

Information concerning the meeting of the Facer Street community to learn more about the twinning of the skyway and how it will affect the community:

- **Time and Date: Monday, March 4, 2024, 7pm - 8:30pm**
- **Location: Canadian Polish Society, 43 Facer St, St. Catharines**

What we know about the Project:

Since the early 2010s, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has been working on plans to build an additional bridge next to the Skyway. Reasons for twinning the bridge include high traffic demand, road safety (the existing bridge lacks shoulders on both sides) and structural concerns because of the age of the existing bridge completed in 1963.

The second bridge would be around 2.2 kilometres (1.4 mi) in length and be constructed north of the existing Skyway for Toronto-bound traffic. The existing bridge would be used by vehicles heading toward Niagara. Once open, the existing Skyway bridge would be refurbished and rehabilitated. Construction is estimated to start in 2025 and take around 4 years to complete. Already 25 properties have been purchased by the Ministry of Transportation to facilitate the planned twinning.

What should the Facer Street Community know about this project?

Infrastructure Ontario estimates it will spend as much as \$1billion or more twinning the Skyway. As one of the neighbourhoods closest to the project, Facer Street residents can expect construction impacts typical of a project of this size: noise, dust, traffic disruptions.

The Twinning project is also an opportunity to redirect some of the ensuing economic investments back to advance economic, social or environmental conditions for local communities like Facer Street. Realizing these potential benefits can be incorporated in a Community Benefits Plan to guarantee positive outcomes for the neighbourhoods closest to the project area.

What is a Community Benefits Plan?

A Community Benefits Plan should reflect the input of the host communities and be delivered through partnerships, ensuring that the interests of neighbouring communities like Facer Street are taken into account. A Community Benefit Plan is usually comprised of two components:

1. A Workforce Development and Participation Strategy geared toward engaging local businesses and supporting workforce training and pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship opportunities.
2. A Neighbourhood Infrastructure Strategy focuses on collaborating with stakeholders and community members to develop a community investment strategy based on priorities identified by the community.

What's next?

We are just one year away from the proposed start of construction of the Skyway Twinning. This information session will explore what is known about the project and the desire of the Facer Street Community to develop and negotiate a Community Benefits Plan. Next steps will depend solely on the concerns and desires of the community as expressed at the meeting.

Who is the Niagara Community Benefits Network (NCBN) and why are they involved?

The Niagara Community Benefits Network is one of many Community Benefits Networks in Ontario. We are a not-for-profit organization that pursuing the use of Social Procurement policies and Community Benefits Agreements to ensure that Niagara will be a better place for all. Our role is not as a decision maker but as a facilitator for community involvement of Facer Street neighbourhood residents have a say in how this project proceeds.

<https://www.gordiehoweinternationalbridge.com/en/community-benefits-section>

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