

# Director's Message



The Year 2022 was a year of challenges and prominence. After almost three years of the pandemic, Hong Kong is on the way to full normalcy. All sectors of society are eagerly looking forward to Hong Kong's emergence from the pandemic and the revival of our economy. During this period, the Planning Department has been actively supporting the Government in implementing various measures and pressing ahead with planning projects, with a view to meeting the public's demand for housing and various land uses, integrating into the national development, and enhancing the competitiveness of Hong Kong.

The Department is dedicated to **developing Hong Kong into a liveable, competitive and sustainable Asia's World City** through planning initiatives. The 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year

Plan has confirmed Hong Kong's positioning of the "eight centres", and national strategies such as the Greater Bay Area Development and the Belt and Road Initiative have injected impetus to the growth of Hong Kong. Our development strategies are to reinforce Hong Kong's position as an international financial centre and strengthen our status as a provider for other professional services, and to promote the development of innovation and technology industry while creating a liveable environment. During the year, we continued to work at full speed in collaboration with the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) to take forward two key development projects, namely the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands and the Northern Metropolis. We have already concluded the public engagement activities for the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands at the end of March this year, and provided preliminary proposals on reclamation extent, broad land use, strategic transport infrastructure and possible financing options. The study team is analysing the comments and recommendations received so as to further develop the preliminary proposals. During the year, we also launched the respective planning and engineering studies for areas within the Northern Metropolis, including San Tin Technopole, New Territories North New Town and Man Kam To, as well as Lau Fau Shan/ Tsim Bei Tsui/ Pak Nai areas and Ma Tso Lung area. These two key development projects serve as the important engines driving Hong Kong's future development and will expand the development capacity of Hong Kong.

The strategic goal of one of the building blocks of "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030" is to enhance the liveability in Hong Kong, a compact high-density city, by advocating for improvements in the quality and quantity of open spaces. To achieve this vision, the Department commissioned the "Reimagining Public Spaces in Hong Kong – Feasibility Study" to explore trends in open space development and understand public aspirations. The Study has also examined issues such as the planning standards and design guidelines for open spaces. The findings of the Study are expected to set a positive example for other government departments and the private sector, fostering continued collaboration to provide higher-quality open spaces and create a more liveable environment in Hong Kong.

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's return to the Motherland in 2022, the Development Bureau and the Department jointly organised a special exhibition themed "**Envisioning Beyond Legacy**" at the City Gallery to tell good stories of Hong Kong from the town planning and infrastructure development perspectives. The exhibition showcased the achievements in planning and infrastructure developments of Hong Kong in the past 25 years, and presented the future urban planning of Hong Kong and promoted our vision of Hong Kong as **a liveable, competitive and sustainable Asia's World City** with innovative, smart and inclusive exhibits. Through this exhibition, the public has gained a deeper understanding of Hong Kong's urban planning and a further insight into how the city would integrate into the overall development of the Greater Bay Area and the country in the future.

To strengthen **our close ties with cities in the Greater Bay Area**, we have maintained communication with relevant departments in the Mainland cities on respective planning efforts through various channels. In December 2022, we held a joint planning co-operation meeting with the Planning and Natural Resources Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality (PNRB), where we exchanged progress updates on major planning projects, such as the latest development of the Northern Metropolis. We also engage in timely information exchange on cross-boundary travel with the PNRB, the Transport Bureau of Zhuhai Municipality, the Macao Transport Bureau and the Transport Bureau of Guangzhou Municipality. In addition, staff from the planning departments in Hong Kong and Mainland China arrange mutual visits from time to time. Following the PNRB's trip to Hong Kong for field visits and discussions in April this year, we visited the PNRB and conducted field visits in Shenzhen in May. We will also arrange visits to other Greater Bay Area cities in the future to enhance communication and cooperation between Hong Kong and those cities.

The Department **proactively promoted youth development** by organising a variety of activities on a regular basis, including school visits, seminars, workshops, visits of the mobile exhibition centre, the Summer Planning School programme, etc., with a view to enhancing young people's understanding of town planning and related professions. In 2022, the CEDD and the Department jointly organised the "Building the Islands of the Future" Design Competition which aimed to enhance understanding on green living, healthy community and sustainability among primary and secondary students, and to encourage them to unleash their ideas and imagination of future living environment and lifestyle at the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands. The competition was well received with about 700 entries submitted. Besides, over 700 students from secondary and primary schools participated in the Summer Planning School programme. Looking forward, we will continue to collaborate with other departments and organisations to organise activities related to urban development, enabling young people to have a more comprehensive understanding on town planning, smart city, resilient city, etc.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to all my colleagues for their dedication and perseverance in discharging duties during the pandemic over the past few years. Upon resumption of normalcy, our colleagues continue to render full support and assistance to the Government in enhancing land supply in terms of quantity, speed, efficiency and quality, whilst in overcoming numerous challenges. I am confident that with concerted efforts, we shall be able to serve the community with our four core values, namely, "**Proactive and Facilitating**", "**Open and Accountable**", "**Professional and Visionary**" and "**Effective and Efficient**".

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Director of Planning

