



The Future of Facer Street

Recommendations Report

Prepared by 8 80 Cities for the
City of St. Catharines



Report submitted by 8 80 Cities to the City of St. Catharines
June 2017



8 80 Cities is a non-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. We believe that if everything we do in our public spaces is great for an 8 year old and an 80 year old, then it will be great for all people. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for people in cities by bringing citizens together to enhance mobility and public space so that together we can create more vibrant, healthy, and equitable communities.

8 80 Cities
401 Richmond St. W. #372
Toronto, ON
M5V 2A8, Canada
Tel: 416.591.7404
Email: info@880cities.org
Website: www.880cities.org
Twitter: [@880citiesorg](https://twitter.com/880citiesorg)

Table of Contents

- 1. Project Background4
- 2. Community Engagement Results.....12
- 3. Design Recommendations.....19
- 4. Short-Medium Term Concept Design.....31
- 5. Next Steps.....34

1 Project Background

Facer Street over the years

Since the 1850s, Facer Street and the surrounding Facer neighbourhood in St. Catharines has been known for being a landing place and home for different generations of immigrant communities. The neighbourhood's population continued to grow until the 1960s. Since then, the population has fluctuated and is currently on a slight decline, which is largely a function of shrinking average household sizes.

Nonetheless, the diversity of the neighbourhood and strong sense of community has flourished to this day.

The neighbourhood boasts a mix of local shops, services, and religious/cultural institutions, all of which have shaped it into the mixed-use corridor it is today. While older, established businesses have persisted through the test of time, newer businesses on Facer Street have struggled to retain a strong clientele, resulting in many vacant storefronts along the street. In recent years, local businesses and community leaders have been working together to revitalize the area to make it an inviting destination within St. Catharines.

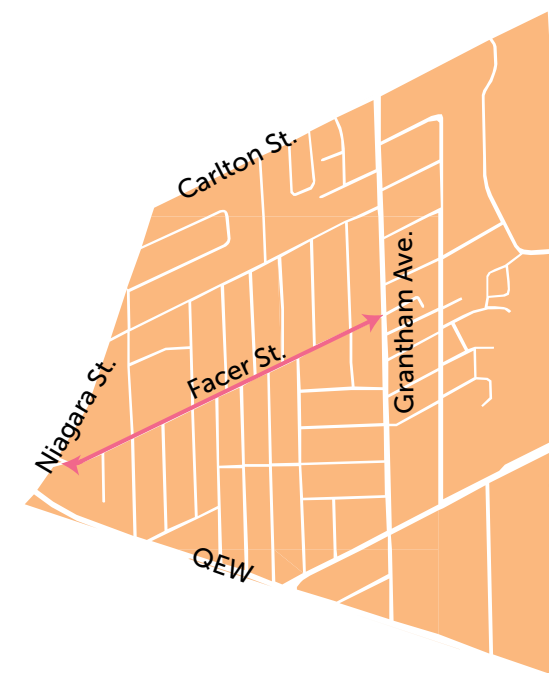


Figure 1. Facer Street is located in Census Tract 0013.01 which is bound by Carlton St. to the north, Neilson Ave. to the east, the QEW to the south, and Niagara St. to the west. The Facer Street study area examines Facer Street between Niagara St. and Grantham Ave.

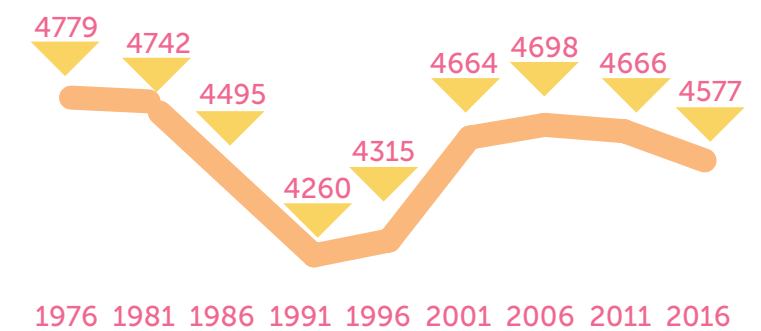


Figure 2. Population of the Facer neighbourhood over the last 40 years (Stats Canada 2016).

