



fashion district institute

01 June 2015,

RE: Response to the Inner City Promulgation and Designation of Trading Areas around the Fashion kapitol i.e. President Street

To whom it may concern,

I hereby write this letter in response to your request for all the stakeholders to respond to City of Johannesburg (CoJ)'s Draft Plans of the Promulgation and Designation of Trading Areas meant for Informal Traders within the Inner City.

As the Fashion District Institute (FDI), a Section 21 organisation which was established to, amongst other things, manage a property called the Fashion Kapitol, and contribute towards the growth of the fashion industry within and around the Fashion District, we would like bring to your attention certain issues which will be affected by the proposed changes.

The Fashion Kapitol, which was built by the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), is surrounded by Troye, President, Polly and President Street- a street which is included as part of the City's Draft Plans. The property was built to, amongst other things, assist with the growth of emerging Fashion Entrepreneurs, in order for them to be able to contribute economically to the growth of the local fashion industry.

<http://www.jda.org.za/index.php/latest-news/1671-fashion-kapitol-refashioning-the-future-inner-city>

The heart of the Johannesburg CBD-based Fashion District, the Fashion Kapitol has facilities which were built to enable the FDI carry out its mandate. We have in the premises a built-in Amphitheatre, which was built to host fashion shows and fashion-related events. This particular facility, on its own, can accommodate a crowd of between a 100 to 500 people.



Extending from the Amphitheatre is the Courtyard. Together the two are commonly used by we, as the FDI, or private clients who book the venue for fashion shows or fashion related events. In 2011 the African Fashion International (AFI) held the opening of the Mercedes Benz Johannesburg Fashion Week at the Fashion Kapitol, which had a crowd of over 700 people.

It is, therefore, imperative that all the safety precautions are taken when hosting any event, especially an event as the above-mentioned. Fortunately when the Fashion Kapitol was designed and built, that fact was taken into consideration. The

premises has two (2) main entrances and/or exits for emergency purposes. The one entrance and/or exit is situated on Pritchard Street, while the other is on President Street.

In an event of emergency evacuation the gate on President Street will, therefore, be one of the two (2) exit points used to evacuate the large number of people. It is for this reason that the small and upmarket Fashion Kapitol shops located on President Street were moved a few meters back, in order to allow for space during or in case of an emergency. In addition to the two (2) gates being used as points of emergency, they also act as main entrance points for the Fashion Kapitol. They, therefore, need to be accessible all the time.

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130 Pritchard Street | Fashion Kapitol | Johannesburg | South Africa | 2001



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In view of the evacuation plan that was built in the design of Fashion Kapitol we, therefore, feel that the upgrades should be done on the Southern-side of the President Street pavement instead- for that is where Informal Traders are currently located and trading. The removal of parking on the Northern side of President Street will also create problems for customers who come to support Fashion Kapitol businesses located along President Street.

As previously indicated, it is one of our primary objectives to support and empower up and coming retailers within the Fashion District. It is, therefore, also

our primary objective to avail (and protect) resources and facilities that will enable them to reach their objectives. So by removing parking on the Northern side of President Street would be detrimental for Fashion Kapitol businesses that face the street. It would, amongst other things, discourage customers that have to access the upmarket shops along the streets.

Moreover, the City created two (2) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations within the Johannesburg CDB-based Fashion District. The two (2) stations, namely Fashion Square North and Fashion Square South, are respectively situated on Troye and Mooi Streets. They were built to both enable and encourage accessibility by those who work in or seek the services of businesses based in both the Fashion Kapitol and Fashion District at large.

We sincerely hope that our suggestions and input will add value to this great plan that the City has drafted. We, however, cannot stress enough the importance of the Fashion Kapitol having the exit on President Street open, during an emergency for evacuation processes. Having fashion shows and fashion related events every month, it is of the utmost importance that both our emergency exit points are open, in case of emergency in order to evacuate the patrons attending the shows.

That is why we recommend that the widening of the sidewalk placement of the Informal Traders takes place on the Southern side of the President Street pavements- as per Example 2 on Slide 25- as the majority of Informal Traders are currently located and trading there.

Thank you.

Kind Regards,

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