A security guard patrols the In-N-Out Burger store on Oakport Street on Monday in Oakland. The store will close in March, and the company cited car break-ins, theft and other crimes as the reason.

Closures a blow to Oakland's image

City struggles against perception it's not doing enough on crime

By Sarah Ravani and David Hernández

The sudden announcement that Oakland’s only In-N-Out Burger restaurant would shutter after becoming a hot spot for robberies and burglaries could do lasting reputational damage to a city already struggling to manage rising crime amid public safety concerns.

The Southern California-based fast food chain said this week that it would close its outlet near Oakland International Airport, located near Interstate 80 at 451 Oakport St., on March 22 because patrons had been “victimized by break-in, property damage, theft and assaults over the past year.”

Despite recent attempts by the city to paper over policy issues in the area, the In-N-Out, a frequent stop for travelers headed to and from the airport, has become a major hub for crime. Since 2019, signs at In-N-Out warn customers to lock their cars. The store has become a crime hub with more reported incidents than any other spot in the city.

The church council considered handing the video over to the police. It discussed sharing the video on social media and seeing if someone could identify the thief. Neither of those options felt right. “That’s not really what we’re about,” said Leslie Ross, Oakland-based political consultant and communications director for ex-Mayor Libby Schaff. “This particular area needs to be a priority because Oakland continues on A6.”

New worry for workers a year after shootings

Temporary housing ending for those displaced in Half Moon Bay

By Jessica Flores

Amid preparations by the tight-knit community in Half Moon Bay to commemorate the one-year anniversary Tuesday of the mass shooting that left seven farmworkers dead, painful memories flooded back to Juan Flores-Lopez.

He worked at California Terra Garden, the first of two farms where police said a disgruntled fellow employee opened fire, killing four. “Unfortunately, I see everything,” Flores-Lopez said.

He said his family lived with two of the victims and had created a special bond with them. “It’s very sad and because we’re referring it, we’ve also been remembering the beautiful relationship we had with them,” Flores-Lopez said.

On top of mourning the victims of the worst mass shooting in San Mateo County history, Flores-Lopez also worried about finding affordable and permanent housing for his family.

Flores-Lopez and several other farmworkers living at California Terra Garden and Concord Farms, where the other two victims were killed, were rushed into AirBnB and then into temporary rental units after the killings highlighted their poor living conditions and renewed calls for more farmworker housing. But the one-year arrangement ends soon.

Closing a blow to Oakland’s image

City struggles against perception it’s not doing enough on crime

By Erin Allday

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How Chronicle was drawn into kidnapping case

There are some things you never forget in a community ravaged by violence. One is a mother who accidentally caused the death of her baby while leaving him in a car. Thanks to the Berkeley Chronicles breaking news editor, I was over- seeing a big story. The day before, a Vallejo physical therapist named Aaron Quinn had called police to report that his live-in girlfriend and coworker, Denise Huskins, had been kidnapped by one or more intruders who drove a stolen (2007) Camaro.

Search teams were being dispatched, the victims’ family was pleading for help. Kidnapping continues on A7.

Church invites thief for chat after banner taken

Community offers gentle response to video of young man tearing down its Pride sign

By Erin Allday

Just a week into the new year, someone stole the rainbow Pride banner from the front of Sacramento's Parkside Community Church.

“Wasn’t the first or second or even third banner to be stolen or vandalized. The church has a history of racism and creeping signs, and so many have been taken or destroyed over the years,” Pastor Isaac Serra said. “We keep a few items in its budget.

But the thief, this time, was caught by a security camera. In a black-and-white video, a young man is clearly identifiable, seen at the bindings holding the banner in place that had listed about his name off-camera. “Zach!”

The church council considered handing the video over to the police. It discussed sharing the video on social media and seeing if someone could identify the thief. Neither of those options felt right. “That’s not really what we’re about,” said Leslie Ross, head of community outreach for Parkside. Still, it seemed like some sort of response was warranted. Finally, Serra suggested, half-jokingly, that they raise a new banner that just said, “Hey, Zach, do you want to talk?”

And that’s what they did. The “Hey Zach” banner is a 2-by-12-foot sign with a Pride heart and a QR code that takes users to a letter addressed to Zach and an invitation to call and chat. As of midweek, about 20 people had clicked on the code. If Zach was one of them, he hadn’t revealed himself.

“I don’t think we want to publicly shame him or out him,” Serra said. “We’re going on with this kid. I don’t know what’s going on.

Runners continue on A6

Community offers gentle response to video of young man tearing down its Pride sign

By Erin Allday

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