessary documents to apply for other grant funding streams and to work with other local organizations to develop physical signage for our community. The Chamber would also continue to investigate other opportunities through grants, etc. to offset the District's contribution.

Summary

Staff is recommending providing funding for the project purely because Council has supported this project in October 2024, and Council only withheld funding during the 2025 budget process to see if funding by other parties could be secured.

Benefits or Impact

General

Completion of a project that has been considered by Council since October 2024.

Finances

Overall cost for the project is estimated at \$50,000. Grant funding is available for up to a maximum of \$25,000 (or 50%). Simpcw is contributing \$5,000. The Chamber is contributing \$2,500 in kind. The District's portion would be \$17,500. By committing up to \$20,000, a contingency allowance of up to \$2,500 would be created.

District operational finances for 2025 are largely on-track as of the time of writing this report. No major financial "windfalls" were achieved outside of the wildfire support throughout the summer season which accounted for roughly \$50,000-60,000 in additional revenue after expenses. However, the grant application for the fire hall utilized roughly \$40,000 to 45,000 of that additional revenue, and additional unforeseen repairs to a fire engine are estimated at \$30,000.

Strategic Impact

Priority #4: General Governance and Community Engagement

Goal 3. – Enhanced Engagement with the Community and our Partners

Results: c. Support our local community partners and enable them to provide a benefit to the community on behalf of the District

Risk Assessment

Compliance: Community Charter, Funding Agreement between ETSI-BC and the Chamber.

Risk Impact: Low-Medium. This funding was not included in the budget, and no significant additional revenues were achieved in 2025. As such, this expense would most likely need to come from operating surplus to balance the budget at year-end.

Internal Control Process:

Staff would continuously engage with the Chamber on the progress of the Project. It is anticipated that Council will provide input and would need to approve the final master plan before it becomes an official document of the District.

Next Steps / Communication

- If approved, Staff would work with the Chamber on funding and RFP process.
- Complete the project by the ETSI-BC grant deadline (May 31, 2026)

Attachments

- N/A

Recommendation

THAT Council supports the Wayfinding project in the amount of up to \$20,000 to be funded from Surplus; AND THAT Council instructs Staff to amend the Financial Plan accordingly.

Alternative Options

1. Council could instruct Staff to utilize Option 1 (not funding the project instead). As mentioned, this would effectively end the project without a master plan at hand for future grant applications.

Prepared by:

D. Drexler, Chief Administrative Officer