THE FUTURE STARTS NOW

Hong Kong is one of the most vibrant and dynamic cities in the world, but have you ever envisaged what Hong Kong will be like in 30 years' time? Will there be a clean and healthy environment for our next generation? Will Hong Kong be an even better place in which to live and work?

Many changes will take place in a span of 30 years. In fact, rapid changes are already occurring in Hong Kong. For example, there has been an increase in cross-boundary activities. Almost three in every five Hong Kong residents make frequent trips to the Mainland. Last year, 4.5 million residents crossed the boundary on 97.1 million trips, made mainly for business and holidays.

Adding to this passenger traffic, Hong Kong receives 11 million visitors a year, making it the most popular destination in Asia. The port is one of the busiest in the world.

Above all, we need to consider future changes in our population. The population of Hong Kong has been increasing by about one million people in the past decade, and this increase is likely to continue.

To accommodate these and other changes, Hong Kong needs an up-to-date physical planning framework to guide development and to ensure the efficient use of resources.

In formulating this new planning framework, starting now, every Hong Kong resident will have an opportunity to participate in determining this city's land use, transport features and environment for the next 30 years. By taking the community's views, expectations and aspirations into consideration, this study will become the best possible roadmap for insuring the future lifestyle of Hong Kong citizens.

The study, entitled Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy ‘HK 2030’ will update and extend the Territorial Development Strategy, which was last approved by the Executive Council in 1998.

HK 2030 will involve widespread public consultation, divided into four stages, over the next two years. These components will be linked to the four key stages of the study - identifying planning objectives and key issues; examining the key issues and evaluative criteria; formulating scenarios and options; and formulating development strategies and response plans.

There will be a consultation report issued and a specific call for community views at each of the four study stages. Now is the Stage One public consultation, which emphasizes on planning objectives and key study areas.

The comments received will then help to guide the formulation of planning strategies for the following stages.

Everyone's voice will be heard

We call on every citizen to take this opportunity to have a say in shaping tomorrow's Hong Kong. This will ensure our vibrant, living city is a place that future generations will thank you for.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

For Hong Kong to achieve the vision of becoming Asia's World City as well as a major city of China, we first need to assess Hong Kong's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats before we can chart the course for our future.
The HK 2030 study will examine the land use, transport and environment planning measures that will build on our strengths and help overcome any shortcomings in Hong Kong's development. It will also explore how we can take advantage of opportunities as well as eliminate any threats that we are likely to encounter.

**Strengths...**

Hong Kong's success is a result of many strengths. An industrious and stable population, a strategic location at the heart of Asia, our role as a gateway to China, the stability of the monetary system and the low and simple tax regime -- these elements, and more, all contribute to the success of Hong Kong as an international business and financial centre.

Added to this, Hong Kong’s world-class transportation and telecommunications infrastructure has kept pace with the increase in economic activity and met the demands arising from population growth. Our port is one of the busiest and most efficient in the world.

**Weaknesses...**

However, we cannot overlook some weaknesses, such as the shortage of developable land and the lack of natural resources. We also have to cope with the pressures generated by the high level of population increase.

There are also weaknesses in the social and economic spheres. For example, some segments of the workforce do not have the skills required by the new economy and the economic base is narrow.

**Opportunities...**

In this era of globalisation and technological advancement, great opportunities have been presented to us. There is scope for more co-operation and communication with the Mainland if we are to progress the vision of forming a multi-centred, city-region in the Pearl River Delta. China’s accession to the World Trade Organisation will also create more economic opportunities for Hong Kong.

Within Hong Kong, the creation of environmentally friendly new development areas will bring us forward in realising sustainable development. Opportunities arising from the emergence of high technology and information technology industries also help to broaden our economic base.

**Threats...**

Despite these opportunities, there are also threats looming on the horizon. Economically, there is keen competition from neighbouring cities and the high cost of living in Hong Kong can be a disadvantage in attracting and retaining some industries.

Hong Kong also faces challenges from the fact that its open, service-oriented economy can be easily affected by external economic changes.

