INFORMATION NOTE NO. 1
PLANNING OBJECTIVES

Purpose

1. This paper aims to highlight the planning objectives of Hong Kong 2030 Study, which have been set out in the Inception Report. It also explains how the Chief Executive (CE)'s vision of developing Hong Kong into a world-class city is translated into the planning objectives.

Background

2. In his Policy Addresses in 1998 and 1999, the CE promulgated a long-term vision of developing Hong Kong to become the most cosmopolitan city in Asia, enjoying a status similar to that of New York in America and London in Europe. In February 2000, the Commission on Strategic Development (CSD) published the document "Bringing the Vision to Life: Hong Kong's Long-term Development Needs and Goals" and outlined Hong Kong's long-term vision of becoming Asia's World City and a major city in China. This vision has been formulated with regard to major world trends and driving forces (e.g. globalisation of world economy, development of innovative technology and growth of China's economy) which may affect Hong Kong's long-term development.

3. Earlier in 1999, the Chief Executive's Commission on Innovation and Technology (CIT) also published its final report outlining the measures Hong Kong needs to take in order to develop into an innovation centre. The CIT believed that Hong Kong has the capability to become an innovation and technology centre, and that Hong Kong should emphasize innovation in all economic sectors so that a knowledge-driven and technology-intensive economy can be developed.

4. To work towards these visions, we need to identify the key features of "world cities" and consider the essential components required to make Hong Kong a leading city in Asia. These key elements would then be translated into planning objectives for guiding the preparation of development strategies and the assessment of hybrid options.

Key Features of the World Cities

5. Based on current research, world cities are:
   - major international financial and business services centres;
   - foci of powerful and influential decision makers;
   - important international centres for news and information dissemination;
   - leading international centres for the creative and cultural industries; and
   - international tourism centres.

6. In general, "world cities" enjoy a dominant position in the urban hierarchy and display the following main attributes:
   - Performance level - achieving sustained strong performance in terms of income per head, quality of life and international reputation.
   - Core activities - representing the world's leading centres for fast growing, high value added, and internationally oriented service activities.
   - Supporting infrastructure - possessing an excellent "soft" and "hard" infrastructure.

Broad Assessment of Hong Kong's as a World City

7. In comparing Hong Kong with London and New York on these aspects, the current research study concludes that:
   - Hong Kong currently lacks the support of a strong hinterland and the links with China tend to be restricted;
   - Hong Kong's core activities are generally not as advanced and internationally developed; and
   - Hong Kong's "hard" infrastructure is close to that of world cities but its "soft" infrastructure is lacking in important aspects.

8. The above analysis indicates that significant gaps exist between Hong Kong and the prototypical cities of New York and London. It implies that if Hong Kong has to achieve the "world city" status in the future, it would need to recognise the global
trends, notably those of high technologies, and meet the challenges from the competitors through developing a long-term strategy.

**Implications on Strategic Planning**

9. To become Asia's World City, Hong Kong should adopt a bold strategy with the following considerations:

   a. to improve its core activities to equip itself for a fast-growing, internationally oriented and high-value-added service economy. In particular, we need to enhance our international character as a world financial centre and regional headquarters; develop information industry and innovative technology, and promote the tourism industry;

   b. to reposition itself in the Asia-Pacific context and strengthen its links with the Mainland. China's entry into the World Trade Organisation would open up new opportunities for Hong Kong to work closely with the hinterland to build up a strong partnership for the future advancement of the Pearl River Delta (PRD) area; and

   c. further develop its "soft" infrastructure by improving the quality of life, building affordable housing, training high quality manpower and promoting arts and cultural activities.

10. The CSD's document published in February 2000 has outlined four strategic themes that Hong Kong must address in its long-term development, namely:

   a. Strengthening Links with the Mainland;
   b. Enhancing Competitiveness;
   c. Improving Quality of Life; and
   d. Reinforcing Identity and Image.

11. These four strategic themes have implications on a wide range of fields, such as finance, education, land use planning, marketing and so forth. The themes, that have bearings to land use planning, are highlighted at Annex A. Having regard to these themes, the key aspects at Annex A will be studied, or considered, in preparing our Hong Kong 2030.

12. To understand other players in the field, a review of the strategic planning experience of London, New York and Paris as well as other leading Asian Pacific cities including Sydney, Singapore, Tokyo, Shanghai and Taipei has been outlined in Information Note No. 2.

