

# F ocus





# URBAN DESIGN STUDY

## FOR THE WAN CHAI NORTH AND NORTH POINT HARBOURFRONT AREAS

### Embracing the Harbour's Assets

Victoria Harbour is an internationally renowned icon, and a special public asset and natural heritage of Hong Kong. For many years, while most of the harbourfront areas have been shaped for various functions to support our vibrant city, the Government is committed to realising the Harbour Planning Vision of building an attractive, vibrant, accessible and sustainable harbourfront. A number of planning and design studies for the harbourfront areas have been conducted over the past years, striving to bring the Harbour Planning Vision to life. The Government has also earmarked \$6.5 billion of dedicated funding to extend the existing 23 km long harbourfront promenades to 34 km by 2028, with an additional 35 ha of open space.







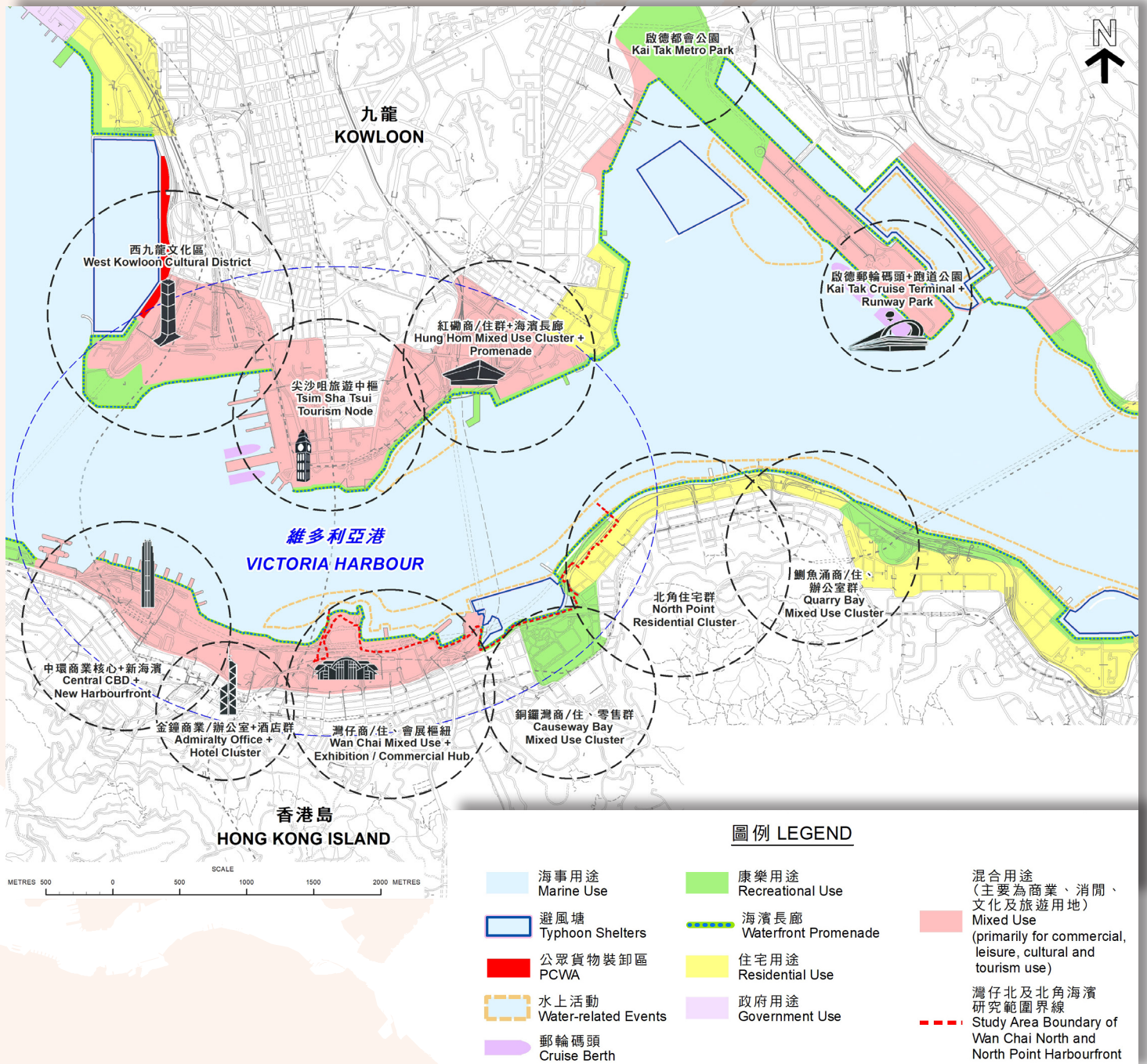


*Wan Chai North and North Point Harbourfront Areas*

The 'Urban Design Study for the Wan Chai North and North Point Harbourfront Areas' (the Study) was completed by the Planning Department in October 2019. The 3.8 km long Wan Chai North and North Point (WCN) harbourfront, comprises a piece of valuable reclaimed land of 19 ha extending from Hong Kong's premier business district and a water space of 22 ha including the Wan Chai ex-Public Cargo Working Area (ex-PCWA) and the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter (CWBTS). It presents a unique opportunity for creating a new public space to 're-connect' people to the water.