There are also growing environmental problems in Hong Kong and in neighbouring cities which, if not adequately addressed, can pose a threat to health, detract from Hong Kong's attractiveness to tourists and affect our international image.
DEFINING OUR OBJECTIVES

Purpose

To work towards our visions for the future, we must identify and critically consider the key components that will be required. These will then be translated into planning objectives for HK 2030. These identified objectives will guide the study and form the evaluation criteria for assessing the subsequent formulation of planning scenarios and options.

Planning Objectives

The study will commence by considering the following seven key planning objectives:

- Adhering to the principle of sustainable development to balance social, economic and environmental needs for present and future generations.

- Enhancing Hong Kong’s hub functions by:
  - providing sufficient land reserves to meet the changing needs of commerce and industry;
  - strengthening our role as a global and regional financial and business centre; and
  - developing further as an innovation and technology centre for southern China.

- Providing a good quality living environment by:
  - conserving the natural landscape;
  - preserving our cultural heritage;
  - enhancing the townscape; and
  - regenerating the old urban areas.

- Meeting housing and community needs by providing adequate land and infrastructure for the development of housing and community facilities.

- Providing a framework to develop a safe, efficient, economically variable, and environmentally friendly transport system.

- Promoting tourism to ensure Hong Kong will continue to be the major tourist destination in the Asia-Pacific region.
Strengthening links with the Mainland to cope with the rapid growth of cross-boundary interactions.

Should there be others?

IDENTIFYING KEY STUDY AREAS

To meet these objectives, various key study areas will have to be examined, including the planning experiences of selected world cities, population forecasts, development opportunities, the port, the environment, the SAR's relationship with the Mainland, tourism, and information technology.

International Town Planning Experiences

Like Hong Kong, other leading cities around the world have also prepared strategic plans to guide their future development. London, for example, produced a study report entitled "Advice on Strategic Planning Guidance for London" (1994), which contained a vision for London to become more sustainable. In Asia, Tokyo also published a strategic plan entitled "The Strategic Plan to Overcome Crises" (1999), while Singapore issued a plan entitled "Singapore 21: Together We Make the Difference" (1999).

By reviewing the strategic planning experiences of these, and other leading cities, we hope to understand their:

- Strategic planning processes;
- Approaches to dealing with rapidly changing circumstances; and
- Ways of tackling long-term planning uncertainties.

Population Forecasts and the Implications for Housing and Employment

Here, the study will aim to:

- Put forward different short, medium and long-term population growth scenarios;
- Assess the land use implications of population forecasts on the requirements for housing and other community facilities;
- Assess the ageing of the population and land use implications on housing the elderly and social services. Some 10% of the population are currently over 65 years of age. According to Government projections, this figure will increase to 13% in 2014 and 20% in 2029; and
- Examine the distribution of the population and employment patterns to minimise traffic needs.

New Development Opportunities

In this area, the study will:

- Identify development opportunities, particularly in the New Territories;
- Assess the key constraints in developing the identified areas and their capacities;
- Assess the potential of redeveloping old areas and explore other new forms of development; and
- Prioritise the development options (i.e. selecting areas that are considered suitable for development within the study time-frame).

Requirements of Port and Other Major Infrastructure Facilities

HK 2030 will:
Assess the need and location for further port development and associated facilities;

Consider, and take forward, the recommendations of major transport studies to enhance mobility and accessibility; and

Examine the future requirements for major territorial facilities, such as transport infrastructure.

**Environmental Considerations and Conservation**

To build a better environment we need to:

- Identify further protected areas to safeguard areas of natural heritage and high landscape value;
- Identify major environmental constraints and opportunities;
- Assess the regional environmental issues covering the Pearl River Delta region;
- Carry out broad strategic environmental assessments to evaluate the development options; and
- Formulate a development strategy which is environmentally friendly and sustainable.

**Improving Links with the Mainland**

This will involve studying the current and future development of southern China - particularly the Pearl River Delta - and its implications on the future development of Hong Kong.

Other aspects to examine will include:

- Exploring the scope of co-operation and coordination with the Mainland in land use, transport and environmental issues;
- Assessing the areas adjacent to the Hong Kong-Shenzhen boundary, giving particular attention to environmental and conservation implications and the development potential of the boundary area;
- Examining the relationship between Hong Kong and the Mainland on port development and logistics centres; and
- Exploring ways to enhance socio-economic ties - such as the potential for providing housing and social facilities in the Mainland for Hong Kong residents - and opportunities for tourist facilities.