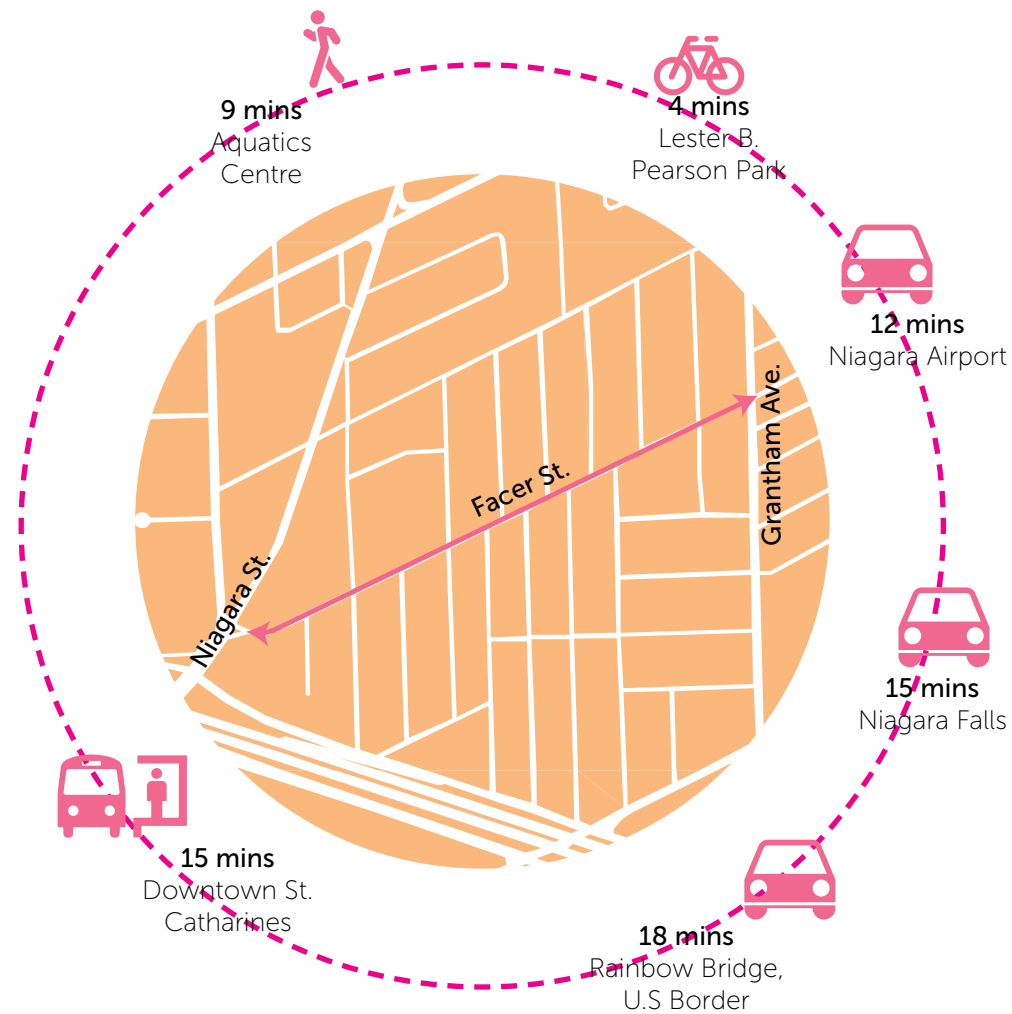


Figure 3. Facer Street boasts a unique location within St. Catharines. This diagram demonstrates travel time between Facer Street and several major destinations using various modes of transportation.

Current functions of Facer Street

Facer Street features short blocks and a mix of local food-based shops, businesses, and housing primarily dating back to the post-war era. It is also home to an elementary school and a Boy's and Girl's club, which bookend the Street.

Facer Street is serviced by a local bus route and is also a major transportation corridor that connects drivers to the QEW highway.

As our conversations with the community revealed, many residents currently pass through Facer Street to access other destinations rather than spend time on Facer Street itself. They report maintenance and safety concerns, an unenjoyable pedestrian experience, and lack of destinations as reasons for not spending more time on Facer Street. At the same time, Facer Street has a constrained right-of-way, which limits improvement opportunities on public lands.

What makes Facer stand out?

Facer Street is one of the few mixed-use corridors in the St. Catharines-Niagara region outside of a downtown area (see Figure 4). The Facer Street neighbourhood is identified in the St. Catharines Garden City Plan as an area for future intensification.

The Urban Design Guidelines for the City of St. Catharines recognizes the importance of mixed-use corridors in creating a more transit

and pedestrian friendly city. Moreover, the St. Catharines Culture Plan 2020 highlights the importance of places like Facer Street that encompass a distinct sense of place and stimulate civic pride. It is a diverse neighbourhood where the top five languages spoken are Italian, Polish, Spanish, German and Tagalog.





A vibrant, mixed-use corridor

Figure 4. The mixed-use character of Facer Street is demonstrated here with each colour signifying a different use.

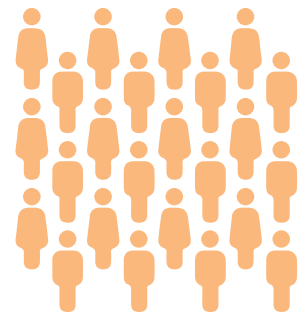
The neighbourhood at a glance

The neighbourhood data below is for the census tract that Facer Street is located in, as identified in Figure 1.

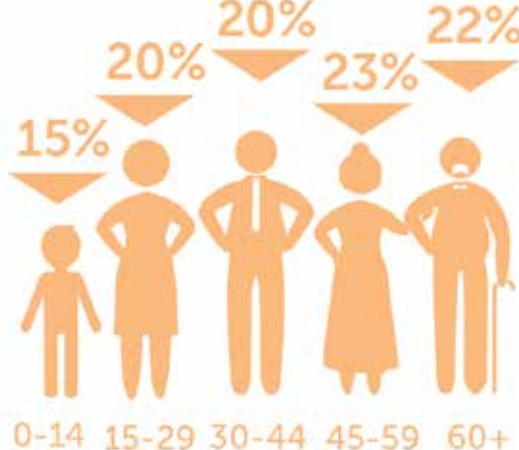


Image Credits: Facereuropeanfestival.jigsy.com

4577



Facer Population, 2016
(Census 2016)



Population Distribution by Age, 2016
(Census 2016)



Average Household
Size, 2016
(Census 2016)

11% 5+ storey
apartments



31% semi-detached
houses, and
townhouses



57% single detached
houses



Project Supporters

The first-ever Facer European Festival was held in August 2016. It drew 10,000 visitors and highlighted Facer Street’s potential as a unique local destination. Local businesses, community leaders, and board members of the Facer European Festival picked up on the momentum of the festival and are advocating to embed the rich cultural heritage of Facer Street in the re-design of the street. The community gained the support of the City of St. Catharines to further explore this initiative.

