



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\***

**MAYOR LEE LAUNCHES FASHIONSF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

*New Initiative Focuses on Supporting Apparel Manufacturers & Fashion Designers in San Francisco; Part of Mayor's Start Here, Stay Here, Grow Here Economic Strategy*

**San Francisco, CA**—Mayor Edwin M. Lee today launched FashionSF, a new economic development initiative focused on supporting the retention and growth of apparel manufacturers and fashion designers in San Francisco. Mayor Lee joined by Supervisor Malia Cohen made the announcement at Cayson Culinary Designs in the Bayview and toured their workshop.

“FashionSF brings together the private sector, educational institutions and the City to work towards a singular goal – to make San Francisco the pre-eminent location for fashion designer and apparel manufacturers,” said Mayor Lee. “I am committed to ensuring that apparel and design companies of all sizes can start, stay, grow and hire right here in San Francisco, driving job creation for all San Franciscans. I want to thank the Fashion Working Group for their commitment and support for this important economic development initiative”

“These are exactly they types of businesses we want to attract, support and have grow here in San Francisco,” said District 10 Supervisor Malia Cohen. “These small manufactures hire local residents and invest in our local communities. I look forward to participating in the working group and identifying ways that we as a City can collectively support this industry.”

FashionSF is part of the Mayor's “Start Here, Stay Here, Grow Here” economic strategy and includes the following elements:

**Fashion Sector Manager:** The Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) has designated a Fashion Sector Manager who will serve as the City's central point of contact to the fashion design and apparel manufacturing industry, conduct business outreach and assistance to businesses, and coordinate the FashionSF program.

**Fashion Working Group:** Representatives from leading San Francisco designers, manufacturers, educational institutions and non-profit groups have formed a private sector industry working group to advise and support the implementation of FashionSF. The working group is co-chaired by Roger Kase of Isda & Co and Janet Lees of SFMade.

**Fashion Action Plan:** In the coming months, OEWD will be meeting with the Fashion Working Group to identify key industry needs, challenges, opportunities, and develop an action plan to prioritize and address.

Non-Profit Economic Development Organization: The City is working to identify funding to provide an economic development grant contract to a non-profit organization to supplement the City’s FashionSF programming. The competitively bid grant contract would fund a non-profit organization to develop and implement programs and initiatives identified by the Fashion Action Plan.

“San Francisco is home to an incredible fashion ecosystem of talented designers, expert sewers and top-notch production factories,” said Roger Kase, co-chair of the Fashion Working Group and President of Isda & Co. “In my long experience with the San Francisco fashion industry, this is the first time I’ve seen an effort like FashionSF which dedicates city staff and resources to supporting the success of designers and manufacturers here in the city. The fashion industry is a proud partner in FashionSF.”

“When Cayson Culinary Designs was a start up 20 years, apparel manufacturing was beginning to show signs of a permanent slowdown,” said Lynette Cayson, owner of Cayson Culinary Design. “FashionSF is an opportunity to revive, retain and grow a sector that is rich in innovation, design and urban manufacturing, which translates to meaningful employment opportunities in San Francisco. I look forward to working with my peers in industry and the City to create a stronger apparel industry in San Francisco.”

Research compiled by SFMade, a San Francisco non-profit focused on the City’s manufacturing sector, found that:

- Apparel and accessory product companies represent the largest segment of the San Francisco manufacturing industry – totaling approximately 40 percent of the City’s manufacturing sector.
- San Francisco has seen a relative increase in the number of apparel/accessory product design companies since 2007. This trend has further accelerated since 2009.
- San Francisco continues to have an exceptionally skilled – although underemployed – workforce of sewing professionals.
- San Francisco has an estimated 20 larger sewing factories and another 30+ small sewing houses and individuals in the City. These firms have available capacity to expand.
- The strength of the San Francisco brand helps locally manufactured products differentiate themselves in the marketplace, and allows San Francisco-made apparel and accessories often to commend premium pricing.

The Fashion Working Group includes the following members:

Gail Baugh	PeopleWearSF
Lynette Cayson	Cayson Culinary Designs
Jasmine Worrell	Cayson Culinary Designs
Dennis Conaghan	Fashion Incubator San Francisco at Macy’s Union Square, San Francisco Center for Economic Development
Ian Hannulah	NICE Collective
Suzy Furrer	Apparel Arts Fashion School
Roger Kase	Isda & Co., Co-chair of Fashion Working Group
Amy Williams	California College of the Arts, Fashion Incubator San Francisco at Macy’s Union Square
Miranda Tang and Johnny FA	National Apparel Sewing Factory
Janet Lees	SFMade, Co-chair of Fashion Working Group
Rosemarie Ovia	Cut Loose
Steven Zhen	Sky Blue Sewing Factory
Lily Khong	Bonton Sewing Factory
Tony Patella	Tellason

Diane Greene  
Suzy Furrer  
Julienne Weston  
Kevin Coker

City College. Fashion Incubator San Francisco at Macy's Union Square  
Apparel Arts Fashion School  
Weston Wear  
Weston Wear

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