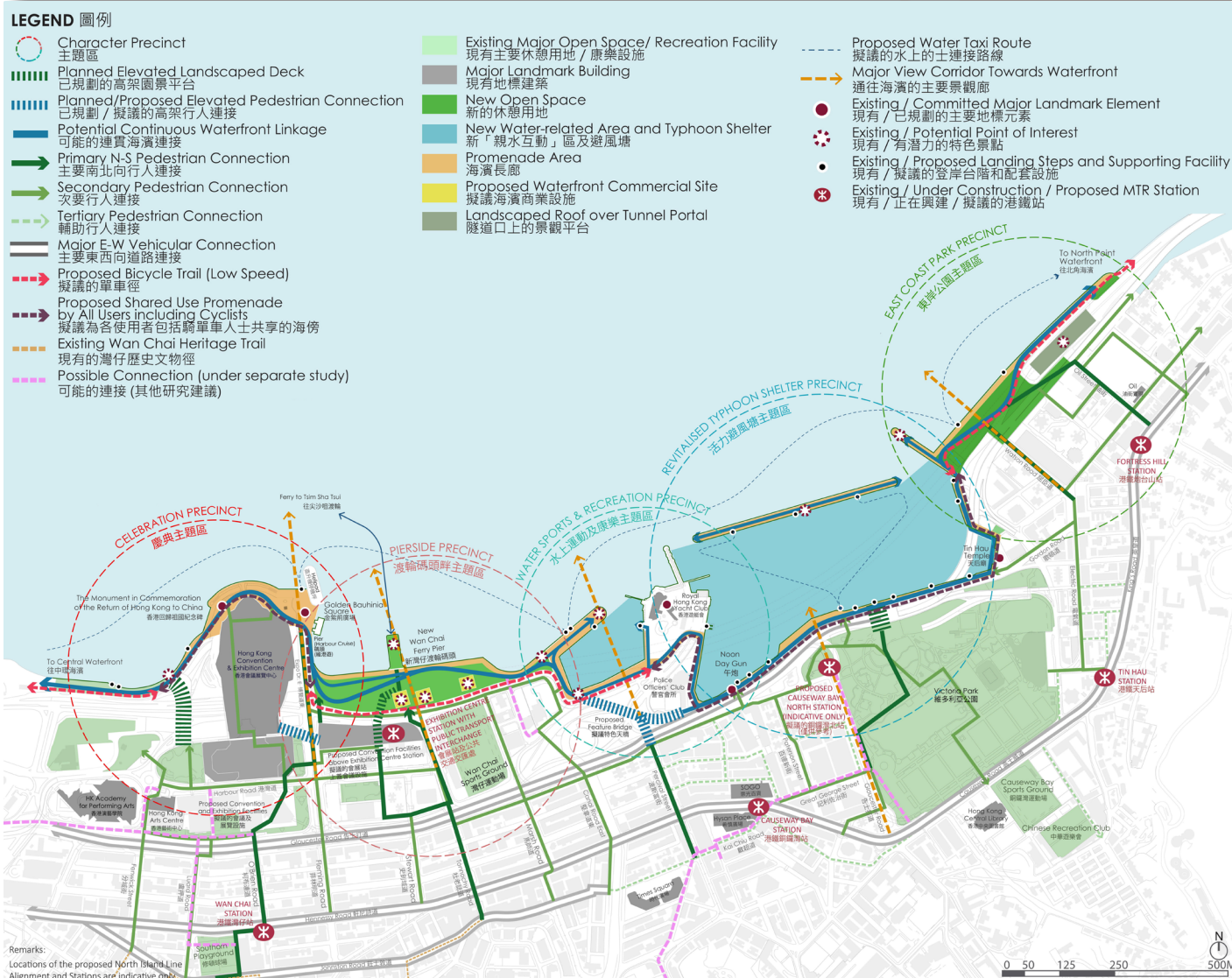
As shown on the Harbour Functional Zone Plan, the study area stretches along the exhibition/commercial hub in Wan Chai, the commercial/residential/ recreation cluster in Causeway Bay, and the residential cluster in North Point. Upon completion of the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Sha Tin to Central Link (SCL) with a new railway station at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), it will be more accessible to the public. The water bodies of the ex-PCWA and CWBTS also provide opportunities for re-defining the role of the water space in promoting water-friendly culture and activities. The WCN harbourfront will have great potential in becoming an attractive, well-connected, vibrant and sustainable new waterfront for public enjoyment.





Harbour Functional Zone Plan





Urban Design Framework for WCN Waterfront

To tie in with the gradual completion of infrastructure works on the WCN harbourfront areas, including the Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII), Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) and SCL, as well as the reprovisioning of affected waterfront facilities, the Study has worked out a sustainable urban design framework and various harbourfront enhancement proposals (HEPs) to guide future developments. In view of the public aspiration for early enjoyment of the harbourfront, some quick-win projects are being implemented progressively under an incremental approach.



## Co-visioning with the Community



*Public Engagement Activities*

The Study was conducted hand-in-hand with the Harbourfront Commission (HC) throughout the study process. A collaborative and bottom-up approach was adopted to co-vision the harbourfront together with the community and the Wan Chai and Eastern District Councils; and to gauge the community needs and aspirations in a timely manner. A series of interactive and lively activities, including a design ideas competition and various community events and resident workshops, was conducted in the two-stage innovative public engagement exercise, thereby successfully arousing public awareness and building consensus.

With concerted effort of the community and HC, the vision of 'developing an urban harbourfront re-connecting people to the water' has served as a beacon for planning and design of our new waterfront.



## Urban Design Emphases

Underlying the vision, a set of urban design emphases is devised to outline the framework for the new harbourfront, as set out below:

- **Waterfront Character, Identity and Sense of Place**  
To define character precincts
- **Waterfront Attraction, Vibrancy and Diversity**  
A mix of commercial, recreational and various waterfront open space uses
- **Waterfront Connectivity, Continuity and Accessibility**  
To be enhanced through a continuous and easily accessible promenade well served by public transport
- **Flexible and Shared Use Design**  
To accommodate the needs of users of different ages and interests
- **Assemblage of Green and Blue Resources**  
To create distinctive landscape character and make use of the existing blue resources
- **Smart, Green and Sustainable Elements**  
To optimise energy efficiency, environmental friendliness and liveability
- **Local Character and Heritage**  
To be respected by appropriate preservation and compatible waterfront design

## Character Precincts and Harbourfront Enhancement Proposals

Endeavoured to create an attractive, accessible and vibrant harbourfront for public enjoyment round the clock, a master layout plan comprising five character precincts infused with different unique identities and supported by a number of HEPs has been drawn up. The entire harbourfront will be linked up by a continuous promenade for both pedestrians and cyclists, with some shared sections at constrained/bottleneck areas, as part of the harbourfront promenade of the northern shoreline of Hong Kong Island.



The five character precincts and their respective HEPs proposed in the Study, as well as their latest development progress are highlighted in the following paragraphs. While the availability of some sites are pending the completion of the ongoing infrastructural works, some quick-win projects have been pushed ahead under the incremental approach.



