

The 2014 Policy Address

Policy Agenda

(extract on Land, Housing and Transportation)

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Chapter 2

Land, Housing and Transportation

Preamble

Housing is an important livelihood issue for the public as well as the Government.

Our policy objectives for housing are to –

- (a) assist grassroots families to secure public rental housing (PRH) to meet their basic housing needs;
- (b) assist the public to choose accommodation according to their affordability and personal circumstances, and encourage those who can afford it to buy their own homes;
- (c) provide subsidised home ownership flats on top of PRH so as to build a progressive housing ladder; and
- (d) maintain the healthy and steady development of the private residential property market, with priority to be given to meet Hong Kong permanent residents' needs amidst a tight supply situation.

Increasing land supply is fundamental to addressing Hong Kong's housing needs, as well as our continued social and economic development. In the short to medium term, we are stepping up our efforts to increase land supply through on-going land use reviews and optimising the use of developed land. In the longer term, we will develop new land extensively through new development areas in the

New Territories and Lantau, reclamation outside Victoria Harbour, rock cavern development and underground space development. The objective is to build up a land reserve for Hong Kong's sustainable development and to respond more flexibly and timely to present and future needs. All these required the society as a whole to make difficult choices and accept trade-offs. An extensive public consultation exercise was carried out between 3 September 2013 and 2 December 2013 on the Long Term Housing Strategy. The above issues have been the subjects of the consultation. The Government is committed to adopting a robust long-term housing strategy, taking into account the results of this consultation exercise.

With a growing population and continuous development, facilitating the public to move around to undertake social and economic activities is also a challenge. We encourage the use of public transport and will maintain a quality and efficient multi-modal public transport network, with railway as the backbone, complemented by buses, public light buses, taxis and other modes.

We are taking forward five new railway projects in full swing. Upon their completion in phases by 2020, our railway network will cover areas inhabited by over 70% of the population in Hong Kong. In parallel, we will step up our efforts in rationalising road-based transport services, franchised buses in particular. This would help ease road congestion, alleviate the pressure for fare increases and reduce road-side emissions.

To enhance Hong Kong's external transport links, we are pressing ahead with the construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point project and pursuing with the Airport Authority in planning for the expansion of our airport into a three-runway system.

New Initiatives

We will:

Long-term Housing Strategy

- Develop and implement a long-term housing strategy, having taken into account the views of the Long Term Housing Strategy Steering Committee and those received during the public consultation exercise conducted from 3 September 2013 to 2 December 2013. (THB)
- Adopt a total of 470 000 new residential units as the new supply target in the coming ten years, with a 60:40 split between public and private housing. (THB/DEVB)
- Increase the supply of units under the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) on top of what the Government has already pledged in response to public's aspirations for home ownership at an affordable level and to encourage turnover of existing tenants in PRH. (THB/DEVB)

Increasing Land Supply

- Increase the maximum domestic plot ratios allowed in different Density Zones as appropriate, with a view to increasing the floor space that can be provided on individual sites as far as permissible in planning terms. (DEVB)

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- Partially lift the administrative moratorium on development in Pok Fu Lam to release six government sites for public housing development (including the redevelopment of Wah Fu Estate) which are estimated to provide about 11 900 additional public housing units, alongside active consideration of constructing the South Island Line (West) to address the transport needs arising from the new public housing developments. (DEVB/THB)
 - Take forward a Pilot Scheme for Arbitration on Land Premium to facilitate and speed up agreement between the Government and private land owners on premium charged for lease modification and land exchange transactions through arbitration. (DEVB)
 - Take forward the planning and engineering study for a new town in East Lantau, and carry out a strategic feasibility study for the artificial islands in the central waters between Hong Kong Island and Lantau Island. (DEVB)
 - Carry out a detailed study on potential underground space development in four pilot strategic urban districts, viz. Causeway Bay, Happy Valley, Admiralty/Wan Chai and Tsim Sha Tsui West. The aim is to formulate a master plan for underground space development for each district and carry out broad technical assessment for priority projects identified in the commercial areas and adjacent open spaces in these districts. (DEVB)
 - Study the feasibility of topside development on the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge for developing bridgehead economy and creating business and job opportunities. (DEVB)