The City of St. Catharines retained 8 80 Cities to identify the community’s vision for the area. This report highlights the findings from the community engagement process, the community’s vision for Facer Street, and recommendations for the short, medium, and long term. The results of this report will inform the City of St. Catharines’ next steps in the revitalization process.

2 Community Engagement Results

How did the community participate?

1. Sidewalk Salon

We set up colourful, oversized survey boards outside of St. Joseph's Bakery on a Saturday morning to ask residents about their ideas for improving Facer Street. We heard from a total of 24 community members at the sidewalk salon.

2. Walkshop

We led a walkshop for six city staff and seven community members to assess the quality of the design and pedestrian experience on Facer Street. On the walk, participants focused on the potential uses of underutilized spaces and how to create a more welcoming and safe pedestrian experience on Facer Street.

3. Workshop

Working in groups, community members brainstormed potential actions that both the community and City of St. Catharines could take in the short, medium, and long term. Participants also worked together to develop a coherent overarching vision for The Future of Facer Street.

4. Online Survey

Community members who were unable to attend the community engagement activities had access to an online survey from May 27 – June 4 where they could provide their ideas for improving Facer Street. A total of 38 community members completed the survey.

At a Glance

We engaged with...

84

residents, community leaders and business owners

- 2 City Councillors
- 3 City Planning Staff
- 1 Regional Planning Staff

60%

of people feel positively about Facer Street

The top 3 improvements people would like to see to improve safety and convenience on Facer Street



sidewalk maintenance (80%)



better lighting (79%)



road maintenance (49%)

Other answers: hanging planters (40%), street pavers (35%), more trees (31%), more seating (21%), bike lanes (17%), public art (1%).

The top 3 improvements people would like to see to improve the look of Facer Street



outdoor patios (58%)



welcome sign/banner (44%)

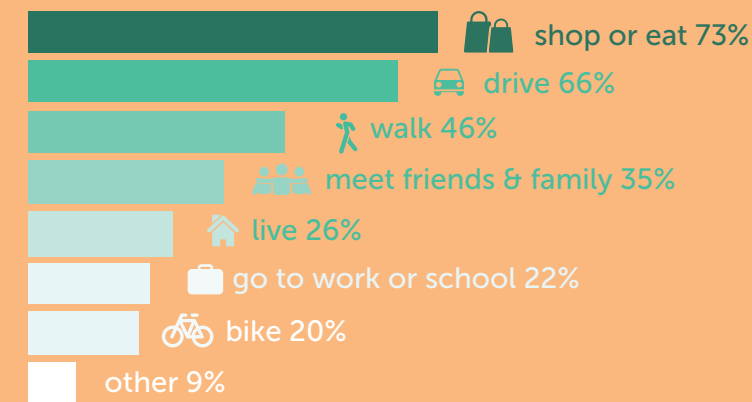


more shops to visit (42%)

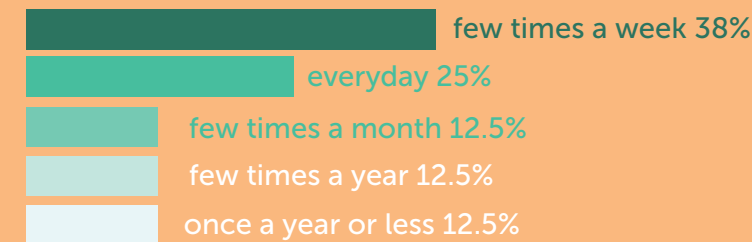
Other answers: crosswalks (34%), curb bulb outs (30%), more parking (21%), stop signs/traffic lights (1%).

Sidewalk Salon & Online Survey Results

What people do on Facer St.



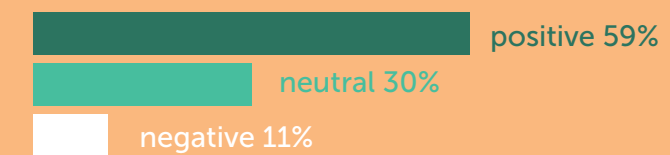
How often people visit places on Facer St.



How often people drive through Facer St.



How people feel about Facer St.



What people like about Facer St.

Top 3 Themes:

1. Sense of community
2. Unique culture and place
3. Diversity of small businesses

"I love the heritage of the area. I love driving down the street and seeing the men sitting out front having coffee. There is a sense of family and community that makes me happy."

"I love the diversity of the street, butcher, deli, pizza place, cultures and people."

"I like the small businesses and churches"

What people do not like about Facer St.

Top 3 Themes:

1. Deteriorating roads and buildings
2. Lack of things to do, places to visit
3. Unsafe streets (for kids, walking)

"Looks run down"

"It has a closed up feeling, not a welcoming feel, it needs to be more inviting"

"Not enough businesses to be a draw or things to do"

"Not enough trees. There are vast areas where there is just concrete."



