



CITY OF OAKLAND  
**newsrelease**  
Office of the City Attorney

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **City of Oakland goes to court against two hotels catering to prostitution**

OAKLAND, CA – The City Attorney’s Office will go to court Friday to shut down two hotels that for years have been hubs of prostitution and child sex trafficking in Oakland.

Trial proceedings start Friday, Feb. 10 in Alameda County Superior Court for the National Lodge at 1711 International Boulevard, and Friday, Feb. 17 for the Economy Inn at 122 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

“Both hotels have long records of allowing and profiting from a criminal industry where horrific abuse of women and girls is routine,” City Attorney Barbara Parker said. “We cannot accept, and we will not allow, businesses to profit from the abuse and exploitation of women and girls in our community.”

The City of Oakland declared the Economy Inn a public nuisance in 2005 based on years of complaints about drug and prostitution activity. However, prostitution and related crimes continued unabated at the hotel. In recent years, there have been numerous incidents of rape, kidnapping and violence – many involving victims as young as 14 who were forced to work as prostitutes at the Economy Inn.

In December 2010, the Neighborhood Law Corps – the community law unit in the City Attorney’s Office – sued the Economy Inn and the National Lodge under California’s Red Light Abatement Act (Penal Code § 11225). The law requires hotel owners to prevent prostitution at their properties, and allows the City to seek a one year closure, and other remedies, if the hotels fail to meet that responsibility. The City’s lawsuits cite multiple incidents of crime and prostitution, including child prostitution.

In October 2011, the court ordered preliminary injunctions against both hotels. The injunctions require the owners to make some improvements to security, including the installation of video cameras that allow police to monitor the properties. Unfortunately, prostitution and crime has continued, according to police and neighbors.

The City Attorney’s Office is now seeking the maximum penalty under the law – closure of both businesses for one year.

“Closing these businesses for a year is a drastic step, but a necessary one,” Parker said. “No community in Oakland should have to live with the sex trade industry as a routine part of their lives. We hope the owners will use that time to come up with a business plan that doesn’t rely on prostitution as a major source of revenue.”

The case against the National Lodge is set to start at 10:30 a.m. Friday in Department 516 at the Hayward Hall of Justice – 24405 Amador Street in Hayward. The case against the Economy Inn is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Feb. 17 in the same department.

**Brief bio of City Attorney Barbara Parker:** Parker has served as City Attorney since July 2011. Since that time, she has focused on priorities including public safety, government transparency and smart, effective litigation strategies that protect taxpayer dollars. Previously, Parker served for 20 years in the Oakland City Attorney's Office, including 11 years as the Chief Assistant City Attorney. She has extensive expertise as an attorney in the private sector and at every level of government – federal, state and local – including more than five years as an Assistant US Attorney for the Northern District of California. She serves as president of the Black Adoption Placement and Research Center and volunteers as a mentor for the East Bay College Fund. She is a longtime Oakland resident and lives in the Haddon Hill neighborhood near Lake Merritt.

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