Energising Kowloon East

- Apply the “place-making” concept in converting and identifying an operator for the remaining vacant sites underneath Kwun Tong Bypass to provide cultural and creative space with unique design character and vibrancy. (DEVB)
- Inherit the industrial cultural heritage of Kowloon East and integrate it with creativity for translation into urban design guidelines and public art elements to provide guidance for improvement to public spaces and private development. (DEVB)
- Study the transformation of the existing King Yip Street nullah to a green and vibrant Tsui Ping River with environmental and landscaping upgrading of the vicinity. (DEVB)
- Advocate the sustainability concept on “walkability” in Kowloon East through improving connectivity and enhancing pedestrian environment. (DEVB)

Building Safety and Management

- Formulate a set of seismic-resistant building design standards with a view to further enhancing building safety in Hong Kong. (DEVB)
- Launch a pilot scheme in collaboration with professional institutes to provide professional and tailor-made advisory and support service to owners’ corporations to assist them to appoint authorised persons to carry out building maintenance works. (HAB)

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- Launch a new phase of the Building Management Professional Advisory Service Scheme by engaging property management companies to provide one-stop and tailor-made support and advisory services on building management and maintenance to 1 200 old buildings without any form of management. (HAB)

On-going Initiatives

We are:

Increasing Supply of Subsidised Housing

- Providing PRH to low-income families who cannot afford private rental accommodation, with a target of maintaining the average waiting time at around three years for general applicants on the Waiting List. (THB)
- Taking forward the existing target of producing at least 179 000 PRH flats over the ten-year period from 2012-13 to 2021-22. (THB)
- Pressing ahead with the optimisation of the development potential of each public housing site and increasing flat production through relaxing the plot ratio and building height restrictions where planning conditions permit and without compromising environmental quality. (THB)
- Continuing to review the redevelopment potential of aged PRH estates to optimise the use of valuable land resources with a view to increasing PRH flat production. (THB)
- Ensuring the effective and rational use of PRH resources, including enhanced enforcement actions against tenancy abuse cases. (THB)
- Addressing the home ownership aspiration in the community by developing new HOS flats as part of our housing policy. (THB)

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- Taking forward the existing target of producing about 17 000 HOS flats over the four-year period starting from 2016-17 onwards and thereafter an average of 5 000 flats per year. The first batch of new HOS flats is scheduled for completion in 2016-17 and pre-sale in end-2014. (THB)
 - Working with the Hong Kong Housing Society on the provision of subsidised flats for sale in Sha Tin and rental housing in Sha Tau Kok respectively. (THB)
 - Implementing the interim scheme to allow an annual quota of 5 000 buyers with White Form status to purchase HOS flats with premium not yet paid under the HOS Secondary Market Scheme and to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the interim scheme in the second half of 2014. (THB)
 - Improving and expediting the construction process by widening the use of pre-cast building technology and streamlining administrative procedures without compromising housing quality and site safety. (THB)

Increasing Land Supply

- Continuing and expanding the on-going land use reviews with the objective of identifying more suitable sites in Government, Institution or Community, Green Belt, Industrial and other non-residential zones for rezoning to residential use. (DEVB)
- Making available for housing development or other uses in higher demand sites for which the originally earmarked purposes will no longer be pursued. (DEVB/THB)

- Reviewing and increasing the development density of residential sites such as those in the Kai Tak New Development Area and those identified through the land use review in Tuen Mun East, as well as reviewing and relaxing development restrictions such as the Mid-Levels Moratorium, as far as permissible in planning terms. (DEVB/THB)
- Streamlining land administration processes and administrative approval procedures to expedite land supply, as well as taking other corresponding measures to facilitate flat production. (DEVB)
- Continuing the revitalisation measures to facilitate the redevelopment and wholesale conversion of older industrial buildings until 31 March 2016 to provide more floor space for suitable uses such as commercial and business uses, in order to meet Hong Kong's changing social and economic needs. (DEVB)
- Taking forward the planning for residential development at the Kam Tin South West Rail Kam Sheung Road Station and Pat Heung Maintenance Depot and the adjoining areas, and continuing to explore development potential along the railways. (DEVB)
- Taking forward the planning and development of the former Diamond Hill Squatter Areas (Tai Hom Village), former Cha Kwo Ling Kaolin Mine, former Lamma Quarry and Anderson Road Quarry to provide housing land. (DEVB)
- Continuing with the planning and implementation of new development areas and new town extensions –

