



STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 21, 2026 **REPORT:** DEV 26-046
FROM: Adrian Smith, Planner **FILE:** 3090-20/DV26-03
SUBJECT: Development Variance Permit DV26-03 1306 Main Street (Fresh Slice Pizza)

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission recommend that Council approve the Development Variance Permit Application DV26-03, for 1306 Main Street, legally described as Lot 20, Block 29, Plan PRP1054, District Lot 5289, Range 5, Coast Range 5 Land District, to vary Section 8.4 a) of the Town of Smithers Sign Bylaw No. 1841, increasing the maximum fascia sign area permitted for the Fresh Slice Pizza business from 2.025 m² to 4.076 m².

BACKGROUND:

On March 27, 2026, the Town of Smithers received a Sign Permit application from the owner of Fresh Slice Pizza for its soon-to-be operational location at 1306 Main Street (see **Attachments 1 and 2**). The applicant submitted revised plans afterwards as the initial sign proposal did not conform to the Town's Sign Bylaw No. 1841 in terms of sign materials, lighting, and sign area standards. On May 7, 2026, the Applicant submitted a Development Variance Permit (DVP) application requesting a variance to the permitted fascia sign area for the subject business, while confirming their intent to conform to all the other signage requirements (see **Attachment 3**).

OCP & Zoning: The subject property is designated High Density Residential / Downtown Commercial in the Town of Smithers Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw No. 1935 and is zoned C-1 (Town Centre Commercial) in the Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 (see **Attachment 4**). The property is also located within the Downtown Commercial Form and Character Development Permit Area (DPA) as identified on Map 7 of the OCP. As the Applicant is not proposing any exterior renovations to the building, no Development Permit is required.

Agenda Date:	June 11, 2026
Meeting Type:	APC
Agenda Placement:	Agenda

DISCUSSION:

Regulating commercial signs is necessary to ensure public safety, maintain or enhance visual character, and avoid sign pollution. Section 526 of the Local Government Act (LGA) enables local governments to regulate the number, size, type, form, appearance, and location of signs by bylaw. Currently, business signage in the Town of Smithers is regulated by the Town of Smithers Sign Bylaw No. 1841.

The Applicant has been preparing to open a takeaway pizza restaurant since the property became vacant in January 2026. Fresh Slice Pizza is a franchise operation, and franchisees are required to comply with corporate branding directives, including standardized design and signage components intended to maintain brand consistency across locations. With the intent to comply with the Sign Bylaw requirements, the Applicant has already revised the proposed signage by changing the materials and removing the internal illumination.

Under the Town's Sign Bylaw, the extent of "business frontage" — defined as the side of a building facing a street and containing the business's main entrance — determines the maximum permitted fascia sign area for a business. In this case, the with its business frontage along Main Street being 6.75 m in length, the maximum fascia sign area permitted for the subject business is of 2.025 m², which is sufficient for only one fascia sign of the proposed size. However, the building also has an equal length of frontage along Fourth Avenue, where the Applicant proposes to install a second identical fascia sign. The combined fascia sign area proposed for the business is almost double that of the maximum fascia sign area permitted as per section 8.4 of the Sign Bylaw (see **Attachment 5**). Therefore, to accommodate the proposed signage proposal, the Applicant seeks a variance to Section 8.4(a), varying the maximum fascia sign area permitted for the subject business from 2.025 m² to 4.076 m².

Staff support the Applicant's variance request for the following reasons:

- a) The parcel housing the subject business fronts onto two streets. Although "business frontage" only considers the building face containing the Main Street-fronting side of the business— the Fourth Avenue elevation is of equal length and visual significance from a form and character perspective. Allowing an additional fascia sign on the Fourth Avenue elevation will enhance the streetscape without creating a sense of sign clutter.
- b) The proposed signage is consistent with the form and character objectives of the downtown core design guidelines.
- c) The proposed fascia signs largely align with the general intent of the sign standards established by the Sign Bylaw for the downtown core.
- d) The proposed signage has largely incorporated the relevant OCP guidelines for commercial signage (see **Attachment 6**). The fascia sign's colour complements the newly painted green exterior of the building, creating a cohesive appearance. The additional sign on the Fourth Avenue frontage is proportionate to the building's scale and is consistent with the intent of the OCP signage guidelines.

- e) Staff have already been considering initiating a Sign Bylaw amendment to provide additional flexibility in the calculation of fascia sign area permitted for businesses with multiple street frontages. This may be brought forward to a future Council meeting as part of some housekeeping amendments to the Sign Bylaw.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS:

The applicant will cover all costs associated with the processing of this application, including the registration of the Development Permit, and the preparation and installation of the proposed signs. The proposed new signage may also be eligible for receiving funding support through the Annual Smithers Spruce Up Program, 100% funded by NDI, and staff advised the applicant of the program's June 1st application deadline.

LEGISLATION / POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1935 Sections 8.2 Strengthen and Diversify the Local Economy (policy 6), and 16.3.6.6 Signage Branding, Scale and Presence support staff recommendation (see **Attachment 6**).

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

Not Applicable.

CONNECTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The proposal aligns with the following Strategic Priority of Town Council for 2023-26:

- **Economic Prosperity: Economic Development** - Support the growth and diversification of the local economy.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Approval of the requested variances is unlikely to have any adverse environmental implications

COMMUNICATIONS:

Notification and communication for this application will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act, the Town of Smithers Development Procedures Bylaw, and the Town of Smithers Public Notice Bylaw

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

Approval of the requested variances is unlikely to have any adverse accessibility impact. On the positive side, the proposed signage will assist with wayfinding and business identification for individuals with visual impairments.

ALTERNATIVES / OPTIONS:

1. Require changes to the Development Variance Permit application.
2. Approve the requested variance with conditions.
3. Deny the Development Variance Permit.
4. Another option as per Council discussion and motion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. DEV 26-046 Attach.1 Subject Property Map
2. DEV 26-046 Attach.2 Relevant Street Views
3. DEV 26-046 Attach.3 Application DV 26-03
4. DEV 26-046 Attach.4 OCP and Zoning Maps
5. DEV 26-046 Attach.5 Section 8.4 Sign Bylaw No. 1841
6. DEV 26-046 Attach.6 Section 8.2 OCP Bylaw No. 1935

Respectfully submitted:



Adrian Smith

Reviewed by:



Deepa Chandran
Manager of Planning and Climate
Readiness

Approved for Submission:



Michael Dewar
Chief Administrative Officer