Master Layout Plan



## *Celebration Precinct*

The design concept of this Precinct is to reinforce the identity and ceremonial significance of the Golden Bauhinia Square, and enhance the sense of place to attract both locals and tourists. Three feature plazas, namely Celebration Plaza, City View Plaza and Sunset Plaza, are proposed to provide flexible venues for official celebration and ceremonial events, as well as other outdoor art and cultural events and exhibitions, and to serve as public spaces for enjoying the panoramic harbour view. The West Landscaped Deck proposed under WDII is also suggested to be used as an art walk/corridor to echo with the nearby Hong Kong Arts Centre and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.



*Celebration Plaza*

The section of waterfront promenade between Tamar and the Sunset Plaza next to HKCEC has been made accessible under the incremental approach in end 2019. While the West Landscaped Deck is under construction, further modification to the deck design has been proposed to facilitate more direct linkage towards the Sunset Plaza and HKCEC.



*West Landscaped Deck*



## Pierside Precinct

Positioned at the heart of Wan Chai waterfront, this Precinct is intended to be developed as an internationally-renowned harbourfront park offering diverse and round-the-clock enjoyment/experiences for both locals and visitors. HEPs include a Harbourfront Performance Area providing a flexibly shared space for various events and activities; a Gourmet Dining Square as a modern urban waterfront park with diverse dining facilities and multi-purpose event spaces; and various waterfront open space uses such as dry music fountain, water play area, thematic garden, pet playground, etc. Another elevated connection proposed under WDII, namely East Landscaped Deck, will also connect the future MTR Exhibition Centre Station and the Precinct.

As a quick-win project under the incremental approach, a section of promenade of about 380 m long extended from the Celebration Plaza of Celebration Precinct, through Wan Chai Ferry Pier to Marsh Road is tentatively scheduled for full opening in Q3 2021. A pet garden and sitting-out areas will be provided.