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- implementing the plans for the Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Areas as an extension to the Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town;
 - taking forward the planning for the Hung Shui Kiu New Development Area as a housing and employment node to complement Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun; and
 - taking forward the planning for the extension of the Tung Chung New Town into a more sizeable and comprehensively developed new town. (DEVB)
- Identifying further development opportunities in New Territories North, including the areas of Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling and Fanling Golf Course, by commissioning a preliminary development feasibility study in early 2014, with a view to exploring scope for developing a new town of similar scale as Fanling/Sheung Shui. (DEVB)
 - Reviewing deserted agricultural land in the North District and Yuen Long with a view to identifying suitable sites for meeting housing and other development needs. (DEVB)
 - Taking forward near-shore reclamation by –
 - carrying out a cumulative environmental impact assessment for the proposed reclamation sites in Tuen Mun and North Lantau;
 - commencing a planning and engineering study for the reclamation in Sunny Bay; and

- continuing with the preparatory work for the feasibility studies for other near-shore reclamation sites. (DEVB)
- Concluding a feasibility study on the relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to rock caverns. We further plan to commence the investigation and design for the relocation works. (DEVB)
- Commencing feasibility studies for relocation of three public facilities, viz. Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs, Sai Kung Sewage Treatment Works and Sham Tseng Sewage Treatment Works, to caverns so as to release precious land in the urban areas for housing and other uses. (DEVB)
- Continuing with the study on the long-term strategy of cavern development in Hong Kong. The study will include preparation of cavern master plans and setting up policy guidelines to facilitate future cavern development. (DEVB)
- Carrying out a territory-wide study to explore the opportunities and constraints of underground space development in the urban areas of Hong Kong. The aim is to develop some preliminary conceptual schemes for providing more space for commercial and other uses and enhancing connectivity. (DEVB)
- Converting suitable government sites and offices in the Central Business Districts to commercial use, including the Murray Road Public Carpark, the Rumsey Street Public Carpark and the three government office buildings at the Wan Chai waterfront, and reducing the leasing of commercial office space in Central and Admiralty for government use as far as possible so as to release more prime office space to the market. (DEVB/FSTB)

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- Working with the Airport Authority to develop the North Commercial District on the airport island. The aim is to maximise the development potential of this site, taking into account the future development of the Hong Kong International Airport including the three-runway system, and the synergy with Lantau as well as the Western Pearl River Delta Region. (THB)
 - Adopting a visionary, co-ordinated and integrated approach to transform Kowloon East (including Kai Tak Development, Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong) into an attractive core business district to sustain Hong Kong's economic development. Specifically, this involves land use review, enhanced urban design, improved connectivity and the associated infrastructure. (DEVB)
 - Relocating the existing Government facilities in the two Action Areas identified to have potential for optimising their development to facilitate the transformation of Kowloon East. These two Action Areas have potential for providing an additional floor area of about 500 000 square metres. (DEVB)
 - Continuing with the technical feasibility study for increasing housing and office supply in the Kai Tak Development Area, and consulting the public on the study recommendations. (DEVB)
 - Consulting the public on a proposed detailed feasibility study of the future Environmentally Friendly Linkage System for supporting the transformation of Kowloon East into an alternative central business district. (DEVB)

- Continuing the update of the green map in Energizing Kowloon East Office's website showing green buildings in Kowloon East which have obtained BEAM Plus Gold or above rating. (DEVB)
- Exploring opportunities to provide suitable space in the Action Areas in Kowloon East for artists and creative designers to support the art and creative industries. (DEVB)
- Setting up at the former runway tip in the Kai Tak Development Area, the Kwun Tong Ferry Pier Action Area and the enclosed waterbody between the runway and Kwun Tong waterfront as a recreational landmark – Kai Tak Fantasy, which has excellent potential to be developed into a world class tourism and entertainment hub. (DEVB)

