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## Court Shuts Down Hotel Known as ‘One Stop Shop’ for Drugs and Prostitution

*City Attorney secures permanent injunction against Red Carpet Inn*

**COLUMBUS, OH**—The *Red Carpet Inn*—a Northland area hotel rife with violent crime, drug trafficking, and prostitution that “bled out” into the surrounding neighborhood—won’t be operating any time soon after Franklin County Environmental Court Judge Daniel R. Hawkins declared it to be “a public nuisance which presents a danger of immediate and irreparable harm to the public.”

Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. announced today that the City of Columbus received the permanent injunction against the *Red Carpet Inn* after being granted a temporary restraining order against the problem hotel in January. The hotel must remain boarded up until at least May 27, 2015, the maximum time allowed under state law.

**“We are very pleased with Judge Hawkins’ ruling in this case,” said City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. “The facts we presented to the court speak for themselves.”**

The court concluded that the owners of the *Red Carpet Inn*, Punarvasu Patel, Harihar Patel, Dharmendra Patel, and Minal Patel, were not “innocent property owners” but instead seemed to have “invited” criminal activity to their hotel. The court decision also stated that “[r]ather than taking aggressive efforts to rid their hotel of drug dealers, prostitutes and other criminals, the owners of the Red Carpet Inn instead appeared to *compete* for their business.”

Evidence presented by the City Attorney’s office proved that the Patels “knew of and acquiesced to the nuisance conditions” of their hotel, including the following:

- On October 2, 2013 a search warrant executed by police found heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and syringes in room 142 of the hotel.
- On November 25, 2013 a man was arrested for abducting a woman at gunpoint in room 132.
- On November 27, 2013, a man was shot in room 243 during an attempted robbery.
- On December, 30, 2013 a methamphetamine lab was discovered in one of the hotel rooms when police responded to a domestic violence incident that involved a man supposed to be on the “Do Not Rent” list for his involvement in drug and prostitution activity.
- Nine documented felony drug buys between September 19, 2013 and January 15, 2014.
- Twelve reported incidents of prostitution that took place between September 18, 2013 and January 4, 2014.
- During one of several inspections by the State Fire Marshal, a hostage situation involving a man with a gun took place at the hotel.

**“Hotel owners and operators need to be diligent in maintaining awareness of what is happening at their hotels and how criminal activity negatively affects the community,” said Assistant City Prosecutor William A. Sperlazza. “Turning a blind eye to the**

**problem, or making half-hearted efforts to curb criminal activity, will not suffice.”**

A former employee, who worked at the hotel both before and after the Patels purchased it, testified that she saw “a noticeable increase in criminal activity” after the Patels took over the property.

Video surveillance equipment was purchased but never installed and the number of shifts of Columbus police officers hired to work special duty assignments at the hotel were cut in half by the Patels when compared with the previous hotel proprietors.

Copies of the court decision and entry may be read [here](#).

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