



CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Tourism and Culture Division

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	August 14, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Creating a Fashion Incubator Including Opportunities for Community Groups at the Former Eastmount School Site (PED17144) (Ward 7) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Ward 7
PREPARED BY:	Anna M. Bradford (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3967
SUBMITTED BY:	Anna M. Bradford Director, Tourism and Culture Division Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the *Fashion Incubators as Economic Infrastructure – Case Study Analysis by Civic Plan*, attached as Appendix 'A' to Report PED17144, be received; and,
- (b) That staff be directed to include the findings from Fashion Incubators as Economic Infrastructure – Case Study Analysis as part of the research on the incubation of creative spaces which was identified in the 2016-2020 Economic Development Action Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council directed staff, by motion, to conduct a study on the feasibility of creating a fashion incubator and report back to the General Issues Committee. The study is to consider opportunities for community groups at the former Eastmount School site which would include but not be limited to:

- fashion and related businesses;
- opportunities for community groups;
- operating costs offset by partnerships with the private sector; and,
- steps to transform the former elementary school into a place for creative people to work, connect with peers, and learn to further their trades.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

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The impact of the fashion industry on local economies is becoming more widely understood. Many fashion firms are small and medium-sized businesses that employ people directly in the community. They consist of creative workers who design clothing and textiles, manufacturers who produce the garments, and the retailers who sell them. A robust local fashion industry can drive job growth and create employment for a variety of skills sets.

To encourage entrepreneurship in the fashion industry and promote sector growth, some cities have started fashion incubators. While there is a range of incubator models, they usually function to help start-up businesses with training, mentorship, access to equipment and other services.

The development of creative spaces, such as fashion incubators, was also identified in the 2016-2020 Economic Development Action Plan as a major action under Creative Cultural Industries development. Fashion Incubators are classified as creative spaces, therefore a study on the requirements of a successful fashion incubator not only assisted in the assessment of the former Eastmount School but provided criteria to assess other locations for a possible fashion incubator in the future.

In consultation with the Ward Councillor, staff first focused on the feasibility of a fashion incubator operating from the former Eastmount School before any investigation was carried out on including community groups and private operators as outlined in the motion.

Civic Plan was hired to research successful fashion incubators in other cities, and determine what core characteristics were common in their success. In comparing the core characteristics for successful Fashion Incubators to the former Eastmount School, it was determined that the building would not be suitable for this purpose. A decision matrix is found under the Analysis section this report.

The results were shared with the Ward Councillor, who concluded the former school would be looked at for other purposes.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: N/A

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 2016, the city reached a deal to buy the former Eastmount Park Elementary School from the Hamilton Public School Board. Although slated to be demolished the Ward Councillor wished to explore uses for the building before any action was taken. One suggestion was anchoring a fashion incubator in the building in conjunction with other opportunities for business and community use.

To determine the feasibility of locating a fashion incubator in the former school, Civic Plan was commissioned to complete a study on successful fashion incubators and the core characteristics needed for success.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

N/A

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Ward 7 Councillor

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The following matrix was developed using the core characteristics of successful fashion incubators against the former Eastmount School.

	Provide shared space	Provide private space	Industrial quality equipment	Mentoring	Education in fashion and business practices	Location that fosters connections to broader fashion or creative community
Eastmount School	√	√	X	X	X	X

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Additional considerations:

- Fashion Incubators are investments and not themselves profitable. Rather they provide a foundation for local entrepreneurs and small business processes.
- Incubators are designed to encourage both renewal and long-term growth in the local industry.
- Incubators make use of their existing fashion industry ecosystem, working with established fashion businesses, fashion media, and relevant government agencies.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

N/A

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Economic Prosperity and Growth

Hamilton has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix 'A' to Report PED17144: Fashion Incubators as Economic Infrastructure – Case Study Analysis by Civic Plan

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