What we heard during the Walkshop

No places to sit
(e.g. benches)



Unsafe streets
(traffic moves too fast, not comfortable or safe)



Poor pedestrian infrastructure
(e.g. sidewalks, trees that offer shade)



Signify place with an identity marker
(e.g. lights, public art, archway)



Program underutilized spaces
(e.g. add farmer's market, outdoor patios)



Poor streetscape design
(e.g. landscaping, cleanliness)



Facer Street should compel people to stay and linger, not just pass through



Ideas & Actions from the Workshop

We asked community members to develop a list of actions that the City of St. Catharines and other community stakeholders could take in the short, medium, and long term. They identified the following priority projects.

Time	Action	Cost	Impact
short term	add seating and rest areas (benches, patios, umbrellas)	\$\$	large
	place garbage bins at bus stops	\$	large
	add planters and more street trees	\$	small
medium term	add historical signage, markers (e.g. flags of nations, archway, rock garden)	\$	medium
	reduce traffic speeds and increase safety by painting streets and adding crosswalks	\$\$	medium
	open new small businesses and pop-up shops	\$\$\$	medium
long term	replace asphalt paving with stone pavers, brick or cobblestones	\$\$\$	large



The Community Vision

We asked community members to complete the sentence “In 2025 Facer Street will be known for...” Each participant shared their ideas with the group. All the participants then worked together to find common themes which then shaped the overarching vision for The Future of Facer, stated below.

“ Facer Street will be a unique cultural district with beautiful, walkable streets and thriving small businesses. ”

This vision will guide all the recommendations in The Future of Facer final report, which will then inform the City of St. Catharines’ revitalization efforts for the area.



3 Design Recommendations

Design Recommendations

The overarching community vision for Facer Street is that: “Facer Street will be a unique, cultural district with beautiful, walkable streets and thriving small businesses.” This vision guides the following design recommendations, which have been grouped into four distinct categories:

- Unique Cultural District
- Safe and Walkable Streets
- Pleasant and Beautiful Environment
- Thriving Small Businesses

Each category contains specific design solutions that reflect the community’s priorities and/or global best practices. Each design solution includes an estimate of the cost and impact that the design solution would have on the Facer Street community, if implemented. The cost estimates range from “\$” to “\$\$\$\$”, assuming the following values for each:

- \$ = Up to \$10,000
- \$\$ = Between \$10,000 and \$100,000
- \$\$\$ = Between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000
- \$\$\$\$ = \$1,000,000 and above



Unique Cultural District

Facer Street is the historical hub of diverse immigrant communities in St. Catharines. Existing businesses on Facer Street reflect this influence, and many residents in the surrounding neighbourhood identify with this diverse cultural history. This history should play a central role in the future success of Facer Street. The City of St. Catharines and the community must now find ways to make this identity more visible and coherent.

Improvement Area #1: Create a visual identity

People and commerce are drawn to places that look and feel special or unique. Consistent visual markers such as signage and banners along Facer Street would establish a coherent brand or identity for the street. Many cities in North America have vibrant districts that celebrate and foster Chinese, Italian, or Greek communities. St. Catharines should look to successful examples of cultural districts across North America for ideas and inspiration to celebrate and enhance the diverse European community along Facer Street.

Feature: Entrance feature

Signage and gateways announce arrival into a community or district that has a unique identity. They draw people into the community by signifying that the shops, restaurants, and atmosphere of this neighbourhood is distinct and special. These entrance features would be installed on either end of Facer Street; one at Niagara Street and the other at Grantham Avenue.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$\$



An archway marks the entrance to the R Street Corridor in Sacramento CA. Image: rstreet.info



A brightly lit archway in Gaslamp Quarter, historic district of San Diego. Image: backpackwine.com

Feature: Banners

Custom branded neighbourhood banners are a common streetscape beautification element in cities around the world. Banners are a simple way to convey to visitors that they have entered a distinct district. Business owners can partner with the City of St. Catharines to fund the installation of banners on utility poles along Facer Street.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$\$



Banners in downtown Raleigh, North Carolina. Image: bizdistricts



Banners in downtown St. Catharines commemorate famous locals. Image: Irene Eng

Unique Cultural District

Feature: Murals

There are many large, blank facades along Facer Street. To add character and a visual interest to the street, businesses and community organizations can come together to hire an artist to paint iconic murals that reflect the culture and identity of the Facer Street district. Murals have the potential to serve as new landmarks and photo opportunities for visitors to the neighbourhood.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$



A mural captures the history of Wayne, Michigan. Image: Joshua Winer



Reggae lane mural in Toronto celebrates the local cultural heritage. Image: Steps Initiative

Feature: Vinyl Wraps

Vinyl wraps depicting art or historical photos are a common, relatively low-cost improvement that can lend character and identity to a neighborhood. Vinyl wraps can be installed on existing infrastructure, such as hydro poles, utility boxes, or garbage cans. Many cities hold competitions for artists who would like to see their artwork displayed on a vinyl wrap. A competition helps build awareness and excitement around the street beautification initiative.

Impact: low
Cost: \$



Vinyl wrap public art commission by Pasadena Playhouse District in Pasadena, CA. Image: Tucker Neel



A utility box in downtown Vancouver covered in a koi fish design. Image: vancitybuzz.com

Unique Cultural District

Improvement Area #2: Bring History to the Forefront

Community members expressed that they would like to make the history of the area more evident to visitors by using specific streetscape treatments. The City of St. Catharines can work with a local historian and local leaders to identify historical milestones worth commemorating.

Feature: Historical plaques

Historical plaques are a common way to highlight specific stories about the area. These plaques can be installed as free standing structures or on building facades along the street.

