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Business owners feel financial crush of Ontario Street construction

By Evan Loree
For NewsNow

Beamsville business owners are as excited about the end of Ontario Street construction as local kids are to see Santa next month.

The Niagara Region public works project, which replaces 1.7 kms of watermain and upgrades to sanitary sewer lines, began in Winter 2023 and is scheduled to wrap up by the end of January 2025, according to town staff.

Restaurant owner Sharon Meikle said she'll be "more than happy" when it's over.

Meikle owns the Butcher and Banker Pub on Ontario Street and said the construction has been "horrible" for business.

She said there have been instances where both entrances for her location have been closed off construction.

Although construction is shut down by

evening, the restaurant has been dead quiet during weekday lunches.

"Our lunch sales have been terrible," Meikle said, who added she could have applied to Niagara Region for some financial relief but decided not to because of the amount of time and information required was too daunting.

These included tax returns, sales numbers and other data.

Construction workers have also taken up prime parking spaces during lunch hours which could otherwise be used by customers, she said.

Just down the street from Meikle's restaurant is one of Ontario Street's longest operating businesses, Old Post Bakery, which has also seen a significant decline in business.

Bakery owner Ed Hughes said business

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Old Post Bakery owner Ed Hughes says the Ontario Street construction has stretched his business to its limits. Loree - Photo