

- Take a picture inside your favorite Foster Area Business
- Post on Instagram with #FosterFaves
- Follow @FosterAreaPDX on Instagram
- Win Gift Cards!

June 16 - 22 Walk/Roll on Foster
(visit your favorite business by foot,
bike or bus)

June 23 - 29 Favorite Happy Hour

June 30 - July 6 Favorite Shopping

July 7 - 13 Favorite Experience

July 14 - 20 Favorite Kid Friendly
Business



What are your **#FosterFaves**?



- Visit your favorite Foster Area Business
- Post a picture on Instagram with #FosterFaves
- Follow @FosterAreaPDX on Instagram
- Win Gift Cards!



**THERE IS A PLACE
WHERE YOUR VOICE
CAN CHANGE OUR
BUSINESS COMMUNITY
FOR THE BETTER.**

WHO WE ARE

We are a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization made up of sole proprietorships and business owners who work and live in the Foster area.

WHERE WE ARE

The Foster Area business corridor is home to a diverse range of businesses and customers. FABA represents businesses within two blocks of Foster Road from SE 49th Ave. to SE 82nd Ave.



FABA WORKS FOR YOU

Make your voice heard! FABA works on your behalf on issues that matter to your business:

- SAFETY & SECURITY
- TRANSPORTATION & TRAFFIC
- LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT
- DISTRICT IDENTITY & MARKETING
- STREETScape & BEAUTIFICATION
- COMMUNITY BUILDING & MORE!

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

LET'S GET TOGETHER

FABA meets on the second Tuesday of every month from 6-7:30 p.m. (no exceptions, even in December). Meetings are held at the Carts on Foster and are open to all.

QUESTIONS?

Go to our website at fosterarea.org



ARE YOU A FABA MEMBER?

Come to our monthly meeting on the second Tuesday of every month from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Portland Mercado.

Visit our website at fosterarea.org for current members and meeting information.



facebook.com/FosterArea



← to Downtown PDX

26 POWELL



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52ND AVE



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FOSTER

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GREAT CHEAP EATS
AWESOME KARAOKE!
"Foster-Powell Bar is Monument to Everything Right About a Dive Bar"
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facebook.com/TheStandardTavern

FOSTER BURGER
5339 SE FOSTER RD
(503) 775-2077
FOSTERBURGER.COM
OPEN DAILY FROM 11AM - 10PM

HISTORY



SE Foster & 52nd, 1937 (City of Portland Archives)
Does the building in the back left look familiar? It's currently The Trap!

Foster Area is a dynamic business district in Southeast Portland, Oregon. Foster Area has gained a reputation as an ethnically diverse district.

Currently, Foster Rd. is experiencing a major face lift which will promote safer traffic speeds, provide more pedestrian crossings, improve sidewalks, and add valuable bike lanes. Undoubtedly, this will increase business traffic and give shoppers additional incentive to support Foster's great businesses.

For additional information:
portlandoregon.gov/transportation/57866.

DID YOU KNOW?

Foster Rd. is named for early settler Philip Foster. Philip was the brother-in-law of Francis Pettygrove – winner of the infamous Portland/Boston coin flip.

Foster is home to the first civic structure in Oregon to be named after a woman, the historic 1918 Wikman building. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Wikman building is named for Finnish immigrant and anti-poverty advocate Lea Wikman. Today the Wikman building hosts Hallowed Halls recording studio: a fitting purpose since Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger are said to have performed free concerts there in the '60s.

Foster Rd. was an early market road and deviates from the dominant street grid because it follows the historical route of Native American trails.

From Homelessness To Housing
Whether by helping a homeless veteran and her family find housing, sheltering hundreds of people each night with nowhere else to turn, or opening new pathways to employment, Transition Projects represents an invaluable part of Portland's social fabric.
Find out more at:
www.tprojects.org
(503) 280-4700

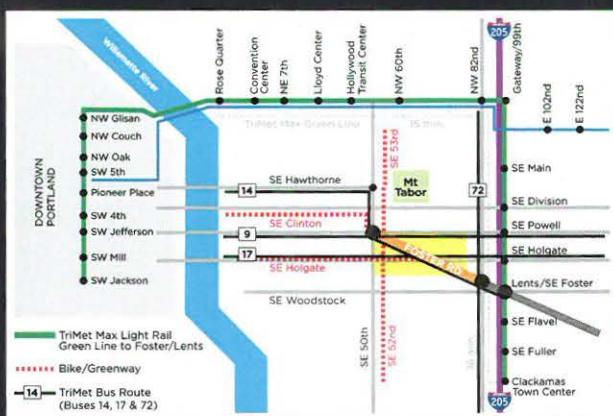
Red Castle GAMES
It's your turn.
www.redcastlegames.com
(503) 774-4263

Klein & Associates, Inc.
Providing professional land surveying, mapping, and drafting services for over thirty five years in Oregon and Washington.
6514 SE Foster Rd, Portland, OR 97206
(971) 271-8194 | info@kleinassocinc.com

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AUTENTICO VENEZUELANO FOOD
laarepax.com
5205 SE Foster Rd • (503) 913-2753

Pieper Cafe
Mon - Sat 7AM - 4PM
Sun 8AM - 4PM
Portland, OR 97206
971.271.7471
info@piepercafe.com

DIRECTIONS



Foster has access to frequent service Trimet bus lines: the 14 links Foster to Hawthorne and downtown; the 9 links Powell Blvd. with downtown and Northeast Portland, and the 72 runs on 82nd from Clackamas Town Center to North Killingsworth Avenue. Additionally, the 17 runs down Holgate Avenue to downtown and North Portland.

There are many major transportation arteries that border Foster, giving the neighborhood easy automobile access to the city center: westbound Foster can be accessed via Powell Blvd at 50th Ave. Eastbound Foster can be accessed via 82nd Ave, or I-205 at exit 17.

INFORMATIONAL LINKS FOR FOSTER AREA

Foster Area Business Association
fosterarea.com

Foster Powell Neighborhood Association
fosterpowell.com
facebook.com/FosterPowellNeighborhood

Mt. Scott Arleta Neighborhood Association
mtscottarleta.com

Vintage Foster Road
vintageportland.wordpress.com/category/streets/foster-rd

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PLEASE RECYCLE MAP AFTER USE.

6514 SE FOSTER
(503) 719-5796

CARTS ON FOSTER
Featuring 17 carts including a hair salon, an art gallery, and a nice beer garden with lots of plants!
5205 SE Foster
Portland, OR 97206
(503) 853-3541

Board Meeting
2nd Tuesday of the month | 6 pm
The Foster Area Business Association (FABA) board meeting is where the Board of Directors make important decisions concerning policy. This is also where they plan and organize events and materials to benefit the district.

Second Saturday - Foster Art Walk
2nd Saturday of every month
A monthly event where skilled local artists, various businesses and dynamic galleries get together to showcase the amazing talent of our creative community. Stroll Foster for great art, food, refreshments and entertainment.