Impact: low
Cost: \$\$



A plaque comemorates the Forest Hill Historic District in Richmond, VA. Image:historicforesthillneighborhood.com



A historical plaque of Memorial Hall in Niagara Falls Image: marriottonthefalls.com

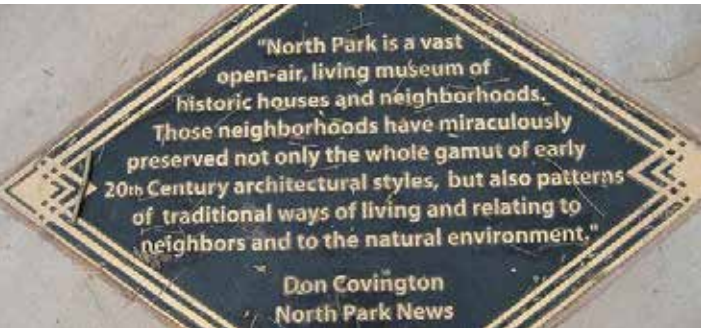
Feature: Sidewalk plaques or medallions

Sidewalk plaques or medallions are subtle ways to add ornamentation to the street without over-cluttering the visual environment. An artist can design the sidewalk plaque/medallion to include words or imagery that helps convey the history of the neighbourhood to community members and visitors alike. These elements can be incorporated into sidewalk repaving projects.

Impact: low
Cost: \$\$



A sidewalk medallion marks the Freedom Trail n Boston, MA. Image:paulreverehouse.com



A sidewalk plaque in the North Park, San Diego celebrates local history: Image: Susan Williams, Flickr

Unique Cultural District

Improvement Area #3: Increase the Frequency of Events

10,000 people attended the first-ever Facer European Festival in August 2016, far surpassing organizers’ expectations. The success of this festival demonstrates that there is a high local demand for public events that bring the community together. While it is not feasible to host events of this scale on a regular basis, there are opportunities for the community to get together smaller events that reflect the unique character and history of the street. These programs and events would help address the community’s concerns that there isn’t enough to do on Facer Street.

Feature: Holiday celebrations

Popular holidays such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter are opportunities for businesses and other community groups on Facer Street to celebrate together. Events like tree lighting ceremonies, parades, and holiday markets are just some ways to celebrate Facer Street’s cultural identity on a smaller scale.

Impact: high

Cost: \$



The Distillery District Christmas market in Toronto draws a large crowd every year. Image: Reb Stevenson



Residents in Nashville, host a turkey fry annually to feed the homeless population during Thanksgiving. Image:nashcountrydaily.com

Feature: Summer markets

There are many large yet underused parking lots belonging to businesses/community organizations along Facer Street. Large, empty parking lots contribute to the perception that Facer Street lacks activity and visual interest. Community members identified these spaces as ideal for hosting temporary vendor markets which would activate the street while also providing additional revenue to the owners of these parking lots.

Impact: medium

Cost: \$



On-street farmer’s market in Brampton, Ontario. Image: City of Brampton



A parking lot is transformed into a weekly market in Maryland. Image:andrewalexanderprice.com

Safe and Walkable

People use all different types of modes to travel on Facer Street, including walking, driving, biking, and wheelchairs/personal mobility devices. Vehicles traveling at high speeds through Facer Street pose a safety concern. In order to ensure all users are able to enjoy their experience on Facer Street, it is important to program the street to be safe and walkable. There are many small but impactful ways to calm traffic and make pedestrians of all ages and abilities feel comfortable on Facer Street.

Improvement Area #4: Install Traffic Calming Infrastructure

Vehicles on Facer Street are often travelling faster than the 50 km/h posted speed limit. Community members identified traffic calming as a priority for the street. This is especially needed in the area directly outside the elementary school. These following ideas can be easily piloted with paint prior to any reconstruction work.

Feature: Curb extensions

Curb extensions enhance pedestrian safety by decreasing the amount of road space they need to interact with to cross the street. These should be built in areas with higher levels of pedestrian traffic such as the school, Boy’s and Girl’s Club, and segments of Facer Street with higher concentrations of businesses.

Impact: high

Cost: \$\$\$



Piloting a curb extension using paint and plastic bollards in Austin, Texas. Image: Streetsblog



Curb bulb out at a midblock crosswalk. Image: Wikimedia

Feature: Crosswalks

Crosswalks should be highly visible to alert motorists to potential pedestrian crossings. This can be achieved with lights, signage, and by using different paving materials and colours. If opting for an artistic, painted crosswalk, the City of St. Catharines can choose to hire a local artist to paint a design that reflects the culture of the local neighbourhood.

Impact: medium

Cost: \$\$



Colourful crosswalks alert motorists to pedestrians activity and beautify the street. Image:editorial.designtaxi.com

Safe and Walkable

Improvement Area #5: Improve Basic Pedestrian Infrastructure

Feature: Sidewalk maintenance

80% of survey respondents agreed that sidewalk maintenance is a top priority. Community members reported that the sidewalks on Facer Street have been neglected for years, with many cracked and uneven sections. To better accommodate people of all ages and abilities, the city should prioritize the repaving of concrete sidewalks.

Impact: high

Cost: \$\$\$

Feature: Street and sidewalk pavers

Some community members suggested incorporating old, historic European design elements into the streets and sidewalks of Facer Street. While it's not feasible to use cobblestone in a modern North American context, the City of St. Catharines can instead use a unique treatment for Facer Street, between Currie Street and Sherbourne Street. The use of unit pavers or stamped concrete would highlight the section of Facer Street with the most commercial and cultural activity, while harking back to an old-world aesthetic charm.