Healthy Private Residential Property Market

- Working with LegCo in their examination of the Stamp Duty (Amendment) Bill 2012 on demand-side management measures to –
 - cool down the residential property market; and
 - accord priority to the housing needs of Hong Kong permanent residents in the midst of the tight supply situation. (THB)
- Implementing the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance to further –
 - enhance the transparency and fairness of the sales of first-hand residential properties; and
 - strengthen the protection for purchasers. (THB)

Harbourfront Development

- Working with the Harbourfront Commission to ensure that our planning, land use and urban design are in line with our stated mission to protect the Victoria Harbour, and to enhance the harbourfront for the enjoyment of all with participation of the community. (DEVB)
- Conducting public engagement in collaboration with the Harbourfront Commission on the proposed establishment of Harbourfront Authority to press ahead with harbourfront development in a holistic manner with an innovative mind-set and a more flexible management approach. (DEVB)

Building Management

- Making preparation on the enabling legislation and implementation programme of the statutory licensing regime for the property management industry. (HAB)
- Following up the recommendations of the Review Committee on the Building Management Ordinance to resolve and alleviate common building management problems. (HAB)
- Promoting and implementing the Resident Liaison Ambassador Scheme in “three-nil” buildings to improve the management of these buildings and to enhance communication between residents and the Government. (HAB)
- Promoting a building care culture by–
 - supporting and promoting the work of the Panel of Advisors on Building Management Disputes;

- organising more structured training for office-bearers of owners' corporations; and
- arranging the graduates of these training programmes to share experience and outreach to other owners' corporations and property owners, thus promoting mutual help. (HAB)
- Strengthening fire safety measures in particularly old buildings and enhancing the awareness of the public on fire prevention. (SB)

Building Maintenance and Urban Renewal

- Increasing the number of buildings to be inspected in the enforcement action against industrial buildings suspected to have sub-divided flats for residential use, enhancing the prosecution action against owners who fail to comply with statutory orders, and taking lease enforcement action in cases with breach of lease conditions. (DEVB)
- Working closely with the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority to assist building owners in need to carry out repair and maintenance works through various schemes, including –
 - the Operation Building Bright;
 - the Building Maintenance Grant Scheme for Elderly Owners;
 - the Integrated Building Maintenance Assistance Scheme; and
 - the Mandatory Building Inspection Subsidy Scheme. (DEVB)

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- Continuing our efforts to enhance maintenance of private buildings through public education, publicity and participation of professional bodies. (DEVB)
 - Continuing the implementation of the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme and Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme to require private building owners to inspect their buildings and windows regularly, and carry out repair works as necessary. (DEVB)
 - Taking rigorous enforcement action against unauthorised building works including those in sub-divided flats, in accordance with the prevailing enforcement policies and responding efficiently to reports on contraventions of the Buildings Ordinance. (DEVB)
 - Implementing the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance, including the registration of qualified persons for regulatory control over lift and escalator safety. (DEVB)
 - Overseeing the implementation of the Urban Renewal Strategy. (DEVB)
 - Working closely with the Urban Renewal Authority as it forges ahead with its “Demand-led” Scheme to address the aspirations of property owners and to speed up the pace of urban renewal. (DEVB)
 - Working closely with the Urban Renewal Authority in its implementation of the Pilot Scheme for the Redevelopment of Industrial Buildings introduced in 2012-13. (DEVB)

- Monitoring the support for minority property owners affected by compulsory sale under the Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance. (DEVB)