**Planning Objectives**

13. Planning objectives have been set out to guide the study process and to form the evaluation criteria for the assessment of planning options. In the last round of the Territorial Development Strategy Review, a total of six policy objectives were identified (Annex C refers). For Hong Kong 2030, after taking into account the CSD's recommendations and growing concern on sustainable development, we have consolidated the previous objectives and initially identified the following seven planning objectives:

   a. Adhering to the principle of sustainable development in formulating development strategies to balance social, economic and environmental needs so that a vibrant economy, social progress and better environmental quality can be achieved simultaneously. In this connection, we will, inter alia, apply the evaluation tool, i.e. the CASET, developed in the *Study on Sustainable Development for the 21st Century (SUSDEV 21)*, in the strategy formulation process in order to obtain as far as possible an optimum balance between the three factors for the recommended strategies.

   b. Enhancing our hub functions by providing sufficient land reserves to meet the changing needs of the economy. We need to strengthen the role of Hong Kong as a global financial centre, a regional Internet hub, a trading entrepot, a regional transportation hub, an innovation and technology centre for South China, and the Asian centre for culture, sports and recreation, etc.

      Moreover, by providing the physical planning framework, we need to facilitate the development of new economic activities arising from the economic restructuring and the new opportunities emerging from China's entry to the WTO. Employment will be provided at conveniently located development nodes and the strategic growth areas in the New Territories to maintain a balanced distribution of jobs and population. Thereby, the efficiency of the labour force could be increased.

   c. Providing a quality living environment so that we could offer an attractive living environment for foreign investors, international visitors and locals alike. We would propose environmental indicators based on the principle of sustainable development to monitor the environmental conditions and strive for a quality environment so that we could breath clean air, swim in non-polluted water and enjoy a quiet, green and clean environment. We will need to maintain and expand, where appropriate, the country and marine parks and enhancing our ecological resources.
i. Conserving natural landscape to ensure that the present and future generations could continue to enjoy significant landscape and ecological attributes. We need to conserve and enhance our natural environment by protecting existing conservation areas and heritage features, by identifying new areas for conservation and by compensating for areas which merit conservation but are inevitably lost to essential development projects. As such, "no-go" areas should be identified and conserved properly.

ii. Preserving cultural heritage and enhancing townscape by planning the new development areas with creative design and high landscape standards. Similarly, the old urban areas will be redeveloped and restructured to improve the citiescape and to preserve valuable heritage buildings and landmark in order to foster a sense of character and identity for the community and visitors.

iii. Regenerating the old urban areas to improve the existing building fabric in order to meet the changing market demands and social expectation. The urban renewal process should be expedited so that the old urban areas will be regenerated and restructured. At the same time, a broader rehabilitation effort (including the preservation of heritage buildings) is proposed to slow down the pace of urban decay, extending the life of buildings and preserving places of cultural, historical and local interest.

d. Meeting the need for housing and community facilities by providing adequate land and infrastructure for the development of affordable accommodations and sufficient community facilities to meet the growing demands arising from population increase, as well as to meet the rising aspirations of Hong Kong people. To become a world city, we also need to provide a stock of quality housing and adequate international schools for foreign investors and talented expatriates as well as their families to work and live in Hong Kong.

c. Providing a framework to develop a safe, efficient, economically viable and environmental friendly transport system and pedestrian facilities. We should aim at providing environmentally friendly mass transit systems which will provide efficient and comfortable services for the commuters, and generate less noise and air pollution to nearby sensitive uses. The use of new technologies and techniques which would improve the environmental performance of individual transport mode and/or the transport system and pedestrian facilities will be considered and incorporated into the strategy.

f. Promoting tourism to ensure that Hong Kong will continue to be a major tourist destination in the Asia-Pacific region. There should be high quality tourist attractions and hotel/conference facilities of various grades to sustain Hong Kong's international image as a major tourist centre.

g. Strengthening links with the Mainland to cope with the rapid growth of cross-boundary interactions. We would seek opportunities to establish a closer co-ordination with the Mainland authorities in areas concerning infrastructure planning and developments.

14. For the purpose of assessing the subsequent formulation of planning scenarios and options, indicators will also be prepared to gauge the planning objectives. For instance, for the objective of natural landscape conservation, the total areas designated as conservation areas could be used as one of the indicators. Any increase in the total areas would amount to a progress towards the realisation of this objective. Similarly, for the objective of townscape enhancement, the length of publicly accessible harbour frontage can be used as one of the indicators. Any increase in this value would be considered as an enhancement of the townscape. A list of indicators for each objective will be prepared at a later stage. This list of indicators will be developed based on the indicators identified in the SUSDEV 21, which has already incorporated comments received from the public, the stakeholders and relevant Government departments and bureaux.

