

Director's Message



Welcome to our Annual Report. This report outlines our major planning initiatives and work achievements in 2023 and 2024.

In 2023 and 2024, the Planning Department continued to actively take forward planning work on various fronts, striving to make Hong Kong a city for live and work. We continued to work closely with the Civil Engineering and Development Department to undertake strategic planning and development studies, in particular those for the **Northern Metropolis development**, with a view to boosting our economic growth and bolstering our research and development as well as technology industries, while providing a better living environment which would help attract talents and encourage them to settle in Hong Kong for good. It was also aimed to enhance the quality of life of the people of Hong Kong, improving their livelihood and well-being.

To tie in with the Government's pressing ahead with the **San Tin Technopole** project in the Northern Metropolis, we promulgated the revised Recommended Outline Development Plan in February 2024 and completed the statutory planning procedures for the preparation of the relevant Outline Zoning Plan in September the same year. We also released the development proposals of **Lau Fau Shan/Tsim Bei Tsui/Pak Nai area** and **Ngau Tam Mei New Development Area** for public consultation in March and November 2024 respectively, and proceeded with the ensuing tasks, including the investigation studies and detailed technical assessments. As for other projects in the Northern Metropolis, we are about to advance the planning for **New Territories North New Town and Ma Tso Lung area**. It is our goal to make, through planning, the Northern Metropolis a metropolitan area integrating quality life, industry development, culture and leisure, with home-job balance and green living.

During the period, we also continued to take forward our statutory and district planning work to assist in fulfilling the Government's commitment to increase land supply to meet the housing demand and other development needs of the community. The Government reviewed the statutory procedures of six development-related ordinances, including the **Town Planning Ordinance** (the Ordinance). The amended Ordinance came into effect on 1 September 2023, and the amendments formed part and parcel of the Government's endeavour to reduce

development time and expedite land production in response to the strong public aspiration for land and housing. In addition, the amended Ordinance strengthened the enforcement power against unauthorised developments in the rural New Territories, with the aim of better protecting the ecological sites facing development pressure and environmental damage in the rural areas. With regard to urban renewal, to accelerate the pace of urban redevelopment, we introduced new planning tools offering incentives to encourage the private sector to participate in urban renewal. Following the completion of the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), we worked together with the URA to take forward the recommendations of the study, including piloting the **new planning tool on “transfer of plot ratio”** in the two old districts, Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok. A new set of Town Planning Board Guidelines was promulgated in July 2023 in this regard.

We have been **maintaining close ties with the Mainland municipalities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA)**, regularly exchanging updates on the town planning work in Hong Kong and other places through various channels. Since the full resumption of cross-boundary travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland in early 2023, we conducted visits to nine GBA municipalities and the Macao SAR, where we met with local officials to gain insights into their work on territorial spatial planning. In 2023, we nominated our Town Planners for attachment to the Authority of Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone for in-depth exchanges for about three months under the Civil Service Staff Exchange and Collaboration Programme with the Mainland Municipalities in the GBA. The engagement in various development projects in Qianhai enabled our colleagues to gain a deeper understanding of the planning regime, regulations and policies of the counterpart as well as the operation of Mainland authorities. Such an understanding is conducive to better complementing the GBA's development strategy in the future. In 2024, we also warmly welcomed planning officers from Beijing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Hangzhou and Shenzhen who were posted to the Planning Department for professional exchanges. These exchanges equipped colleagues with first-hand experience of the similarities and differences between Hong Kong and the Mainland in taking forward and implementing planning projects, thereby achieving mutual learning and mutual support.

The year 2025 is a prominent year for us as it marks the **35th anniversary of the Planning Department**. We will host a series of events to commemorate each significant milestone in our path. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our serving and former colleagues for their dedication to professional service and valuable contributions to the development of Hong Kong over the years. Looking forward, the Planning Department, with great commitment and professionalism, will work with different sectors in the community to **plan a future of boundless opportunities** for Hong Kong.



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Director of Planning