Impact: high

Cost: \$\$\$\$



Street pavers in Singapore. Image: pinterest.com

Feature: Lighting

Street lighting should be consistent and positioned at a pedestrian scale to enhance safety and visibility at night. Lighting can also contribute to the unique visual identity if positioned along the entire length of Facer Street.

Impact: high

Cost: \$\$\$



Catenary lights light up the street in a Germany. Image: tensile.com.au



Pedestrian scale lighting in a park in Houston, TX. Image: forms-surfaces.com

Pleasant and Beautiful Walking Environment

Improvement Area #6: Green the Street

Beyond making it safer for pedestrians to walk on Facer Street, community members also called for enhancing the quality of the pedestrian environment. Adding beautification elements would send a message to community members and visitors that Facer Street is unique place that is cared for. By creating a beautiful, attractive streetscape, community members hope Facer Street becomes a more vibrant place where people will want to spend time.

Natural elements such as trees, flowers, and plants beautify a street by providing contrast to the urban environment. This is particularly important along Facer Street where the dominant colour and material is pavement and concrete. In addition to improving the safety and aesthetic of the pedestrian environment, native plants and trees from European countries could also contribute to the cultural identity of Facer Street.

Feature: Hanging planters

Flowers and plants bring flashes of colour and fragrance to a street. Planters could be hung from Hydro polls, building facades, or lamp posts. Businesses, community organizations, and residents should work together to maintain these planters.

Impact: medium

Cost: \$ - \$\$



Iconic Niagara-on-the-lake downtown hanging planters. Image: lifeatcloverhill.com

Feature: Consistent Shade Trees

Trees bring multiple benefits to streetscapes. They improve air quality, provide shade and greenery in summer, and create a consistent barrier between pedestrian and road space. This has the dual effect of enhancing the sense of security for pedestrians, and causes motorists to lower speeds by decreasing their scope of vision.

Impact: high

Cost: \$\$ - \$\$\$



Newly planted trees in a green buffer between sidewalk and street in Portland, OR. Image: landperspectives.com

Pleasant and Beautiful Walking Environment

Improvement Area #7: Accommodate Basic Needs

There are basic elements and amenities that all streets must provide in order to meet basic human needs and behaviours. Facer Street currently lacks seating, garbage cans, and well-maintained bus stops. Elevating the quality of these streetscape elements would create a more comfortable, accessible, and inviting environment for everyone.

Feature: Garbage Cans

Walkshop participants noted that litter decreases the visual appeal of Facer Street, and contributes to the mindset that the street is rundown and uncared for. There are currently no garbage cans on public property along Facer Street. Installing high quality garbage receptacles will discourage littering, and enhance the cleanliness and order of the street.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$



Protection for the tree doubles as seating.
Image: architonic.com

Feature: Seating

Facer Street currently only has two public benches, both of which are poorly maintained and located too far apart. Installing high quality benches will encourage pedestrian activity and enhance accessibility by providing resting places for people with limited mobility or physical ability. Providing seating at all the bus stops on Facer Street should also be a priority. Seating encourages people to stay and linger on a street, which supports local businesses and a vibrant street life.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$-\$\$



Public seating in Fresh Air Squares, London. These seats are built on a platform that takes up 2-3 on-street parking spaces. Image: dezeen.com

Thriving Small Businesses

The revitalization of Facer Street is tied to the success and growth of the local business community, and vice versa. The business community has a vital role to play in achieving the Facer Street Vision, and the City can support them in these efforts. Workshop participants envision Facer Street as a hub of unique and diverse local businesses that cater to a variety of interests and needs. Actions should be taken to support existing business owners, while attracting new commerce and economic investment in the area.

Improvement Area #8: Activate Storefronts

Street facing storefronts play a critical role in establishing a welcoming pedestrian environment. Active storefronts include creative and well-maintained signage, awnings, and windows that allow passers-by to peer into local shops and restaurants. Where space allows, commercial activity should also spill out into the pedestrian realm.

Feature: Facade Grant

The City of St. Catharines currently offers a Facade Improvement Program to commercial or mixed used buildings in the downtown core. After completion of a facade project, the City provides a grant equal to 50 % of the eligible project costs spent on the facade, up to a maximum of \$10,000, whichever is less. The City should extend this program to Facer Street businesses, to help building and business owners create a more inviting streetscape.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$\$



Activated storefront in Rhode Island.
Image: Ocean Chamber

Feature: Patios

Patios promote vibrant street life while providing cafes and restaurants with additional seating capacity. Cities can support businesses by streamlining or simplifying the permitting process for patios or outdoor spaces.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$-\$\$ per business



Outdoor patio seating in Manhattan, New York City.
Image: Untapped Cities



Outdoor patios of a corner bar in Toronto. Image: Toronto Life

Thriving Small Businesses

Improvement Area #9: Attract More Businesses

People are drawn to, and more likely to spend money in areas with a high concentration of diverse businesses. Bringing more businesses will improve Facer Street’s status as a vibrant commercial corridor, thereby supporting existing business owners. Vacant storefronts currently located on Facer Street have the opposite effect by contributing to the idea of Facer as rundown and neglected. As the density and diversity of businesses increase, people may be encouraged to park the car and walk the length of Facer to experience different retail and food-based businesses.