Attachments

Annex A: Themes in CSD's Document concerning Land Use Planning
Annex B: The Principal Objectives of Territorial Development Strategy Review
Annex C: Key Aspects of Strategic Themes to be considered in preparing Hong Kong 2030

Planning Department
February 2001

Reference


ANNEX A

Themes in CSD's Document Concerning Land Use Planning

Among the strategic themes outlined in CSD’s document, the following issues are of particular relevance to land use planning:

(a) Strengthening of Links with the Mainland

CSD recognised that a multi-centred city-region was gradually taking shape in the PRD Region. The Commission believed that continued co-operation was needed to foster better regional planning and economic development under “one country, two systems”. There should be a closer co-ordination with Mainland authorities in areas concerning infrastructure planning and development.

It is stated in the study that Hong Kong had to develop a strategy to strengthen its position as a transportation hub for the Mainland, in particular the PRD Region. Hong Kong should accelerate and broaden its physical links with the rest of Southern China.

(b) Enhancement of the Competitiveness

To improve the competitiveness of Hong Kong, particular attention should be paid to property costs, which are affected by policies relating to the long-term land supply and the land policy governing the land value and price. Hong Kong should maximise the use of its limited land resources, through:

i. Reassessing the allocation of land for industrial and commercial uses; and
ii. Examining the potential contribution that urban renewal can make to enhance Hong Kong’s competitiveness.

(c) Quality of Life

The Commission considered that urban renewal was also a means of upgrading urban areas. During the renewal process, it would be important to create a more attractive and environmentally friendly city-form and to preserve buildings of historical and architectural significance.

(d) Tourism

In order to promote the tourism industry, CSD considered that Hong Kong needed to expand its range of tourist attractions.
Key Aspects of Strategic Themes to be Considered in Preparing Hong Kong 2030

(a) Strengthening Links with Mainland

The spatial development patterns in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region, particularly, the respective roles for major urban centres including Guangzhou, Zhuhai, Shenzhen, Macau and Hong Kong;

- The economic positioning of Hong Kong in the regional development of PRD and strategic planning implications;
- Ways to enhance socio-economic integration covering such aspects as housing, tourists/recreational facilities, high-tech development, etc.;
- Patterns of cross-boundary travel and need for additional crosslinks; and
- The interface between urban developments on both sides of the boundary including the development potential for the boundary area.

(b) Enhancing Hong Kong’s Competitiveness

- Challenges and opportunities arising from China’s accession into the World Trade Organisation, in particular how land and infrastructural planning can help meet the challenges and maximise opportunities;
- Land and physical infrastructure required to sustain our long-term development, particularly in strengthening and enhancing our hub functions;
- Planning initiatives required to help widen our economic base into such areas as tourism, high-tech and high value-added industries etc.; and
- Scope for new business centre(s) away from the Central Business District.

(c) Improving Quality of Life

- Adopt sustainable development as the key principle in strategy formulation;
- Devise and update the planning framework for the conservation of our natural environment, preservation of our cultural heritage and protection of areas of high landscape value;
- Undertake a strategic environmental assessment for the proposed development strategy and strengthen environmental planning guidelines to guide our future planning and development;
- Better distribution of population and jobs to minimise travelling; and
- An integrated planning framework for arts and cultural facilities.

(d) Reinforcing Identity and Image

- Further develop our tourism industry by exploiting our unique East-meet-West characteristics, and through the development of both project- and area-based attractions; and
- Incorporate the Harbour Plan and Urban Design Guidelines, currently being prepared, as inputs to Hong Kong 2030.
ANNEX C


Objective 1: To enhance the role of Hong Kong as an international city and a regional centre for business, finance, information, tourism, entrepot activities and manufacturing.

Objective 2: To ensure that adequate provision is made to satisfy the land use and infrastructure needs arising from sectoral policies on industry, housing, commercial, rural, recreation and other major socio-economic activities.

Objective 3: To conserve and enhance significant landscape and ecological attributes, and important heritage features.

Objective 4: To enhance and protect the quality of the environment with regard to air quality, water quality, noise, solid waste disposal and potentially hazardous installations by minimising net environment impacts on the community and maximising opportunities to improve existing environmental problems.

Objective 5: To provide a framework within which to develop a multi-choice, high capacity transport system that is financially and economically viable, environmentally acceptable, energy efficient and makes provision for the safe and convenient movement of people and goods.

Objective 6: To formulate a strategy that can be carried out both by the public and private sectors under variable circumstances, particularly with respect to the availability of resources and significant changes of demand.