**Potential for Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Development**

Here, the study will focus on:

- Improving our existing tourist and cultural facilities;
- Formulating a broad planning framework for promoting tourism and implementing the tourism vision and strategy of the Tourism Commission; and
- Formulating a broad land use framework for promoting recreation and cultural development in Hong Kong.

**Implications for Information Technology Development**

In this important area, HK 2030 will:

- Examine development trends in information technology, high technology and high value-added industries; and
- Assess the implications of these developments on land use requirements. The study will then propose planning measures to facilitate the growth of the IT industry in Hong Kong.
A FOCUSED APPROACH

Approach

HK 2030 will use a focused approach aimed at broadening our vision by incorporating a regional perspective, greater flexibility, and responsiveness to public opinions.

The approach to this study will contain the following key elements:

- Public views will form an important base for HK 2030. In all four stages of the study, members of the public will be kept aware of progress and given a wide variety of opportunities to contribute feedback, through public forums and debates, through the media, questionnaires, at exhibitions and roadshows and via the Internet.
- The study will look at Hong Kong 30 years from now (2000-2030). While this is a long period in many respects, it is considered a reasonable timeframe in which to plan and implement strategic development and related infrastructure proposals.
- The 30-year planning horizon will be broken down into stages: short term plans will be detailed in nature, whereas the long term plans will be more conceptual.
- There will be greater emphasis on links with the Mainland. HK 2030 will put more effort into examining Hong Kong's links with the Pearl River Delta region and studying the area's planning proposals in relation to those of Hong Kong.
- Compared with Hong Kong's previous territorial development strategy reviews, HK 2030 will focus on fundamental planning issues, such as socio-economic ties with the Mainland and the land use implications of information technology and high-technology development.
- HK 2030 will be flexible and responsive to changes in socio-economic conditions. Response plans will be prepared to set out broad guidelines on how to adjust the development framework in response to changing circumstances. A monitoring and review system will be proposed during the course of the study.

HK 2030 will be a two-year undertaking, divided into the following four key working stages:

Stage I: Publication of this booklet, presenting the proposed approach, planning objectives and key study areas to be examined. In addition, a public forum will be held in February 2001, details of which are on the following page. A publicity campaign will also be launched to generate widespread awareness of the aims of HK 2030 and the public consultation stages.

Stage II: Examination of the key issues which materialise from Stage I. Again, the public will be invited to comment and offer suggestions relating to this examination and the evaluation criteria for assessing various scenarios and options to be formulated in the next stage.

Stage III: Once the issues have been defined, various scenarios and options will be formulated and evaluated. The public will be encouraged to participate in this evaluation exercise.

Stage IV: The final stage will be the formulation of development strategies and response plans. Members of the public will be invited to comment on the HK 2030 recommendations before the document is finalised.

WE WELCOME YOUR VIEWS

Every member of the community will be affected by some aspects of this study. It will cater for the young and old, for entrepreneurs, planners and developers; and for the workforce as a whole, many of whom live and work, not only in Hong Kong but in southern China as well.

As part of Stage I, the Planning Department is seeking public views on the proposed approach, planning objectives and key study areas outlined in this publication. The first public forum will be held on:

Date: Saturday, February 17, 2001
Time: 9.00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
In the meantime, everyone is invited to download and fill out the feedback form, or make additional written comments to highlight what we, as a community, consider important in preparing the new development strategy.

Are there any other aspects that should be considered under the various key study areas to be examined? How should we ensure improved air quality in the future? How can transportation links be improved to facilitate travel to the Mainland?

Your views and comments will be invaluable.

Please forward your comments to:

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Staff from the Strategic Planning Section of the Planning Department will provide briefing sessions for interested parties, on request.

References

Background on previous studies can be found on the following web pages:

  http://www.info.gov.hk/planning

- Commission on Strategic Development's published document (2000):

Map of the Pearl River Delta Region

(If hard copy of the Consultation Digest is required, please contact us at 2231 4721.)