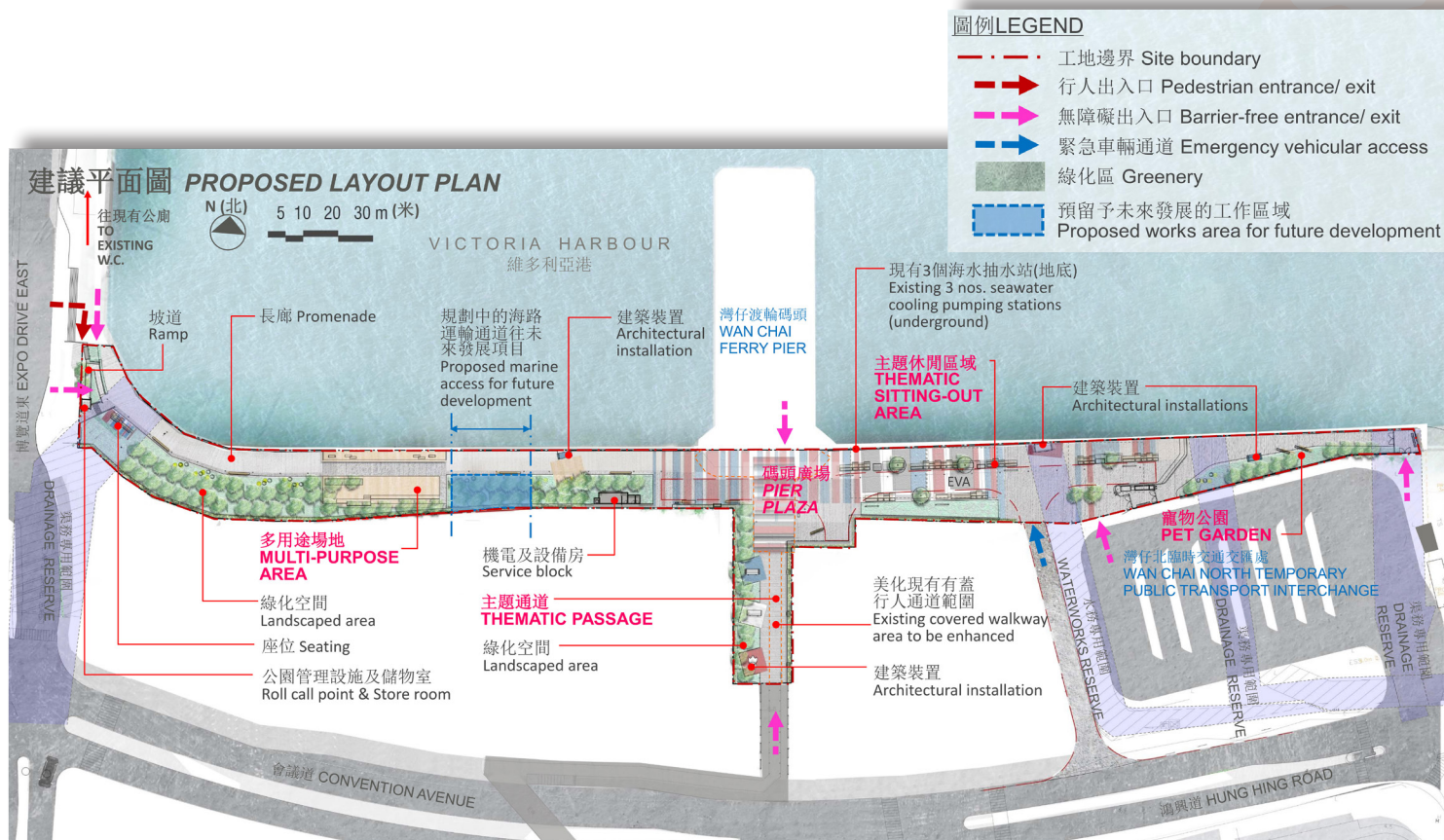


*Gourmet Dining Square*



*Harbourfront Performance Area*





Quick-Win Promenade near Wan Chai Ferry Pier

## Water Sports and Recreation Precinct

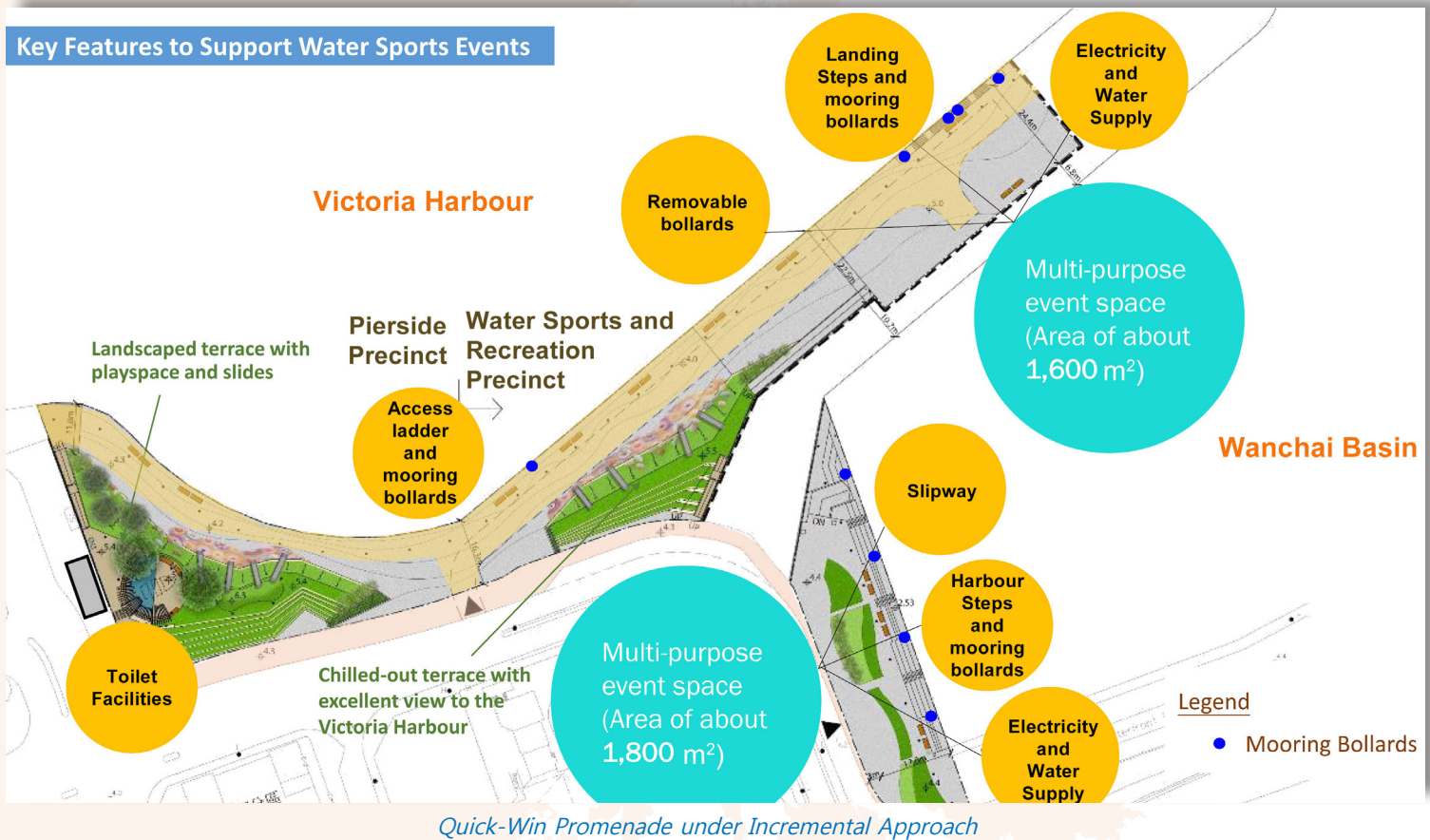
The design concept of this Precinct is to activate the Wan Chai ex-PCWA into a water sports and recreational centre to showcase the new water play concepts and shared use of various water-related activities, including hosting local and international water sports events.



Water Sports and Recreation Centre

In the Precinct, two annex buildings, namely Harbour Recreation Annex and Harbour Education Annex, will be constructed to provide necessary back-of-house facilities and landing steps, floating pontoons and other related facilities. Fence-free harbour steps will be provided to bring people closer to the water. To further improve connectivity, a feature bridge linking up the Precinct and the Causeway Bay hinterland is proposed.





A quick-win promenade will make use of mainly the western portion of the ex-PCWA for multi-purpose event space, including harbour steps, landing steps and mooring bollards to facilitate water sports events and promote water-friendly culture. The promenade is targeted for completion by Q4 2021.

Currently, there are already some water sports events organised by water sports organisations at the water space nearby. In order to explore and unleash the potential of the ex-PCWA in carrying out water sports and recreation activities, trial of water sports events will be held therein through engaging the Water Sports Council.

Nevertheless, the degree of human contact with water, whether primary or secondary, will depend on water quality. The Government will continue with its ongoing initiatives, including 'Enhancing the Quality of the Coastal Waters of Victoria Harbour' by the Environmental Protection Department, and to explore practical options to effectively reduce nearshore pollution and enhance the quality of coastal water.



## Revitalised Typhoon Shelter Precinct

It is intended to revitalise CWBTS to signify its historical characteristics and echo with the cultural and historic elements of the area. New life is proposed to be injected to the typhoon shelter through introduction of charismatic dining experience on floating restaurants with sampan services to create the old typhoon shelter ambience. Boardwalks are also proposed along part of the vertical seawall, as well as the breakwaters so as to create visitor attraction for enjoying the panoramic harbour view. Another Landscaped Deck is proposed to connect Victoria Park to the harbourfront.



*Cantilevered Viewing Deck*

The existing promenade of the typhoon shelter along Victoria Park Road will be shortly revamped as a quick-win project with enhanced railing, seating and new harbour steps for a facelift, as well as incorporating water-friendly and history respecting elements in the design.





*Quick-Win Promenade on Victoria Park Road*

Most of the HEPs have avoided reclamation as defined under the Protection of Harbour Ordinance (PHO). However, the cantilevered boardwalk along CWBTS may have implications under PHO. Further study will be required in the detailed design and implementation stages to ensure compliance with the statutory requirements.

