

# CITY OF OAKLAND



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Office of the Mayor  
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November 10, 2016

Dear Oakland Business Owner,

Last night, as Oakland has been so many times before, our city was the backdrop for a demonstration and protest march. Nearly 7,000 people flooded our streets to express their outrage and indignation over the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States. People in cities from Washington, D.C. to Los Angeles did the same. Unfortunately that's where the similarities end because as you know, the night of peaceful expression ended in harm being done to our business community and the rest of Oakland.

Tens of businesses including many of our small businesses and other institutions vital to Oaklanders were hit hard. Graffiti and broken windows were left behind by a group of anarchists who continually invade these otherwise peaceful protests with the intention of doing nothing but causing destruction.

While I know it's little comfort to you, I want to explain why it seems our police department cannot stop them. The police who are responsible for the safety of the crowds and our community during these protests are very often the target themselves. When they step in to stop an act of vandalism while it is happening, they become the new focal point for the crowds which can lead to an escalation of violence, not a decrease in the vandalism.

This is the very difficult set of circumstances we are dealing with. We are deeply sorry that your businesses continue to be targets, but we want you to know we are working hard to employ tactics that will prevent this from happening in the future, while also preserving the very values that we as Oaklanders and as Americans cherish -- even when this balancing act is so hard.

Impacted businesses are being contacted and pointed in the direction of the limited city resources to assist them. They can also reach out directly to Juno Thomas at Oakland's Business Assistance Center at 238-7952 or [JThomas@oaklandnet.com](mailto:JThomas@oaklandnet.com) for additional support.

We are also working with police to continually improve our strategies, as well as finding additional ways our community can help, like keeping store lights on and possibly having a presence inside on nights when protests are scheduled to occur as another way of deterring this behavior. We're also working to get this message to the peaceful protesters so they know how they can help in keeping their good causes and best intentions from being co-opted by an element that does not have them, Oakland or the values we cherish at heart.

Sincerely,

Libby Schaaf  
Mayor of Oakland