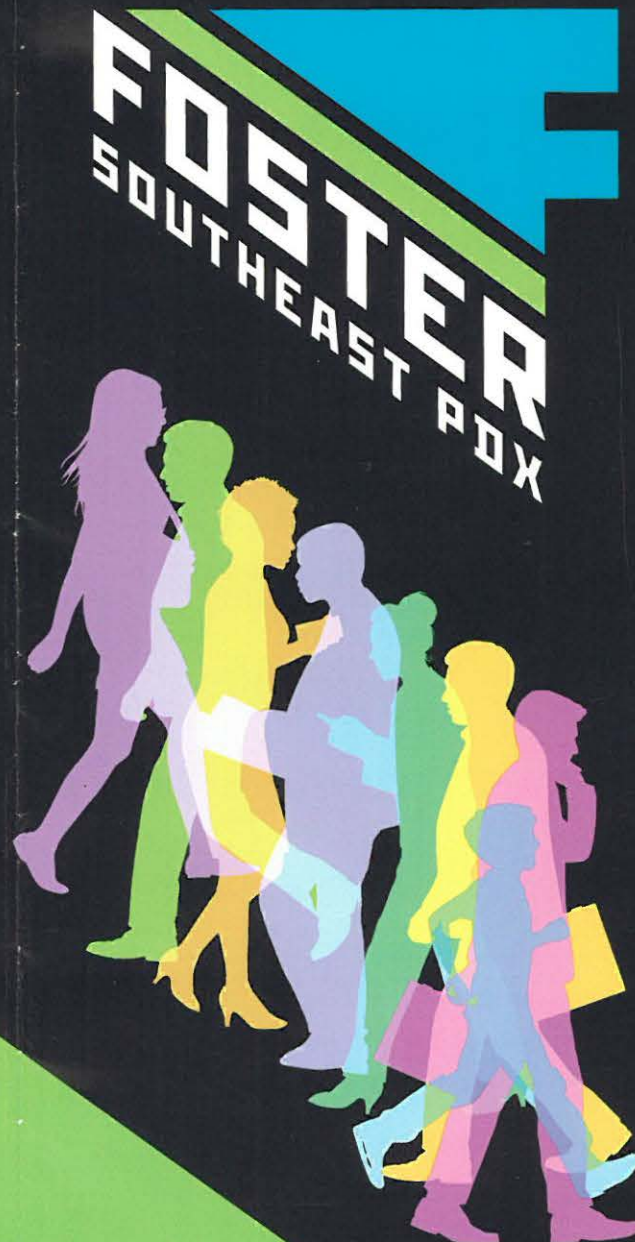
Winter Tree Lighting
November | please visit fosterarea.com for exact time
The Winter Tree Lighting is a family-friendly event, put on in partnership with the Neighborhood Association, in order to celebrate the joyous Foster Area winter season.

Foster Tasting Tour
July | please visit fosterarea.com for exact time
The Tasting Tour is a family-friendly summer event that takes advantage of the Foster District's rich culture and unique businesses. Partake in the event and enter to win prizes!

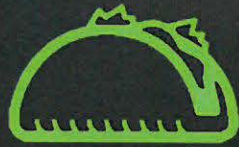
For additional event information please visit fosterarea.com

FOSTER AREA EVENTS

DISTRICT MAP



**DINING
SERVICES
EVENTS
SHOPPING
ENTERTAINMENT**
FOSTERAREA.COM



FOSTER TASTING TOUR

**WIN
Prizes**

More info at:
fosterarea.com

\$5

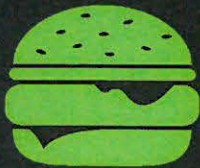
**Food & Drink
SPECIALS**

Get a passport
at participating
businesses

**WALK & BIKE
the New
Streetscape**

+ Play PBOT's Foster Letter Hunt for a chance to win a \$500 gift card!

SATURDAY, JULY 20, 10AM-10PM



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ATTORNEY AT LAW
P. 503.463.4442



PBOT
PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION



Foster Market

Danielle Deschenes Realtor

Sandra McLeod Miller

ginger salon

Tami Landers LLC



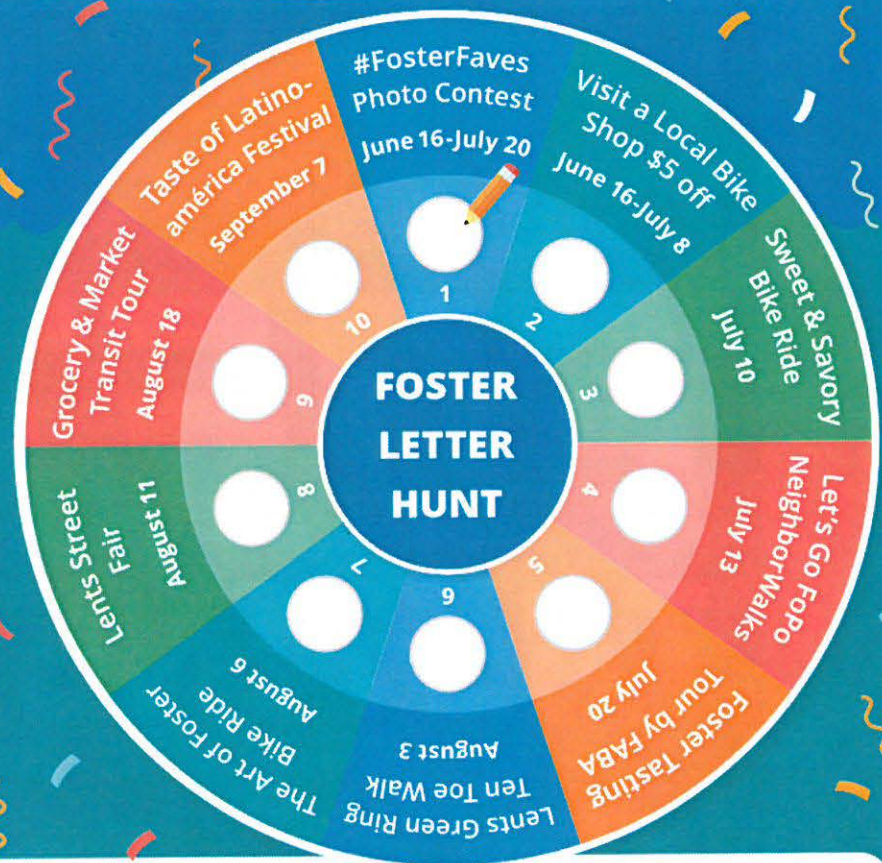
CELEBRATE SUMMER ON FOSTER

FOSTER CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETE and the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) is celebrating. We've lined up some fun summer events and activities in your neighborhood. Try walking, biking, or riding the bus to new and favorite places.

To put a cherry on top, you can enter to win one of four \$500 Visa gift cards by participating in an activity.

RAFFLE TICKET INSTRUCTIONS:

Collect an alphabet letter at each event for one raffle entry. Go to more events, collect more letters, and you may unlock a secret word that Foster Road has for you.



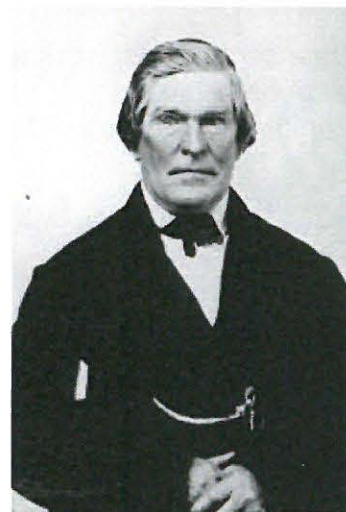
Get event details and submit your raffle entry at SaferFoster.com

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On behalf of the Foster Area Business Association (FABA) and the 228 businesses, 1,668 employees, and 3,029 residents we represent, we appreciate your time, consideration, and continued investment in Foster Area's future.