### *East Coast Park Precinct*

The design concept of this Precinct is to create a waterfront community park with well-planned supporting facilities serving the locals with a view to promoting 'well-being' and 'healthy living' concepts. The community park will be equipped with a wide range of active and passive activity facilities for all ages and interests. Urban farming and landscaped park will be provided on the tunnel portal roof of CWB. Enhancement to local streetscape and pedestrian facilities will also be carried out for better connection to individual local areas.



*Community Park*



To dovetail with the design concept of the Precinct, the Architectural Services Department has worked out a quick-win proposal for the western part of the Precinct as a community park. It is a scheme with children's play area, art installations and lookout points for local enjoyment, regardless of age and interest. Fence-free design will also be adopted at some suitable locations. The proposal has already been presented to HC in mid-2020 and is targeted for completion in 2021.



Taking into consideration the overall design concept, the rooftop of the CWB tunnel portal has been landscaped and possible public access points have been reserved for public enjoyment and to facilitate possible implementation of urban farming. Technical Feasibility Study, covering the Precinct as a whole, including the landscaped deck above CWB tunnel portal, is being conducted.





*The proposed urban farming and landscaped park on CWB tunnel portal roof (Upper); and the current landscaped roof (Lower)*



## Way Forward

In the course of study, broad technical assessments have been conducted for the recommended HEPs which demonstrate the technical feasibility of their implementation. Concerted effort of relevant government departments led by the HO of the Development Bureau has been made to take forward the HEPs in collaboration with HC. Noting the strong public aspiration for early provision of the WCN harbourfront for enjoyment, quick-win projects under the incremental approach have been taken forward progressively upon the availability of the concerned sites.

For the detailed design of the HEPs, design ideas competition will be carried out for the Celebration and Pierside Precincts to tap into the expert and local's intelligence and creativity. Detailed design and technical feasibility studies for HEPs in other Precincts have been/will be conducted in a timely manner.



# URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES REVAMP

## Background and Purposes

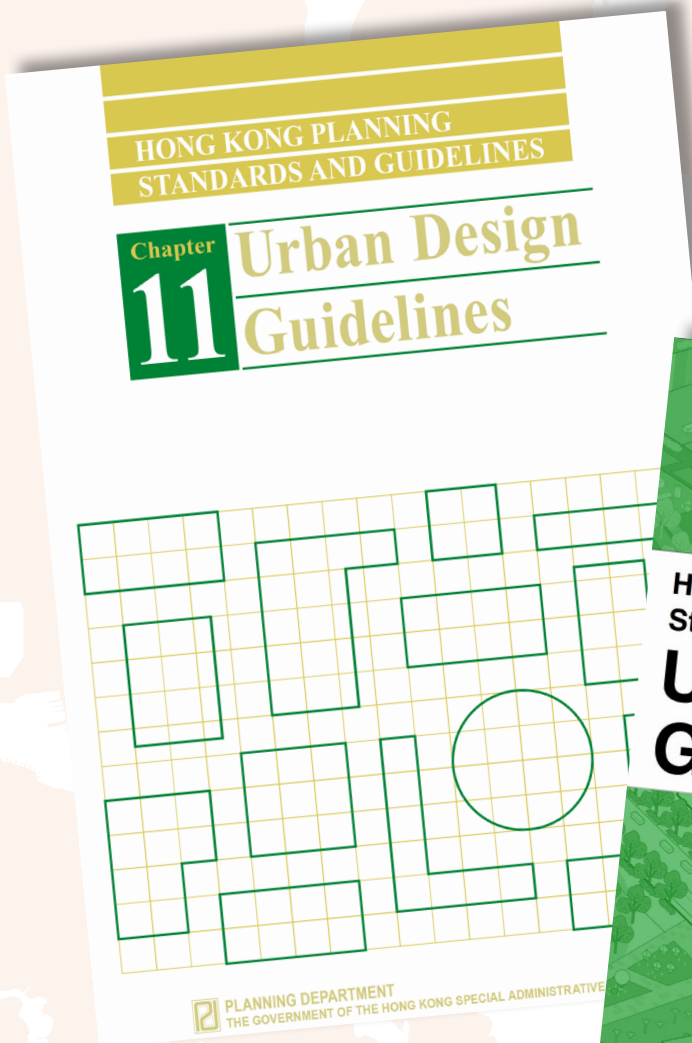
Urban design is an art of making the best from the built environment for people. It is especially important for a compact and dynamic city like Hong Kong. The Planning Department in 2003 promulgated the first Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) for Hong Kong on the basis of the findings and recommendations of the study on 'Urban Design Guidelines for Hong Kong'. The UDG forms Chapter 11 of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG). In 2006, the UDG was amended to incorporate the design considerations as recommended in the 'Feasibility Study for Establishment of Air Ventilation Assessment System' for improving pedestrian wind environment. Since then, there have been no substantial revision to the UDG.

The UDG is a non-statutory advisory document. It is a reference manual for promoting understanding of urban design principles, and for improving design quality of our built environment in functional and aesthetic terms. While the prevailing urban design principles contained in the UDG are generally regarded as timeless in their applicability, there is scope to improve their clarity and relevancy to different contexts as well as their effectiveness as a tool in promoting the quality and liveability of our built environment. As advocated in the 'Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030' (HK2030+), one of the key visions for Hong Kong is to enhance liveability in the high-density compact city and create capacity for sustainable growth. It is important to keep the UDG abreast of time and encourage wider usage of the document, in particular better integration of urban design concepts and principles into different stages of planning and development process. The Planning Department in October 2019 engaged Consultants, to carry out the Study on 'UDG Revamp' (the Study) with a view to revamping the document to make it easier to use and identifying any missing gaps, such as emerging urban design-related ideas and other design measures/considerations that have been formulated over the years. The revamped UDG will be promulgated later in 2021.

