



MEDIA RELEASE
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City Removes Nuisance Liquor Store In East Oakland 'Turns Around' Two Stores in West Oakland

(Oakland, CA) – Today, the Neighborhood Law Corps, in partnership with Councilmember Larry Reid's Office, the Oakland Police Department, the City Administrator's Nuisance Abatement Unit and community leaders announced the removal of a nuisance liquor store at 9422 Edes Street –the Oakland Food Center.

"Business owners have a right to operate a store in the community, but that right comes with a responsibility," said Neighborhood Law Corps founder and Oakland City Attorney John Russo. "When operators are intentionally or negligently cooperating with drug dealers to provide safe haven from the police, we are going to hold them accountable."

The Oakland Food Center store has been the source of numerous community complaints to the City of Oakland. Over the years, community members have reported drug dealing, a car jacking, shootings and harassment by loiterers. After years of failed attempts to get the store owner to work with the City and discourage the drug dealing in front of the store, residents worked with Councilmember Reid and the Law Corps to take legal action.

"The drug dealing associated with this corner has been plaguing the neighborhood for decades," said Councilmember Larry Reid. "When residents can't walk down the street out of fear for their safety and the safety of their children, we have to do everything necessary to remove the threats to the neighborhood's peace and tranquility."

Neighbors and police officers documented drug activity on the property (9422 Edes St) and in the store. The Oakland Police Department's Crime Reduction Team coordinated a series of undercover "buy and bust" operations to provide ample evidence for the Neighborhood Law Corps' drug nuisance lawsuit against the property owner. Facing stiff penalties from the city and the declaration of the property as a nuisance, the property owner, Ibrahim Abbushi, agreed to close the liquor store and surrendered his right to have any future liquor stores on the property.

"The neighbors have been instrumental," said Oakland City Administrator Deborah Egerly. "Because we can't be everywhere, they really serve as our eyes and ears in building a solid case."

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In the last month, the Neighborhood Law Corps has also been successful in 'turning around' two problem liquor stores in West Oakland. The Orlando Market at 2940 Linden Street and the K & D Market at 1100 24th street. With the help of residents, the Oakland Police and the City Administrator's Nuisance Abatement Unit, the city was able to persuade both owner/operators to sign an agreement to improve security and visibility into the store, shorten their operating hours, and refrain from selling fortified alcohol and drug paraphernalia in addition to attending community meetings.

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