



ABOUT BARBARA PARKER

Barbara J. Parker is the City Attorney for Oakland, California. She is a longtime Oakland resident and a lifelong advocate for civil rights, women's empowerment and children's issues.

In July 2011, the City Council appointed Parker to the elected City Attorney's seat for the balance of the current term, which ends in January 2013.

Parker is a native of Seattle, Washington, where her parents migrated to escape the brutalities of legalized oppression and sharecropping in the rural, segregated South. Family experiences during segregation, her parents' fierce commitment to education and their struggles as union workers ignited Parker's determination to strive for equal opportunity and equal rights for everyone regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or economic status. Parker earned an undergraduate degree in Economics from the University of Washington, and she was of the very few African American women accepted at Harvard Law School in the early 1970s. She graduated from Harvard in 1975 determined to use the law as a tool to help underrepresented communities.

In an award-winning legal career spanning almost four decades, Parker has developed extensive expertise as an attorney at all levels of government – federal, state and local – including more than five years as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of California. As an Assistant US Attorney, she represented the United States in federal court litigation involving complex policy matters. Parker also has worked in the private sector for private law firms and Kaiser Hospitals.

Prior to becoming City Attorney, Parker served for 20 years in the Oakland City Attorney's Office, including 11 years as Chief Assistant City Attorney. As Chief Assistant, she provided legal advice to the City Council at virtually every Council meeting and directed all legal advice to the Mayor's Office, the City Council, the City Administrator and all other City departments and commissions.

Parker has worked to keep Oakland in the strongest possible legal standing, helping to save millions of dollars for essential services like public safety, senior programs and libraries. She has been a strong advocate for transparency and good government at City Hall and has led or supported efforts on important social justice issues including: creation of Oakland's "Bubble Ordinance" ensuring patient access to reproductive health clinics; decriminalization of medical marijuana; enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act; passage of the City's groundbreaking anti-predatory lending ordinance; prosecution of nuisance liquor stores and hotels that traffic in prostitution, and; fighting to overturn the US Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision, which allows unlimited corporate spending to influence elections.

In 2005, the State Bar Board of Governors selected Parker for an appointment to the prestigious State Judicial Council. The constitutional agency chaired by the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial and accessible administration of justice. Parker is a member of the Charles Houston and Alameda County Bar Associations, the Berkeley-Bay Area Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the League of Women Voters, the National Women's Political Caucus, Black Women Organized for Political Action, and the Black Women Lawyers Association. She serves as President of the Black Adoption Placement and Research Center, an organization that finds permanent, loving and supportive homes for waiting children, many of whom are in the foster care system. She is co-President of Sankofa Holistic Healing Institute (supporting holistic health and healing for cancer and depression) and volunteers as a mentor for the East Bay College Fund.

She is the proud parent of daughter Savannah Parker, a senior at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, studying Political Science and Spanish, and the proud grandparent of Samuel Koda Clement, born in 2011. Parker resides in Oakland's Haddon Hill neighborhood near Lake Merritt.