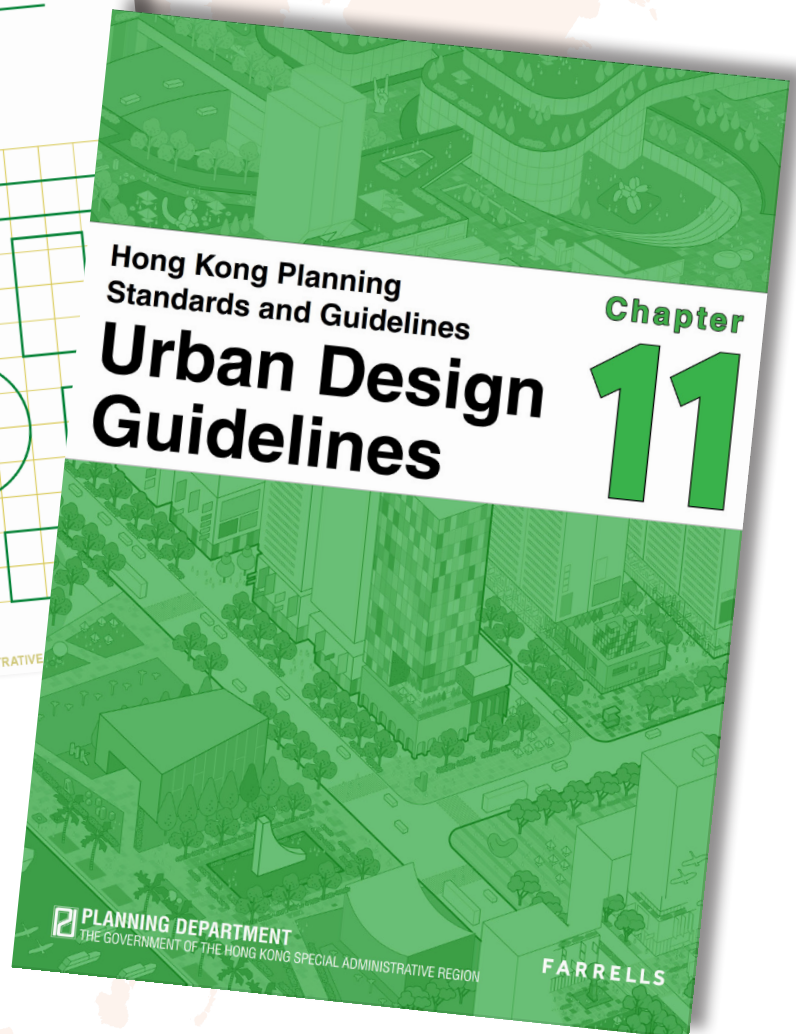


## Revamped UDG

An innovative approach was adopted in restructuring the guidelines. It represents a collaborative effort between the Consultants and the Planning Department with a common goal to promote design excellence. The design of the revamped UDG is more visually engaging and interactive. It adopts features such as distinctive colour illustrations and images to better captivate the readers' attention and to allow better flow of multiple strands through the document. The key amendments are highlight below.



*The Current UDG*



*The Revamped UDG*



## Structure

The revamped UDG has adopted an organised and simplified format to make it more attractive, readable and easy to understand. Under the new structure, the design guidelines are grouped into four overarching urban design principles, including Responding to Context, Pedestrian-Friendly Movement Network, Engaging Public Realm, and People-Centric Building Design. The related guidelines and design objectives are presented in short sentence or point form. Each principle comprises a number of objectives, and each objective a number of associated guidelines along with tip(s), where necessary, suggested practical considerations and/or references for further reading. This principle-based approach could help promote a more holistic and thoughtful design process. Such format also enables future additions and updates to accommodate new principles/guidelines.

To assist users to navigate and make reference to specific guidelines applicable to their projects of different scales, a matrix has been added to the appendix. A checklist in the form of questions has also been introduced to serve as a reminder of the design objectives and related guidelines when applying the revamped UDG to their projects.

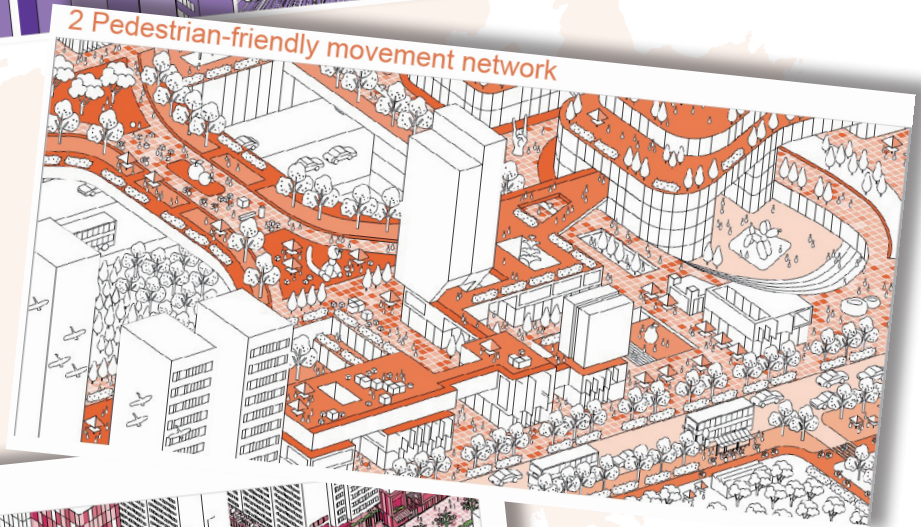
The urban design guidelines, including air ventilation of the current version are regrouped and embodied in the above overarching principles. Revision to graphics and document layout have also been made.