Feature: Branding Strategy

A branding strategy would attract new business investment by building on the unique cultural identity and assets currently in place along Facer Street. The strategy could include a commercial feasibility study to identify what types of businesses are currently needed and are most likely to succeed on Facer Street. This strategy would set a clear roadmap for branding Facer Street as a vibrant commercial area. Businesses that are encouraged to establish on Facer Street should strike a balance between local shopping needs (ie. grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores, etc.), and shopping opportunities that may attract outside shoppers to the area (ie. restaurants, independent retail, cafes, etc.).

Impact: high
Cost: \$\$



City branding on vinyl wrapped street furniture in Dublin, Ireland. Image:thplacebrandobserver.com

Feature: Pop-up shops

Pop-up shops would allow the business community to experiment with the right mix of commercial activities, while activating vacant storefronts and bringing new investment to the area. Entrepreneurs would transform vacant storefronts into attractive spaces in exchange for low-risk, temporary leases. Businesses that succeed may be encouraged to permanently establish along Facer Street. The City and local business community should partner to develop a strategy for approaching building owners of vacant properties and recruiting and supporting potential pop-up business.

Impact: medium
Cost: \$



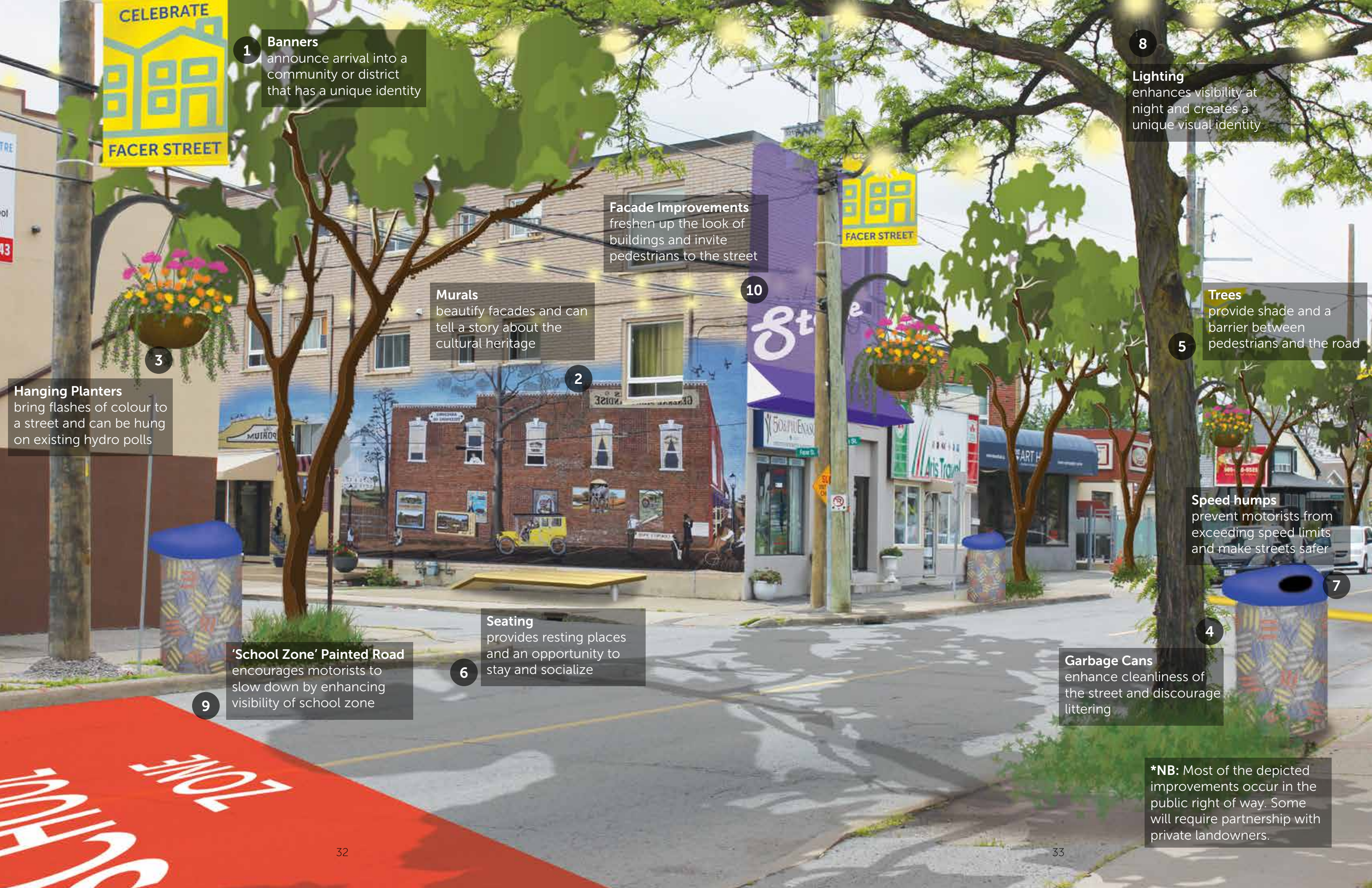
A pop up shop in Los Angeles, California. Image: chambermaster.com



A pop up market based out of a shipping container in Brooklyn, New York City. Image:gwhoffman.com

4 Short-Medium Term Concept Design

The following rendering depicts improvements to a section of Facer Street that could potentially be implemented in the short-medium term. Community members identified several low-cost beautification elements as being priorities for Facer Street.