History

Foster Road has been a vital part of industry and commerce dating back to 1800 when the Clackamas Tribe utilized it as a gateway to connect Johnson Creek with the Willamette River. In 1843, the thoroughfare was named after Philip Foster, one of the first Oregon Territory settlers. Over the course of 150 years, Foster Road has served many purposes and many people.



Chief Lone Wolf, Clackamas Tribe (earliest photo on record) and Philip Foster, 1800

In 1850, Foster Road was designated as a farm-to-market thoroughfare. In 1912, Foster's streetcar shuttled people from the Arleta and Lents districts to the urban core in twenty minutes or less. In 1950, Fred Meyer closed its doors to the neighborhood to reconfigure its store with ample parking for customers; today, that location is now home to Shun Fat, an Asian grocery that serves the community's highly diverse residents.

Today

The Foster Area Business District is home to a diverse mix of businesses and residents including:

- Destination Businesses – Carts on Foster, Portland Mercado, Red Castle Games, Tango Berretin
- Family-owned, Legacy Businesses – Kern Park Flower Shop (1915), Mt. Scott Fuel (1919), George Morlan Plumbing (1927), Artistic Taxidermy and Mac's Radiator (1937), I've Been Framed (1955), Save Stores (1960)
- POC Businesses – An Xuyen Bakery, K&B Bakery, Nayar Taqueria
- Community Organizations – Junior Achievement, Performance Works NW, Portland Radio Project, YMCA

Foster businesses and neighbors have been and remain in intense flux. While the City grows, the Foster area continues to witness *exponential* growth due to its seemingly low rents and mortgage prices. However, while the median household income in Portland is approximately \$62,000,

Foster resident's household incomes are roughly \$10,000 below that average and significantly larger in size (Portland averages 2.4 people per household while Foster households contain, on average, 4 people.) While the median rent in the Foster area is \$992 versus the Portland rental average of \$1,024, the disproportionately lower income of Foster neighbors creates higher levels of housing insecurity. Lower incomes also translate to lower discretionary spending at Foster Area businesses.

Foster faces additional demographic challenges and opportunities:

- 13% residents were not born in the US
- 5% of Foster residents do not speak English well if at all
- 410% higher rates of crime than other parts of Portland
- Housing insecurity driven by a large number of renter-occupied housing with zero bedrooms (Foster Area residents frequently live in unsanctioned "housing" or, literally, on the couch of a friend)
- 300 new family and multi-generational lofts/apartments with 50,000 sq ft new retail space built by 2021

The public and private sector must work together to prevent displacement, harness changing opportunities and support education, business and culture shifts that increase prosperity for all in our vibrant and rapidly evolving community.

Portland Business District Per Capita Income (2017)



Foster Area Per Capita Income: **\$24,221**

Portland Business District Median Household Income (2017)



Foster Area Median Household Income: **\$52,296 (16% less than Portland average)**



Accomplishments 2018

300
attendees
at Winter
Celebration
(**50%** increase)



NEW
**District
Map**

 **27%** increase
in Facebook Followers

 **425** followers
new Instagram

District Website
97% increase in visitors

Tasting Tour
\$9,800 in sales

Quarterly business networking

Mixers 

Advocacy
Shelter, Streetscape
and Crime Prevention



22.5%
increase in
membership

District staffer met
with businesses
280 times

Received
\$10,000
in grant awards

Learn more at fosterarea.com

FOSTER AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

2019

Member Networking and Education

Connect with colleagues and customers. Learn new strategies to build your bottom line from business experts.

- Quarterly Networking Mixers in February, May, September and November
- Trainings (10 per year, business best practices and tools for district leaders; lunch provided)
- Annual Meeting and District Celebration
- Business Happy Hour with Educational Speakers

Annual District Events

Seasonal events that bring customers directly to your business and provide valuable sponsorship and advertising opportunities.

- Foster Winterfest- December 2, 2018
- Foster Forward- November 23 – December 9, 2018
- Foster Tasting Tour- July 2019 (generated more than \$9,800 in 2018)

Advertising, Marketing and Promotion Plus Online Media

Stretch your marketing budget with Foster Area Business Association advertising, earned media and targeted PR. Feature your products, special events or sales via our new website, social media and email list which highlight businesses and important Foster Road information.

- FosterArea.com member profile
- Monthly Newsletter (over 200 subscribers)
- District Map: 1,500 distribution, updated with member information annually
- Social Media (27% increase in Facebook likes in 2018)
- Halloween and St. Patrick's Day member promotional campaign

Advocacy

Leverage Foster Area Business Association relationships with elected officials, including Commissioner Nick Fish, our City Council Business District Liaison, and City Bureaus. Understand the impact of increasing City investment in East Portland, planning, construction, public safety and transportation on your business. Elevate the status of your business with opinion leaders.

- FABA has been very involved with PBOT insuring that the Foster Streetscape will benefit all the businesses on the street and mitigate the impact of construction
- FABA was instrumental in the creation of the steering committee to guide Foster's new shelter and continues to advocate for your interests with a representative on the committee

Representation on Board of Directors

Shape the future of Foster Area Business Association. Members are eligible to join the Board or committees and help make important decisions about Foster Area Business Association events, promotions and advocacy efforts.

Venture Portland

Foster Area Business Association is a member.

- The Catalytic Investment Initiative provides increased resources, including grants and staffing
- Eligibility to apply for up to \$15,000 in annual grants for district projects and events (Venture Portland provided more than \$10,000 in grants to FABA last year)
- City-wide marketing campaigns highlight neighborhood businesses and districts (Pledge to Shop Local, Summer Local, Fall Into Local and National Small Business Week)
- Representation with City Leaders – Venture Portland elevates the status of neighborhood business districts and businesses with elected officials

| 2018

**Southeast Foster Road
and the Foster Streetscape Plan**
A Commercial Affordability Study

Prepared by Christian Smith, MPP Candidate

In partnership with:

Mark O. Hatfield School of Government
And
Prosper Portland

September 4, 2018
Christian Smith
christianbsmith@me.com

Executive Summary

This study was prepared for Prosper Portland to help understand the gentrifying effects of the Foster Streetscape Plan to the retail environment of Foster Road. Out of concern that the streetscape improvements may result in forcing out neighborhood-serving small business owners, this report attempts to analyze the effects of the Division Streetscape Plan on the retail environment of Southeast Division Street to forecast the potential impacts the Foster Streetscape renovation will have on the Foster business community. This study includes a before-and-after analysis of Southeast Division Street, observations of existing conditions on Foster Road, and qualitative and quantitative results received from conversations with stakeholders within the small business community of the Foster Area. The report includes a compilation of strategies and best practices studies or employed by other cities facing the same challenges. It concludes with recommendations, methodologies and appendices.

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Introduction

As the cost of living in Portland rises, and concerns mount over the city's growing pains and its livability, much attention has been given to residential gentrification and its impacts on residents whose incomes are not able to keep pace with the rising cost of housing. These immediate concerns, along with Portland's housing crisis, have overshadowed a different challenge lurking in the background: commercial affordability.

Portland entrepreneurs are increasingly challenged by rising retail lease rates and low vacancies. Portland's retail property vacancy rate is 20% lower than the national average, and average quoted retail property lease rates are 14% higher than the national average. Small businesses across the city are finding their properties bought out from under them by developers looking to redevelop the sites into new residential and commercial space (Moore, 2016).