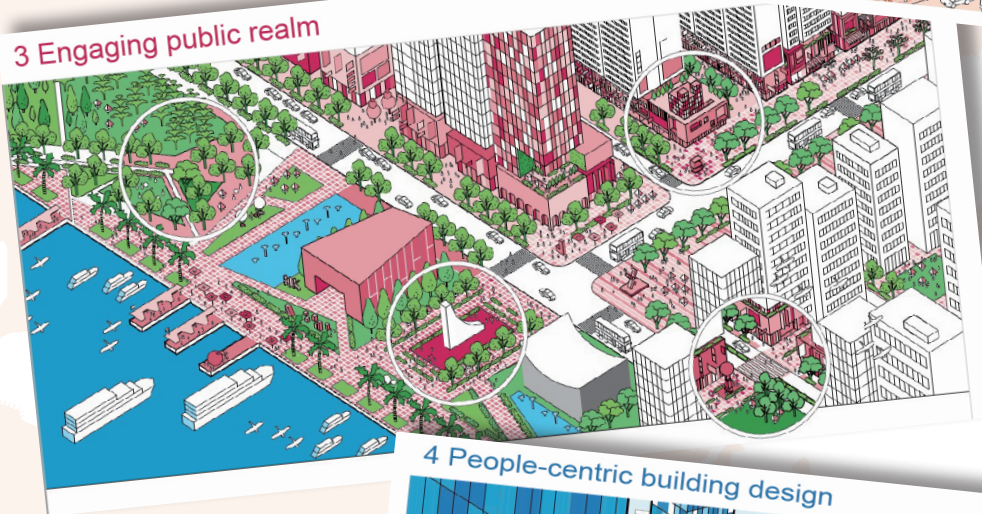
### 1 Responding to context



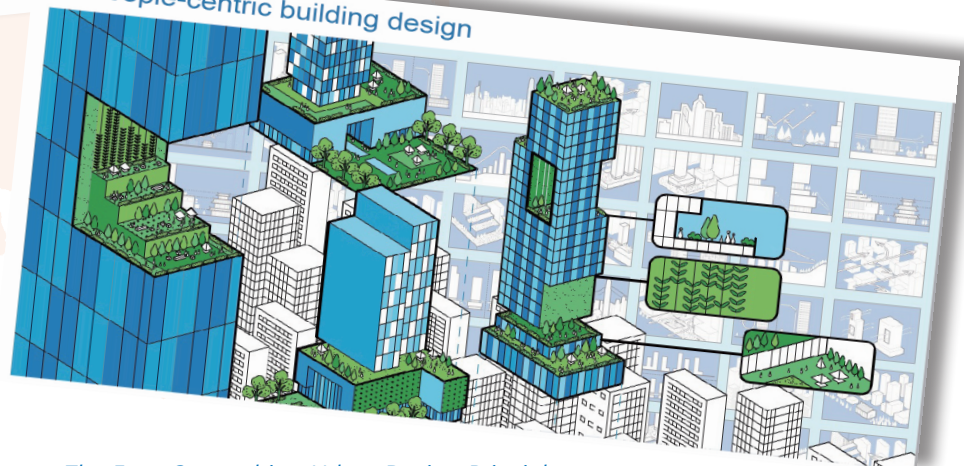
### 2 Pedestrian-friendly movement network



### 3 Engaging public realm



### 4 People-centric building design



*The Four Overarching Urban Design Principles*

### *Emerging Design Concepts Updated*

The urban design principles of the current version have been largely retained in the revamped UDG. To bring the UDG up-to-date, suitable and relevant emerging design ideas are infused into the revamped UDG. These mainly include principles highlighted in the HK2030+ as well as existing and latest practices, including:

- (i) climate adaptation considerations such as incorporation of blue-green infrastructure in the development, maximising tree planting and sustainable landscape, as well as creating permeable development;
- (ii) health and well-being such as creating/maintaining the built environment conducive to walkability and enhancing human comfort, as well as integrating biophilic elements in the building design; and
- (iii) key recommendations of urban climatic map study relating to building permeability, ground coverage, building setbacks and greenery provision. The need to bring urban design into an early stage of the planning and development process has also been emphasised.



