



# ABOUT BARBARA PARKER

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

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 her father's life as a union worker made Parker determined to strive for improved opportunities 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 became one of the very few [African American women accepted at Harvard Law School](#) in the early 1970s. At Harvard, she was told by male classmates that she "took a space that should have been held by a man." That experience fueled Parker's desire to fight against double standards and glass ceilings. She graduated in 1975 determined to use the law as a tool to help underrepresented communities.

Parker has extensive expertise as an attorney providing legal counsel for federal, state and local levels of government, including more than five years as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of California. As a US Attorney, she represented the United States in federal court litigation involving complex policy matters. Parker has also worked in the private sector for private law firms and Kaiser Hospitals.

Parker has served for 20 years in the Oakland City Attorney's Office – including 11 years as Chief Assistant City Attorney. As second in command, Parker provided significant day-to-day leadership and provided legal advice to the City Council at virtually every Council meeting for the last decade. She also 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 on 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, and; implementation of a groundbreaking anti-predatory lending ordinance in Oakland.

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.

On July 19, 2011, Parker was appointed by the City Council to serve as City Attorney for the balance of the term ending in January 2013.

Parker is a member of the **Charles Houston Bar Association** and the Berkeley-Bay Area Chapter of **Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.**, a service sorority. She also 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**. Daughter Savannah attends **Spelman College** in Atlanta, Georgia, studying Political Science and Spanish. Parker is a resident of Oakland's Haddon Hill neighborhood.