Improving Quality of Living in Public Rental Housing

- Implementing arrangements to promote mutual family support and care for the elderly. (THB)
- Improving the living conditions of overcrowded PRH households by implementing measures to provide them with transfer opportunities to larger accommodations. (THB)
- Implementing the Lift Addition Programme in PRH estates including the installation of lifts in hillside estates with common areas in different levels and beside existing footbridges in estates to facilitate access of residents. (THB)
- Promoting sustainable public housing developments by designing for green and healthy living. (THB)
- Continuing with various environmental initiatives such as domestic waste recycling, enhancing energy saving, water conservation and greening in PRH estates. (THB)
- Increasing the greening ratio of all new public housing development projects over two hectares to at least 30% and to at least 20% for smaller sites. We will also provide green roofs in low-rise buildings and provide vertical greening in these projects wherever feasible. (THB)

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- Continuing our efforts in the provision of quality property management and maintenance services in PRH estates. (THB)

Other Land Matters

- Continuing the review of the small house policy and overseeing its implementation and related matters. (DEVB)
- Engaging the key stakeholders to refine the proposed amendments to the Land Titles Ordinance. (DEVB)

Developing Railways

- Reviewing and updating the Railway Development Strategy 2000, with a view to reporting to the public in 2014 on the way forward for the railway projects beyond 2020. (THB)
- Overseeing the construction of the West Island Line for timely commissioning in 2014. (THB)
- Overseeing the construction of the South Island Line (East) and the Kwun Tong Line Extension for timely commissioning in 2015. (THB)
- Overseeing the construction of the Shatin to Central Link for timely phased commissioning in 2018 and 2020. (THB)

Improving Road Traffic

- Continuing our efforts in improving the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings. (THB)

- Overseeing the construction of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link with target commissioning in 2017. (THB)
- Preparing for the implementation of the Central Kowloon Route, with a view to commencing its construction in 2015. (THB)
- Continuing to pursue bus route rationalisation vigorously to enhance network efficiency, improve service quality, and ease traffic congestion, whilst reducing roadside air pollution. (THB)
- Considering and implementing measures to enhance traffic management with a view to reducing congestion along major transport corridors. (THB)

Improving Marine Safety

- Reviewing comprehensively the existing regulatory regime on local passenger-carrying vessels to enhance marine safety. We will take into account the recommendations in the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Collision of Vessels near Lamma Island on 1 October 2012. (THB)

Improving Pedestrian Environment

- Implementing the policy on “Universal Accessibility”, as announced in August 2012, to further enhance the accessibility of existing public walkways by installing lifts to help the elderly and other people in need to move around with greater ease. After consulting the District Councils in the first quarter of 2013, we are conducting preliminary technical feasibility studies for priority projects identified in each district. (THB)

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- Taking forward the higher ranking proposals for the provision of hillside escalator links and elevator systems which are found technically feasible. (THB)
 - Taking forward proposed pedestrian environment improvement schemes in Yuen Long, Causeway Bay and Mongkok. (THB)
 - Developing a comprehensive cycle track network in the New Territories to improve the quality of living. We are carrying out a pilot scheme in Tai Po, under which new improvement measures to cycle tracks would be implemented and new bicycle parking facilities would be installed. We have commissioned a new consultancy study on how to implement these new measures in nine new towns. (DEVB/THB)

Enhancing External Links

- Working with the Airport Authority in considering initiatives to enhance airport capacity and airport services. Major projects being considered include the expansion of the Hong Kong International Airport into a three-runway system and implementing the midfield expansion project. (THB)
- Improving air traffic management through optimising the use of airspace as well as implementing enhancement measures on air traffic control system. (THB)
- Reviewing the air services arrangements with our aviation partners, with the objective to further liberalising our air service regime, thereby supporting the continued growth and development of the local civil aviation industry. (THB)

- Assisting the Airport Authority to expand inter-modal connections to strengthen the links between the Hong Kong International Airport and the Pearl River Delta Region. (THB)
- Supporting the Air Transport Licensing Authority in regulating our local airlines. (THB)
- Overseeing the construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge local projects to dovetail with the target commissioning of the Main Bridge within Mainland waters in 2016. Construction of the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities and Hong Kong Link Road are underway and on schedule. (THB)
- Overseeing the construction of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link with target completion in 2015. (THB)
- Overseeing the design and construction of the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point project including a new connecting road with a view to commissioning the Boundary Control Point not later than 2018. (DEVB)