At the time of this report, Southeast Foster Road is in a state of disrepair not uncommon to many of Portland's neighborhood main streets before city-funded infrastructure improvements. The commercial environment consists of a mix of independent, light industrial, and an up-and-coming collection of bars, cafes, and coffee shops. However, the infrastructure of Foster Road is about to embark on a dramatic revision. After years of collaboration with area stakeholders, the City of Portland ("the City") is preparing to restore Foster Road and convert it from a high-capacity vehicular corridor back into a neighborhood main street (as it was originally envisioned).

The first part of this study will analyze the effects of a previous streetscape redevelopment project on Southeast Division Street to forecast expectations for Foster Road. Division Street was selected for comparison due to its close geographical proximity. Additionally, the project's relatively recent completion means that abundant data is available to analyze before and after conditions to look for valid trends.

The second part of this report examines the existing conditions on Southeast Foster Road from 50th Avenue to 82nd Avenue. It includes the current state of the commercial environment as represented by quantitative data and information gleaned from stakeholder interviews and questionnaire responses.

The third part of this report contains a compilation of previous experiences and best practices from other cities facing similar growth challenges as Portland with the intent that Prosper Portland may find appropriate and useful tools to assist small business owners faced with increased overhead expenditures.

Portland Gentrification and Affordability

Portland State University's Kelly Howsley offered the following definition of gentrification for the Fourth International Space Syntax Symposium:

"Gentrification is commonly understood as the process by which middle to upper income residents acquire housing in a traditionally low income neighborhood, raising property

values and displacing low income residents. Implicit in its definition is displacement. Gentrification in urban areas also diminishes core affordable neighborhoods important not only for employment opportunities but to lessen commuting costs to low income households” (Howsley, 2003).

Portland’s affordability challenges can be traced to a lack of available housing compared to the number of people seeking to rent or purchase shelter. By 2009, as the city emerged from the Great Recession, a new wave of migration to the Pacific Northwest brought droves of newcomers to Portland. Lured by its quality of life and relative affordability, the number of migrants quickly outpaced the amount of new housing stock coming online. High demand and low vacancy rates caused rent and home prices to skyrocket. Landlords raising prices forced many existing residents out of their long lived-in neighborhoods (Hamilton, 2017). By 2015, citywide average rent was increasing by more than \$100 per month (Portland Housing Bureau, 2015).

Commercial Gentrification in Portland

Studies on commercial gentrification in Portland are more difficult to come by, but a 1992 Masters Thesis authored by Portland State graduate Rachel Ann Hardyman chronicling the revitalization of Hawthorne Boulevard offers some useful insights. Hawthorne’s evolutionary struggles mirror some of the challenges currently facing Foster Road. In particular, the author notes an abundance of commercial properties in various states of neglect and disrepair. Property owners were either unable or unwilling to make the necessary improvements to contribute to district revitalization. The patterns Hardyman observed regarding commercial gentrification on Hawthorne is worth noting, as it entailed effects many of the stakeholders of Foster Road are actively hoping to prevent. Chief among these was the displacement of small, independent, neighborhood-focused businesses in favor of specialty retailers and restaurants that were able to afford higher rents as a result of attracting regional customers. Before Hawthorne’s renaissance, approximately 78% of businesses in the study area serviced demand for local convenience or household goods. Initial revival of the district was marked by an increase in antique stores, and the author goes further to detail one specific location that once housed a linoleum merchant before becoming an antique store and, ultimately, Powell’s Books for Cooks and Gardeners. The author also notes the purchase and renovation of the Bagdad Theater as a major catalyst for district revitalization (Hardyman, 1992).

Southeast Division Street Analysis

Division Street in Southeast Portland recently underwent a city-sponsored streetscape improvement project to revitalize and reimagine the high-capacity vehicular boulevard into a commercial main street more suited for local pedestrian and traffic activity (See Figure 1). The Division Green Street/Main Street Plan was cultivated after a two-year public involvement and planning process that began in 2004 and completed in 2006. The final product combined goals of the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services to divert storm water runoff, the Portland

Bureau of Transportation to fix a street in disrepair, and both the City's and neighborhood residents' goals for prioritizing Division Street's rebirth as a neighborhood Main Street. Division Street now boasts a much more pedestrian-friendly urban design that emphasizes nodes for commercial activity, residential use, traffic calming, and eco-friendly stormwater management (Portland Bureau of Planning, 2006).



Fig. 1: Southeast Division showing transit stop enhancements, improved stormwater management, and curb extensions providing more comfortable pedestrian crossings (source: TriMet.Org).

The project itself was constructed in 2013. However, a Portland State University senior capstone project completed in 2011, undertaken in collaboration with the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, provides a snapshot of the Division Street commercial environment prior to implementation of the Division Streetscape Plan (Brewer, et al., 2011). The researchers collected information from addresses on Division between SE 14th and SE 35th Avenues and coded their observations into categories as shown in Figure 2. The additional category, N/A, accounts for addresses that either lacked data or were residential.

Fig. 2: Observed commercial uses on SE Division as of 2011 (source: Brewer, et al., 2011).

Business Category	Observed
-------------------	----------

Arts-Culture	1
Grocery	3
Industrial Services	1
Other	1
Retail	10
Parking	2
Professional Services	17
Public-Ed-Health	6
Religion-Church	3
Restaurant-Bar	19
Total	63

After canvassing the same survey area in 2018, five years later, this study found that commercial uses in the area had changed significantly (see Figure 3).

Fig. 3: Observed commercial uses on SE Division as of 2018.

Business Category	Observed
Arts-Culture	4
Grocery	4
Industrial Services	3
Other	2
Retail	35
Parking	0
Professional Services	30
Public-Ed-Health	6
Religion-Church	2
Restaurant-Bar	57
Total	143

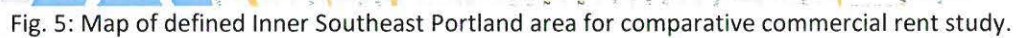
To illustrate the changes, Figure 4 below shows the comparative changes over a seven-year period.

Fig. 4: Observed changes in commercial uses on SE Division between 2011 and 2018.

Business Category	2011	2018	Change
Arts-Culture	1	4	+ 3
Grocery	3	4	+ 1
Industrial Services	1	3	+ 2
Other	1	2	+ 1
Retail	10	35	+ 25
Parking	2	0	- 2
Professional Services	17	30	+ 13
Public-Ed-Health	6	6	0
Religion-Church	3	2	- 1
Restaurant-Bar	19	57	+ 38
Total	63	143	+ 80

In addition, while there were no longer any dedicated surface parking lots, five empty lots were observed. Most were either for sale or undergoing various stages of apparent mixed-use construction.

Data collected from CoStar was analyzed to observe commercial property trends along Division Street from the years 2006 to present, and then compared to similar trends in close-in Southeast Portland and citywide across Portland. As a reminder, the data used for Inner Southeast PDX includes the Division Street study area, but also expands out to include the Southeast Industrial, Hawthorne, Belmont, Burnside, and Sandy commercial districts out to Caesar Chavez Avenue (see Figure 5).



8

Fig. 6: Gross Office Rents.



Triple Net (NNN)¹ leases require the tenant to pay more of the expenses, typically maintenance, insurance, and some taxes, associated with the property, often in return for a lower base lease rate. This type of lease is common for some retail and most foodservice establishments, which require much more in the way of capital improvements to become operational. The observed pattern noted here is that NNN leases were already on track to outpace city averages before the recession. Post-recovery, this trend had resumed its upward trajectory and, at an average rent of \$25.34 per square foot/year, the average 2018 NNN rent for Southeast Division is more than double the average rent reported in the rest of close-in Southeast and the City at large (see Figure 7).

