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.

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

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.
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.

Facer Population, 2016 (Census 2016)
Population Distribution by Age, 2016 (Census 2016)
Average Household Size, 2016 (Census 2016)

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.
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
- 60% of people feel positively about Facer Street
- 2 City Councillors
- 3 City Planning Staff
- 1 Regional Planning Staff

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

- Sidewalk maintenance (80%)
- Better lighting (73%)
- Road maintenance (49%)

Other answers: hanging planters (40%), street pavers (35%), more trees (31%), more seating (21%), bike lanes (21%), public art (15%).

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 (10%).

Sidewalk Salon & Online Survey Results

What people do on Facer St.:

- Shop or eat 73%
- Drive 66%
- Walk 46%
- Meet friends & family 35%
- Live 26%
- Go to work or school 22%
- Bike 20%
- Other 9%

How often people visit places on Facer St.:

- Everyday 25%
- Few times a week 38%
- Few times a month 12.5%
- Few times a year 12.5%
- Once a year or less 12.5%

How people feel about Facer St.:

- Positive 59%
- Neutral 30%
- Negative 11%

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.”

Image Credits: Khaldoon Ahmad
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

Idea & 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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>short term</td>
<td>add seating and rest areas (benches, patios, umbrellas)</td>
<td>$$</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>place garbage bins at bus stops</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>add planters and more street trees</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium term</td>
<td>reduce traffic speeds and increase safety by painting streets and adding crosswalks</td>
<td>$$</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long term</td>
<td>open new small businesses and pop-up shops</td>
<td>$$$</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>replace asphalt paving with stone pavers, brick or cobblestones</td>
<td>$$$</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
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

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**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: $$**

**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: $$**

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**Images:**

- 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
- 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: $

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: $

Improvement Area #2: Bring History to the Forefront

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: $$

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: $$
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: $

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: $

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: 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: $
**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:** $$$$

**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:** $$$

**Pleasant and Beautiful Walking Environment**

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 a 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.

**Improvement Area #6: Green the Street**

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 color 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 color 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:** $ - $$$

**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:** $ - $$$$

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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: $

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.

Impact: medium
Cost: $-$-$

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.

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: $-$-$ per business

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

Thick and Beautiful Walking Environment

Improvement Area #7: Accommodate Basic Needs

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

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Feature: Patios
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: $$

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: $
Banners
Announce arrival into a community or district that has a unique identity.

Murals
 Beautify facades and can tell a story about the cultural heritage.

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

‘School Zone’ Painted Road
Encourages motorists to slow down by enhancing visibility of school zone.

Seating
Provides resting places and an opportunity to stay and socialize.

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

Trees
Provide shade and a barrier between pedestrians and the road.

Garbage Cans
Enhance cleanliness of the street and discourage littering.

Speed humps
Prevent motorists from exceeding speed limits and make streets safer.

Lighting
Enhances visibility at night and creates a unique visual identity.

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Project Lead</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>Medium-term</td>
<td>$$$</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facade Grant</td>
<td>Medium-term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop-Up Shops</td>
<td>Medium-term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branding Strategy</td>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curb bulb outs</td>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>$$$</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalk maintenance</td>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>$$$</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street and sidewalk pavers</td>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>$$$$</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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### Taking Action

5 Next Steps
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.
For updates on this project, please visit:
www.stcatharines.ca/Facer