

From: [New Way Cleaners](#)
To: [councilmeeting](#)
Cc: [Mayor Tory](#); [Councillor Minnan-Wong](#); [BeRationalTO](#)
Subject: IE28.7 Cycling Network Plan - Active TO Midtown
Date: April 5, 2022 3:52:14 PM

To: Infrastructure Committee,

As a small business owner who is directly impacted by the Yonge Street bicycle lane pilot, I am pleading with you to reconsider and cancel this bike lane pilot project immediately. I agree with all the concerns of the residents in the neighborhood, but I am writing this letter to convey my experience and share my point of view from a small business owner's perspective trying to survive in this post-pandemic era.

My name is Andrew Lee and I run New Way Cleaners which is a small drycleaning service located on a stretch of Yonge Street between MacPherson Ave and Roxborough St W. We have been operating in the same location since 1936. Myself along with other small independent business owners in the area pride ourselves in servicing this great community.

The Covid-19 pandemic has severely impacted my business. The last 2 years have been an absolute struggle. In the darkest days of the pandemic my business has plummeted upto 80% from pre-pandemic levels. I have been forced to reduce my staff from 12 full-time employees down to 5 on a part-time basis. The obvious causes were the lack of employees going into work, restrictions on business travel, weddings, galas, church, restaurants, and so on. Today we still continue to struggle as people are still not back to the office full time and likely never will.

As the economy slowly re-opens and customers slowly prepare to go back to the office, the number one complaint I hear from my customers is the amount of traffic and difficulty in accessing my business. Most hours of the day the portion of Yonge St in front of my store is a parking lot. This is due to the combination of 7 traffic lights in less than one kilometer stretch of road and the bike lanes choking off lanes of traffic.

These bike lanes are now one of the biggest detriments to my business. I constantly hear customers complaining it took "X" amount of time being stuck in traffic to get to my location. Even having customer parking, accessing the laneway in the rear of my building is very difficult as more cars are now overflowing onto the side streets. My biggest concern is customers being turned off coming to the area and will eventually go elsewhere. Traffic can only get worse as more and more cars will start filling the streets as they start to go back to the office.

During a conference call with Councilor Mike Layton, the explanation given as to why Yonge Street was chosen for the bike lane pilot project was to help bring customers to the area. As a business owner I can honestly say it has been the opposite and has negatively impacted my business. Not once have I had a single customer ride their bike to bring in their drycleaning. Would you try to ride a bike carrying a large bag of drycleaning? - I think that would be very dangerous.

I am also experiencing issues with my suppliers and vendors who complain about the amount of time it takes to get to my location. Complaints about where to park and drop-off. In fact one supplier has refused to make deliveries and I'm now forced to travel to Vaughn to pick-up

my orders.

I am but only one small business owner who is trying his best to navigate and survive the new reality we all have been subject to. I can only hope my business will operate for another 86 years in the same area. But in-order for this to happen, idealistic notions should not clash with the realities of everyday life.

In conclusion, these bike lanes should not exist on Toronto's main and most busiest street. It does not make any sense to pilot this for another year. There has been too much pain and suffering within the small business community. Too many who have been forced to shut down because of the pandemic. Please do not harm businesses further by promoting an agenda that doesn't work for the community.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew Lee
New Way Cleaners
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