¹ Other types of leases include the gross lease, where rent is all-inclusive of other property expenses, and single or double net (N or NN) leases. For N and NN leases, the tenant assumes an increasing number of the expenses associated with the property. Gross leases are more common for general office space but are rarely, if ever, available for retail or foodservice establishments.

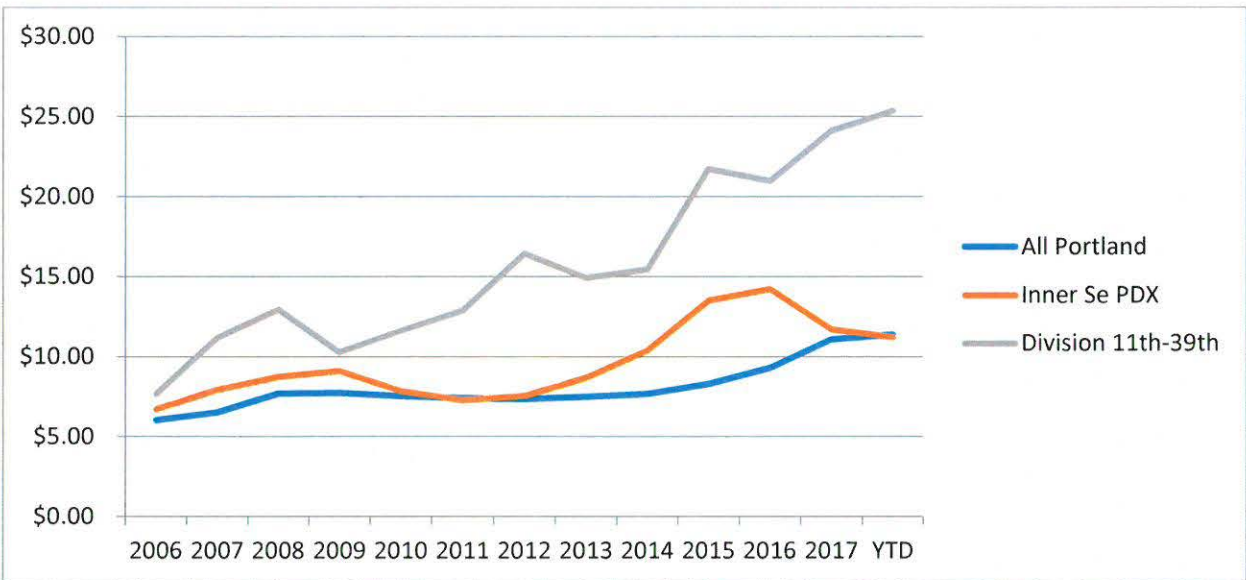


Fig. 7: NNN rents

Another indicator is the rate of change in monthly NNN lease rates (see Figure 8). In this case, during the recession of 2008-2010, changes ranged from zero to negative. Post-recession, citywide commercial rents leveled off before beginning a slow but steady incline starting around 2012 – 2013. Commercial properties on Division Street, however, show a strikingly different pattern. Even before the rest of the city’s rental markets began crawling out of the recession, property along Division was increasing by over ten percent per year. By 2011 – 2012, both inner Southeast and the rest of Portland were leveling off or showing positive growth. At the same time, rent on Division had risen by almost thirty percent from the previous year. A noteworthy observation in Figure 6 below is that commercial rents declined by ten percent during construction of the Division Streetscape, but then increased by forty percent the following year before leveling off and generally tracking the same rates of change citywide.

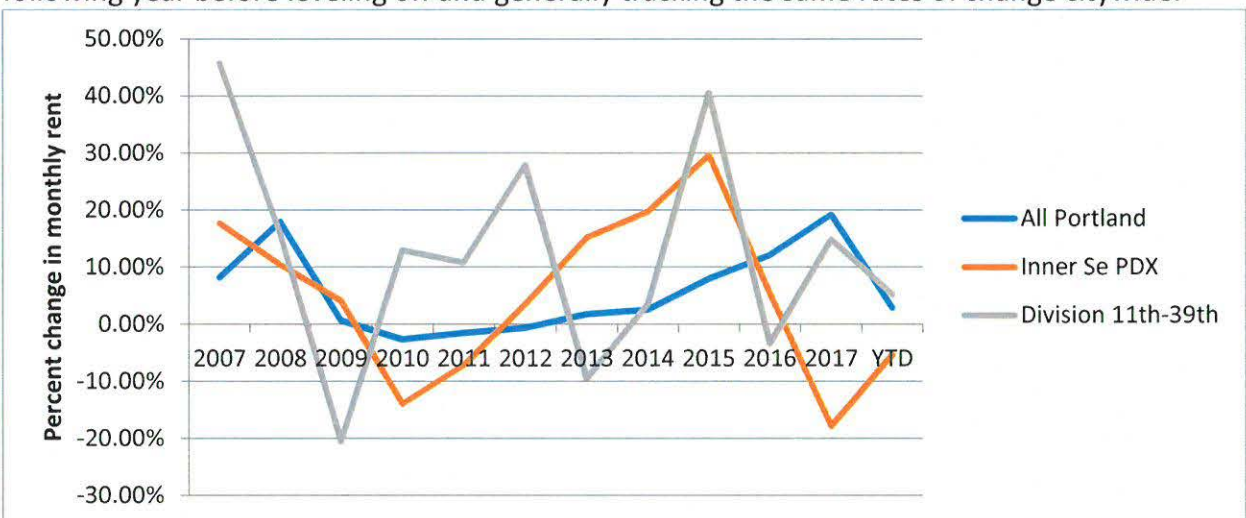


Fig. 8: Rates of change in NNN rents.

The data indicates that commercial lease rates on Southeast Division Street tended to be very responsive both to the implementation of the streetscape improvements and to the construction of the streetscape itself. Despite the drastic increase in small businesses operating in the commercial district over the study period, vacancy rates remained relatively stable (see Figures 9 and 10). This indicates that new construction is keeping pace with demand for retail space.

Vacancy %	All Portland	Inner Se PDX	Division 11th-39th
2006	4.10%	5.08%	4.43%
2007	3.76%	3.98%	3.07%
2008	3.92%	1.80%	2.69%
2009	5.98%	3.17%	3.41%
2010	6.15%	4.61%	6.14%
2011	5.62%	5.25%	5.06%
2012	5.40%	3.85%	2.89%
2013	4.88%	3.27%	4.68%
2014	4.58%	2.81%	5.61%
2015	3.69%	2.05%	2.03%
2016	3.87%	2.23%	1.53%
2017	3.89%	3.14%	2.38%
YTD	4.17%	3.81%	4.19%

Fig. 9: Commercial vacancy rates.



Fig. 10: Commercial vacancy rates.

Southeast Foster Road Analysis

Foster Road Stakeholder Reflections

After analyzing the trends on Southeast Division Street and anecdotal evidence from other areas of the city that have seen commercial district redevelopment, the hypothesis informing this study is that the reconfiguration and pedestrian/bicycle safety improvements on Southeast Foster Road would lead to an increase in commercial lease rates, potentially endangering small business owners in the business district. Aside from the mathematical projections and speculation, an important part of the narrative includes reaching out to the stakeholders themselves to gain their understanding of the imminent changes. To accomplish this, a sampling of twelve Foster area small business owners answered questionnaires, and two in-depth interviews were conducted.