1 **Banners**
announce arrival into a community or district that has a unique identity

Facade Improvements
freshen up the look of buildings and invite pedestrians to the street

Murals
beautify facades and can tell a story about the cultural heritage

10

8 **Lighting**
enhances visibility at night and creates a unique visual identity

5 **Trees**
provide shade and a barrier between pedestrians and the road

Hanging Planters
bring flashes of colour to a street and can be hung on existing hydro polls

3

9 **'School Zone' Painted Road**
encourages motorists to slow down by enhancing visibility of school zone

6 **Seating**
provides resting places and an opportunity to stay and socialize

Speed humps
prevent motorists from exceeding speed limits and make streets safer

Garbage Cans
enhance cleanliness of the street and discourage littering

4

7

***NB:** Most of the depicted improvements occur in the public right of way. Some will require partnership with private landowners.

5 Next Steps

Taking Action

This report captures the broad community vision for the future of Facer Street and recommends specific design improvements that would contribute to this vision. Taking action on these recommendations requires phasing and scoping the implementation, piloting improvements, coordinating the implementation with capital works schedules, increasing community capacity, and strengthening partnerships between the city and the community.

Phased Implementation
A phased, incremental approach to implementing improvements on Facer Street can build momentum for larger, long-term investments in the area. The below chart includes a summary of all the design recommendations, paired with a suggested timeline and project lead.

Improvement	Timeline	Cost	Impact	Project Lead
Banners	Short-term	\$\$	Medium	Community
Murals	Short-term	\$	Medium	Community
Vinyl Wraps	Short-term	\$	Low	Community
Hanging Planters	Short-term	\$-\$\$	Medium	Community
Seating	Short-term	\$-\$\$	Medium	City
Garbage Cans	Short-term	\$	Medium	City
Holiday Celebrations	Short-term	\$	High	Community
Summer Markets	Short-term	\$	Medium	Community
Patios	Short-term	\$-\$\$	Medium	Community
Entrance Feature	Medium-term	\$\$-\$\$\$	Medium	City
Historical Plaques	Medium-term	\$-\$\$	Low	Community
Sidewalk Plaques or Medallions	Medium-term	\$\$	Low	Community
Cross walks	Medium-term	\$\$	Medium	City
Shade Trees	Medium-term	\$\$-\$\$\$	High	City
Lighting	Medium-term	\$\$\$	High	Community
Facade Grant	Medium-term	\$\$	Medium	City
Pop-Up Shops	Medium-term	\$	Medium	Community
Branding Strategy	Long-term	\$\$	High	Community
Curb bulb outs	Long-term	\$\$\$	High	City
Sidewalk maintenance	Long-term	\$\$\$	High	City
Street and sidewalk pavers	Long-term	\$\$\$\$	High	City

\$ = Up to \$10,000 \$\$ = Between \$10,000 and \$100,000
\$\$\$ = Between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000 \$\$\$\$ = \$1,000,000 and above

Scoping the Implementation

Community members referred to different qualities they would like to see associated with different sections of the street. They expressed that the entire street should be safe, beautiful, and walkable. However, when it came to identifying opportunities for increasing foot traffic and vibrancy on Facer Street, community members focused on the section with the highest concentration of cultural and commercial uses, between Currie Street and Sherbourne Street.

Given this, the design treatment of the section between Currie Street and Sherbourne Street should focus on giving the area a unique identity as a local and regional destination. The design treatment for the rest of Facer Street should focus on increasing safety and comfort for daily users.

Piloting the Improvements

The Facer Street community is eager to see change. Some of the improvements identified in this report are low-cost and can be implemented in the short-term. Other recommendations, such as installing curb extensions, may not realistically occur for another 5-10 years. However, the Facer Street community and City of St. Catharines can work together in the interim to identify opportunities to pilot improvements using low-cost, temporary materials. For instance, rather than waiting years to install landscaped curb extensions, the City can create temporary curb extensions using paint and plastic bollards.

Coordinated Implementation

Improvements to the public realm should be responsive to opportunities as they arise. Improvements to Facer Street’s roads and sidewalks, such as the introduction of new crosswalks and curb bump outs, should be coordinated with the City of St. Catharines’

capital works program.

Build Community Capacity

Some of the design recommendations in this report are simple, low-to-medium-cost projects that are best led by the Facer Street community.

There is currently momentum among the local business community to lead some of the change on Facer Street. The Facer District Merchants and Residents Association (FDMRA) recently formed to organize the first-ever Facer European Festival in 2016 and has since received its Articles of Incorporation. As the only formal neighbourhood association in the Facer Street area, the group should prioritize expanding their membership, activities, and funding sources in order to take ownership over some of the recommendations included in this report.

Given how few businesses currently exist on Facer Street (less than 20), it is not advisable for the businesses to form a Business Improvement Area (BIA) just yet. An umbrella organization like the FDMRA, which invites participation from a variety of community stakeholders and not exclusively businesses, better reflects the present-day Facer Street community.

Strengthen Partnerships Between City and Facer Street Community

The City of St. Catharines can help support the growth and success of the FDMRA’s activities by partnering with them on streetscape improvements. Partnership can come in many forms, whether it’s sharing the costs of a beautification project, sharing maintenance responsibilities, or amending the Community Improvement Plan to include the businesses on Facer Street. A partnership model provides mutual incentive for accelerating change in the area.