The in-depth interviews were conducted individually with the owners of two separate small businesses. The interviews revealed that both of the business owners feel deeply and personally invested in the community aspects of the neighborhood where their enterprises are located. One participant, the owner of a small café on SE Foster Road, lives nearby and considers the neighborhood connection between her and her customers to be one of the most important aspects of her business. She has an excellent relationship with her current landlord, and considers her current rent situation to be affordable, but notes that the fear of gentrification-related rent increases is omnipresent.

The second interviewee owns a retail board game/role-playing game store in the heart of the district. He moved in when rents on Foster had taken a dip during the recession of 2008-2010 and commercial space was more plentiful and relatively inexpensive. He has a less-than-favorable relationship with his landlord, who is averse to making any repairs on the building but very enthusiastic about squeezing the maximum amount of rent from his tenants. The business owner is feeling squeezed out by potential rent increases and is currently seeking a new location. Furthermore, this participant brought to the fore an additional condition to consider when factoring in commercial affordability on Foster Road: scarcity of usable retail storefronts (discussed further in the next section).

The questionnaires returned by participating stakeholders revealed that the median small business owner renting a storefront on Foster Road has been in business for under three years, and has about two and a half years remaining on their lease. They universally support the Foster Streetscape plan. Currently, the business owners sampled pay a median rent of \$16.36/year per square foot. They all consider their current rent to be affordable, but almost all expect their rent to rise as a result of the plan's implementation. When asked how much of a rent increase the participants could afford before having to relocate or exit the industry, one stakeholder expressed concern that landlords could use this information to max out tenants' affordability. For their protection, this report will not disclose the specifics of this data, except to note anecdotally that one business owner could only afford an increase of 11% before having to close or relocate.

When asked how the business owners would respond to rent increases, about half who responded expected that the increase in sales driven by the Foster Streetscape's more pedestrian-friendly environment to offset anticipated rent hikes. Others plan on cutting the

number of employees and raising prices. One stakeholder is already relocating their retail business to Hawthorne Blvd., where they found a storefront for the same price per square foot as their current location on Foster, but in a district with exponentially more foot traffic.

Foster Road Existing Conditions

A walking tour survey of Southeast Foster Road found the existing commercial enterprises shown in Figure 11.

Business Category	Observed
Restaurant	30
Food Carts	23
Retail	24
Wholesale	3
Market	9
Auto Service/Sales	15
Professional Services	28
Gov't/Non-Profit/Ed.	4
Arts/Performance	5
Light Industrial	1
Health and Wellness	6
Industrial Services	1
Marijuana Grows	2 to 5

Fig. 11: Foster Road commercial uses in 2018.

Of particular note is the bottom row, indicating the number of marijuana businesses on SE Foster Road. Commercial property used for cannabis production is difficult to identify, but blacked-out windows and running HVAC systems tend to be a positive indicator. At minimum, two such uses were identified, but based on the observed conditions the number could be as high as five.

As previously mentioned, an existing challenge facing would-be entrepreneurs on Foster Road is the scarcity of available storefronts for rent. Currently, as many as nineteen useable commercial properties, totaling 51,430 square feet, sit vacant on Foster Road. Of these, only one storefront of 3,800 square feet is currently on the market. The survey of existing conditions also identified six buildings totaling 20,825 square feet and hosting a minimum of ten retail storefronts that were in a state of dereliction and disrepair as to be unusable in their current states. Derelict properties include the visibly crumbling former flooring store shown in Figure 12.



Fig. 12: The foundation of this building is crumbling, and has been for over a decade.

Figure 13 shows a building that has lain fallow for the entirety of the author's fifteen years of residence in the Foster-Powell neighborhood. Note the red sign marked "U". This sign is a warning to first responders that the building is unsafe to enter in the event of an emergency.

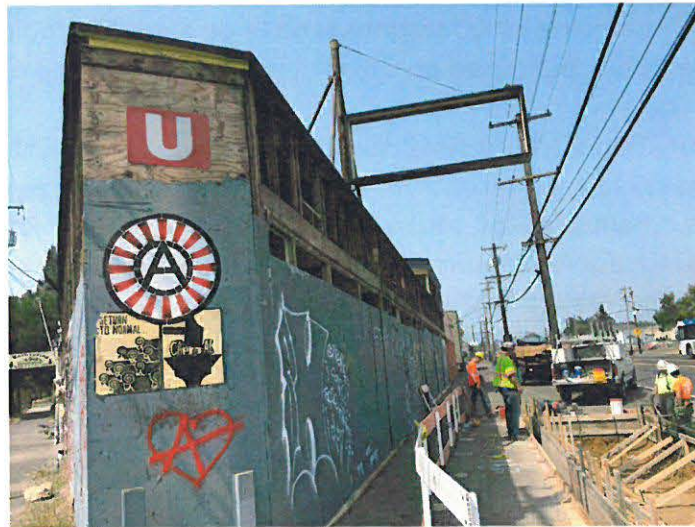


Fig. 13: Dilapidated building on the corner of Southeast Foster and Boise. The hole being excavated on the right is for a bioswale as part of the Foster Streetscape improvements.

The former Phoenix Pharmacy building, on the corner of Southeast Foster and 67th, could be a showcase building for the district. However, sources close to the owner reveal that the building's restoration will cost upwards of one million dollars (see Figure 14).

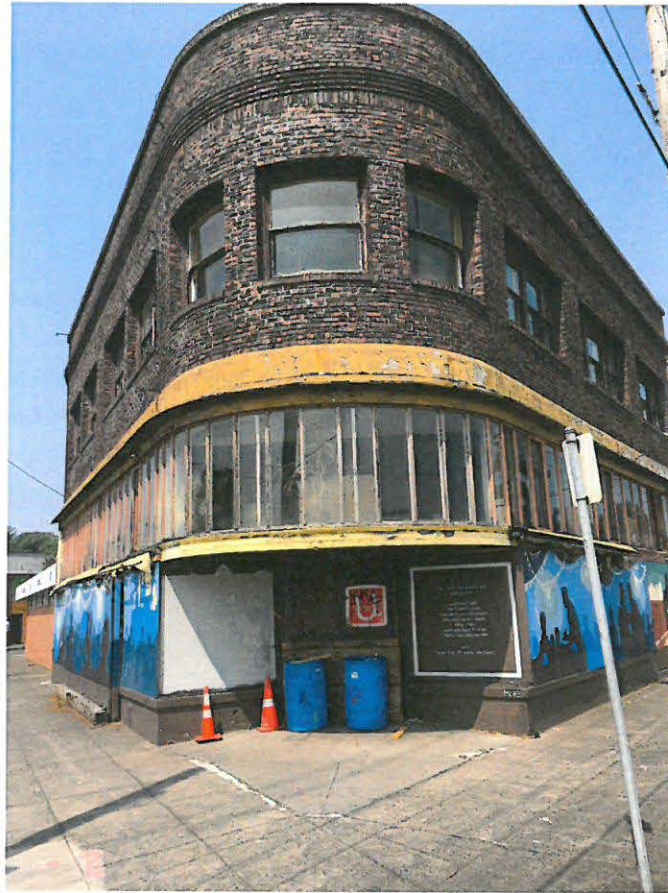


Fig. 14: Phoenix Pharmacy Building. Note the "U" sign on the front door.

On the one hand, the existing environments of Foster Road present some daunting barriers to revitalization. While many of the safety issues will be alleviated by implementation of the streetscape plan, the current conditions of the retail environment may not offer much incentive for landlords to make the necessary improvements or transactions that could spark a more rapid district renewal. However, many Foster area stakeholders believe that restoration of the Phoenix Pharmacy, the Bob White Theater, and/or the Day Theater buildings would create a similar domino effect for many of the surrounding properties that the restoration of the Bagdad Theater had on the main Hawthorne business district.

Responses to Commercial Gentrification: Other Cities' Experiences

A recent gentrification study by realty group Realtor.com found that the following 10 cities are gentrifying the fastest (Yuqing, 2017):

1. Charleston, SC
2. Asheville, NC
3. Washington, DC
4. Portland, OR
5. Denver, CO
6. Nashville, TN
7. Sacramento, CA
8. Jersey City, NJ
9. Long Beach, CA
10. Austin, TX

This study investigated small business affordability assistance programs in each of those cities plus New York City and Portland's West Coast neighbors Seattle and San Francisco.

Many of the cities identified have no apparent strategies to help small business with rental affordability. Charleston is experiencing a housing crisis that has been compared to San Francisco's (Darlington, 2017), and has no programs available to help with commercial affordability. In fact, the web page for the Charleston County Economic Development small business resources displays "Page Not Found" (see Figure 15).

Fig. 15: Charleston's non-existent small business resource page



Asheville is also in the throes of a housing and affordability crisis (Cronin, 2016), but commercial affordability does not appear to be a concern yet. Washington, D.C.'s commercial districts are rapidly losing locally-owned businesses to national chains due to skyrocketing rents, sometimes reaching \$78 per square foot (Vembar, 2017). The city has no apparent programs to help business owners with affordability but does make use of a "Made in D.C." campaign to promote locally made goods and services (Spiegel, 2017). Denver has no programs or studies to address small business affordability. In Nashville, the issue of local merchants being pushed out of their neighborhoods by rising rents is surfacing in the public awareness sphere, and mitigation programs have just entered the conception phase (Bryant, 2016). Jersey City, Long Beach, and Sacramento have no published programs to assist small businesses struggling to afford rental space.

The City of Austin, Texas, recently drafted an Affordability Action Plan that acknowledges affordability as a challenge for small independent businesses. The plan is still in the development phase, but begins the process of stakeholder-led action to cultivate a comprehensive program to address the issue and support local business owners (King, 2017).

In New York City, local government has been experimenting with both rezoning and developer incentives (Lavecchia, 2018). The zoning component allows for more medium density, mixed-use developments along more corridors (New York City Department of City Planning, 2018). The City of New York also invested in Commercial District Needs Assessments to “identify the needs and opportunities for merchant organizing, public programming, district marketing and branding, streetscape enhancements, business support services, and other quality of life improvements” (NYC Small Business Services, 2018). Of particular interest is a Neighborhood Retail Preservation pilot program in the East New York rezoning area. This program requires developers receiving public subsidies to set aside affordable retail space if their building meets certain square footage thresholds. This set aside will amount to the lesser of 5,000 square feet or 20 percent of the ground floor retail. Rents will begin at 30 percent below market rate (City of New York, 2017). This is a much more aggressive model for commercial affordability than the 10 percent below market rate offered at Lents Commons or Oliver Station within the Lents Town Center URA (Prosper Portland, 2018).

Another New York innovation is a program to help local business owners negotiate lease agreements with the landlords. The service offers free clinics through the library system to help prospective tenants understand the lease agreements better, and then provides legal assistance for those in the process of signing a lease (City of New York, 2017); the goal of this program is reducing the power imbalance in tenant-landlord negotiations (Lavecchia, 2018). A recent Oregon Business article points out the possible need for similar assistance with local tenants. Stories abound of local merchants struggling to receive equitable treatment from their landlords in the face of rapidly rising commercial rents (Diehl, 2018).

San Francisco legislated a program to support Legacy Business² by providing assistance and incentives for both the renter and the landlord. Property owners who offer long-term leases to legacy tenants are eligible for yearly grants to subsidize the rents, and businesses may be eligible for yearly grants based on the number of employees (Preserve Legacy Business in SF, 2018).

By far, the most thorough attempt to address the issue of commercial affordability was found from the Seattle Office of Economic Development. In 2016, Seattle Mayor Edward Murray commissioned a study to accomplish citywide what this study attempts to do for Southeast Foster Road. The Seattle report specifically cites commercial affordability as a key component to the success of small independent business, and recommends five solutions after considerable research and input (Seattle Office of Economic Development, 2016):

1. **Launch a new entity focused on commercial affordability.** The new entity would be focused on providing technical assistance and support services to commercial tenants.
2. **Institute new financial incentives.** Here the recommendations include a) tax abatements for landlords who provide certain benefits to their commercial tenants; b) adjusting property taxes so that they connect to a building’s income rather than the property values in the surrounding area; c) develop a fund for small business to provide for low-cost loans or other assistance.

² Definitions for Legacy Businesses vary, but they are generally understood to be traditional, locally-owned firms in long-established business nodes, as compared to “new economy” firms or chain stores.

3. **Changes to public policy.** The committee has a number of recommendations in this category, including a) prioritizing sales to small business interests when considering the disposal of publicly owned property; b) requiring affordable commercial space as a component of affordable housing developments; c) locating affordable commercial space in public properties; d) zoning changes to allow for smaller commercial enterprise “pockets” within residential zones; e) instituting policies to discourage the imposition of large chains in locations where they could negatively impact or displace locally-owned small business.
4. **Improve the permitting process.** These proposals are intended to reduce barriers to entry for many small businesses and also allow community stakeholders to have more input on the selection of commercial tenants. They include a) reducing permitting requirements for qualifying businesses, allowing for a “fast track”; b) strengthening retail design guidelines to allow for more affordable small business space; c) coordinating with neighborhood organizations to ensure that neighborhood priorities are addressed when considering new commercial developments.
5. **Expand technical assistance programs.** Existing resources for small business would grow to include a) a commercial affordability consulting team to help new businesses with startup support and property owners with building rehabilitation; b) a coordinated outreach program to connect small business and property owners with city resources; c) more diversified outreach to connect underserved populations with city resources; d) a small business marketplace exchange to facilitate the sharing of resources and the development of informational exchange networks.
6. **Additional long-term solutions.** These recommendations include a) efforts to relieve the burden of mandated unreinforced masonry upgrades; b) studying the prospects for affordable commercial space on industrial land; c) zoning policy changes to allow for additional building height and denser development; d) increased attention to public safety and anti-vandalism efforts.
(Seattle Office of Economic Development, 2016)

Addressing Vacant and Derelict Properties

A number of policy options have been studied and implemented by various municipalities to address the issue of derelict properties. One prevalent tool involves using building maintenance codes to coerce property owners to rehabilitate their buildings or sell to a party who agrees to do so. Tax foreclosure is another tool, although the lengthy legal process, and potential political backlash, has made this option unattractive to many cities (Accordino & Johnson, 2000).

A new, yet controversial, policy proposal being floated by several cities involves a vacancy tax levied on vacant storefronts. Property owners have, in many cases, been found to be holding onto unused storefronts waiting for general neighborhood conditions to improve before securing tenants at higher lease rates than the current market indicates. However, this creates a chicken-and-egg problem as the vacancies and general disrepair themselves contribute to neighborhood blight (Rosenburg, 2018). Washington, D.C. recently collected \$9.4

million in vacancy taxes, but had no mechanism in place to assess the tax's effectiveness in filling vacant storefronts (Charles, 2018). As all of these measures are inherently punitive in nature this report will not recommend their pursuit without first attempting to collaborate directly with the property owners to seek equitable solutions.

Recommendations

The data and observed patterns on Southeast Division Street before and after the implementation of the Division Streetscape Plan indicate that commercial lease rates on Foster Road can confidently be forecast to rise at a higher rate than the city average after the Foster Streetscape's construction is completed. Additionally, vacant, yet unavailable storefronts, combined with derelict property, create an artificial scarcity condition threatening to further drive up rents.

The experiences of other cities offer a number of policy responses to help protect small business owners from being priced out of their neighborhoods, but so far the City of Seattle has taken the most comprehensive steps to address the issue of commercial affordability. This report proposes utilizing the findings of the Seattle Commercial Affordability Advisory Committee as a starting point to address the issue of commercial affordability in Portland's small business districts, including Foster Road. Additional best practices to be explored by Prosper Portland include lessons from San Francisco's Legacy Business support program and New York's affordable retail subsidy and lease negotiation assistance programs.

An additional policy recommendation to research further would entail a non-profit community real-estate investment trust (REIT) on behalf of the small business community. Allegheny County in Pennsylvania administers a Vacant Property Recovery Program that acquires derelict and vacant properties and transfers them to parties with an approved reuse plan (Allegheny County, 2018). This could be combined with Mercy Corps' Community Investment Trust program currently targeted towards lower-income East Portland residents (Mercy Corps, 2018) (Cohen, 2017), but expand it to allow entrepreneurs to collaborate on purchase and restoration of blighted property which could then be transitioned into a collaborative owner-occupied coop model. The author of this report could find no citation to support the steps notes above in the combined Allegheny County/Mercy Corps approach having been tried elsewhere, but would recommend the exploration of this policy option as another mechanism to stabilize commercial affordability and help small business owners grow both wealth and equity.

The issue of vacant storefronts and crumbling buildings remains an altogether different challenge. Changing the tax codes requires legislative action, but utilizing building code enforcement could be an attractive option. Vacancy taxes for commercial real estate are a new policy prescription that could prove effective, although this carries unknown risk, as there is little literature to report on the policy's efficacy or unintended consequences.

Conclusion

Like many cities, Portland is struggling with the combined challenges of both residential and commercial affordability. However, the opportunity exists to take a number of the program initiatives and lessons learned by other cities, particularly those of Seattle, San Francisco, and New York, to mitigate more small business displacement before it happens. By taking proactive steps today, Portland can help to preserve the character, quality, and livability of its neighborhood commercial districts for the Portlanders of tomorrow.

APPENDIX A: Methodology

Research for this report contains both quantitative and qualitative data to provide an illustration of the changes over time on Southeast Division Street and a snapshot of the existing conditions on Southeast Foster Road. The qualitative data included in-depth interviews with area stakeholders that were transcribed and coded, information gleaned from a questionnaire that surveyed a sample of local merchants, and field observation notes from a meeting of the Foster Area Business Association. Approximately thirty small business owners were canvased to participate in the stakeholder questionnaire, yet it took several weeks to collect a statistically valid (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006) sampling of twelve responses. The in-depth interviews were conducted with randomly selected questionnaire respondents.

Walking the length of the study areas and taking a physical inventory of commercial properties and their current usage collected one portion of the quantitative data. Additional data was collected from a questionnaire that surveyed a sample of small business owners along Foster Road. Current and historical lease rates for the study target areas were collected from CoStar, a market research firm with a reputation for reliable, up-to-date data on commercial real estate nationwide. The information retrieved spans from 2006 to 2017 and current YTD, and includes average lease rates, building inventory square footage and commercial vacancy square footage. This information was used to compare commercial lease trends along Southeast Division Street to the rest of inner Southeast Portland and to the City of Portland at large.

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FOSTER AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

fosterarea.com



October 9, 2018

Jessica Vega Pederson
Commissioner, District 3
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 600
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Commissioner Pederson,

I am writing on behalf of the Foster Area Business Association (FABA) regarding the proposed \$100,000 Community Investment Fund under consideration by the Shelter Steering Committee. Per the request of the Steering Committee, we have polled Foster Area businesses and spoken with most of those within 1,000 feet of the shelter. We heard many creative solutions that we look forward to exploring further with the committee, however the top three priorities were safety, community building and cleanliness/livability.

Safety/Security

This was the overwhelming top priority. Businesses requested simple upgrades that could easily be provided to all properties within 1,000 feet of the shelter including: outdoor or façade-mounted floodlights and/or motion-detector lights; security cameras, especially in nearby alleys and side streets; and lighting in Laurelwood Park.

Community Building

Businesses also indicated high interest in integrating our new neighbors into the community by using public art and positive programming to activate the public right of way. The Laurelwood Park Vision and Master Plan, completed in 2013, represents a significant head start, and we would be happy to see a portion of Community Investment Funds used to jumpstart the renewal and activation of this underutilized asset. Public art, including murals or other installations that celebrate the Foster Area's diversity and sense of community would be welcome additions to the neighborhood. Additionally, consistent positive programming throughout the district such as live music, dance and cultural celebrations will strengthen our sense of community, contribute to our safety and security and make Foster road more livable for everyone.

Cleanliness/Livability

Last but not least, addressing livability issues, including litter, graffiti, needles and other biohazards, is a high priority. Garbage cans with consistent and frequent pick up plus graffiti abatement, sidewalk sweeping and other beautification/greening/place-making projects should be implemented or expanded with the help of this fund.

Finally, it is beyond the scope of the fund to fully address safety and security around the shelter. Following release of the data showing a 307% increase in crimes against person and property within 500 feet of the Willamette shelter, it is imperative that JOHS include community safety and outreach officers in ongoing funding as part of shelter operations. It is unacceptable to consider rising crime the cost of doing business for transitional housing, and JOHS is responsible for preventing and containing similar side effects here.

We look forward to continuing to work with your office and our community partners to find safe, sustainable and smart solutions to overcome challenges in our district and ensure the success of this shelter.

Sincerely,
Allen Rowand

President

Matthew Mičetić,

Past President

FOSTER AREA BUSINESSES



WELCOME



**ALL RACES &
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN**



**ALL GENDER IDENTITIES
& FAMILY STRUCTURES**



**ALL SEXUAL
ORIENTATIONS**



**ALL RELIGIONS
& PHILOSOPHIES**



From: [Shea Flaherty Betin](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Cc: [Hoell, Heather](#); [Moore-Love, Karla](#)
Subject: Foster Area Business Association Concerns - Testimony on July 10th
Date: Monday, May 20, 2019 12:58:18 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

Hello,

I'm writing to confirm my commitment to testifying on behalf of Foster Area on Wednesday, 7/10 at 9:30am. Here is my information:

- Name: Shea Flaherty Betin
- Address: 7238 SE Foster Rd
- 8055737434
- Date to Speak (July 10, already confirmed)
- Topic: Foster Area Business Association Concerns

Saludos,



Shea Flaherty Betin (He, His)
Portland Mercado Director

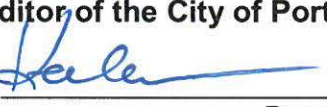
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[haciendacdc.org](#) | [portlandmercado.org](#)

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Request of Shea Flaherty Betin to address Council regarding Foster Area
Business Association Concerns (Communication)

JUL 10 2019

PLACED ON FILE

Filed JUL 01 2019
MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland
By 
Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Hardesty		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		