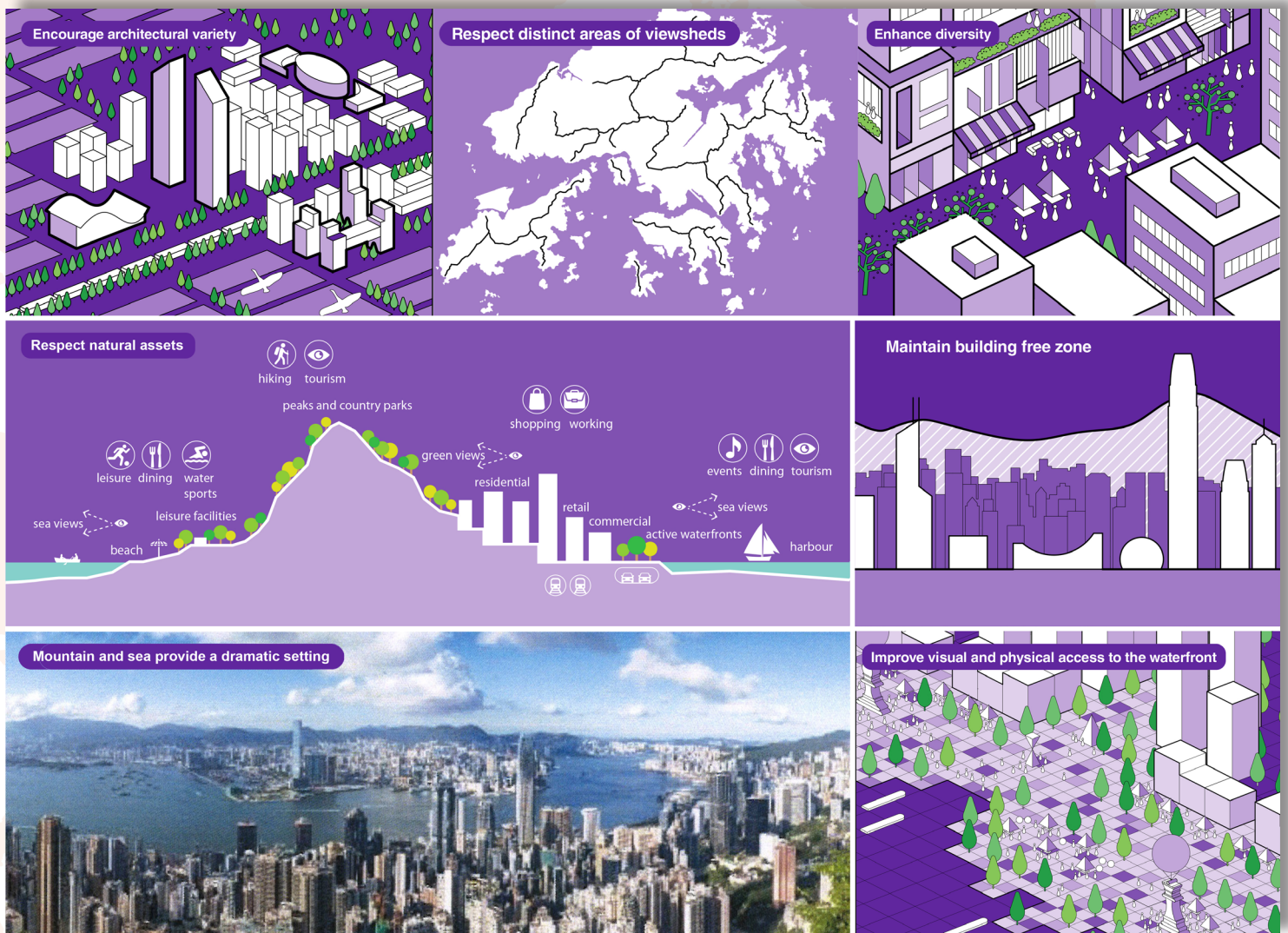
## Contents

A brief summary of the four overarching principles is outlined below.

### 1. Responding to Context

It is important for a development to respond positively and relates well with its surroundings. Understanding the history, function, character and setting of a place is the starting point for designing projects at any scale. The Study of context will help shape key design decisions, such as built form, orientation, height, massing, open space design and landscape treatment. The relevant guidelines include:

- (i) Respect Natural Assets;
- (ii) Respect Neighbourhood Character; and
- (iii) Create Permeable Development.

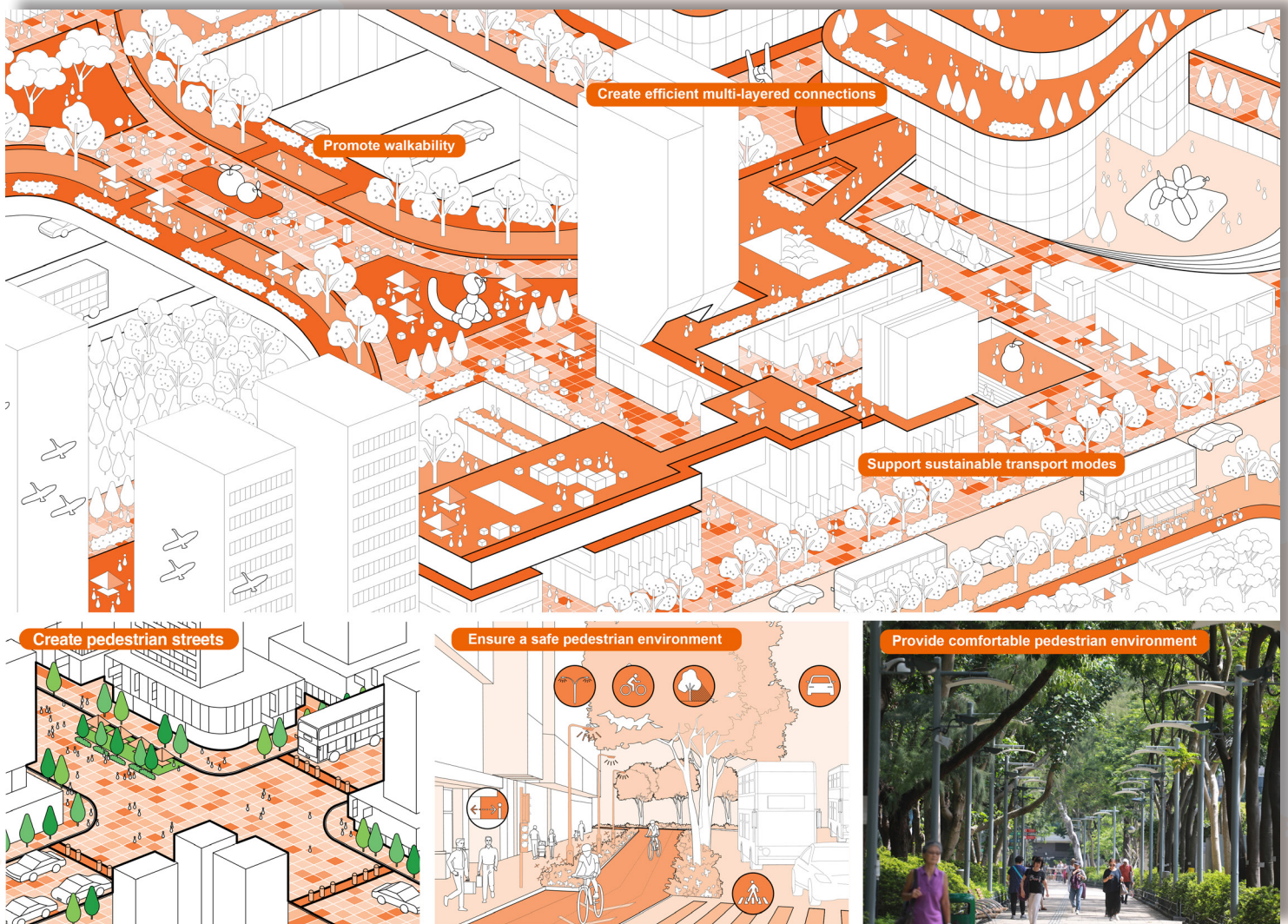


*Responding to Context*

## 2. Pedestrian-friendly Movement Network

A comfortable and enjoyable pedestrian environment is important to encourage journeys on foot and public transport usage, which can promote sustainability and health and wellness throughout the city. Hong Kong's compact and high-density urban form, well-established transit-oriented development network and close proximity to blue and green assets are all conducive to creating a walkable city. The relevant guidelines include:

- (i) Support Sustainable Transport Modes;
- (ii) Promote Walkability; and
- (iii) Create Efficient Multi-layered Connections.



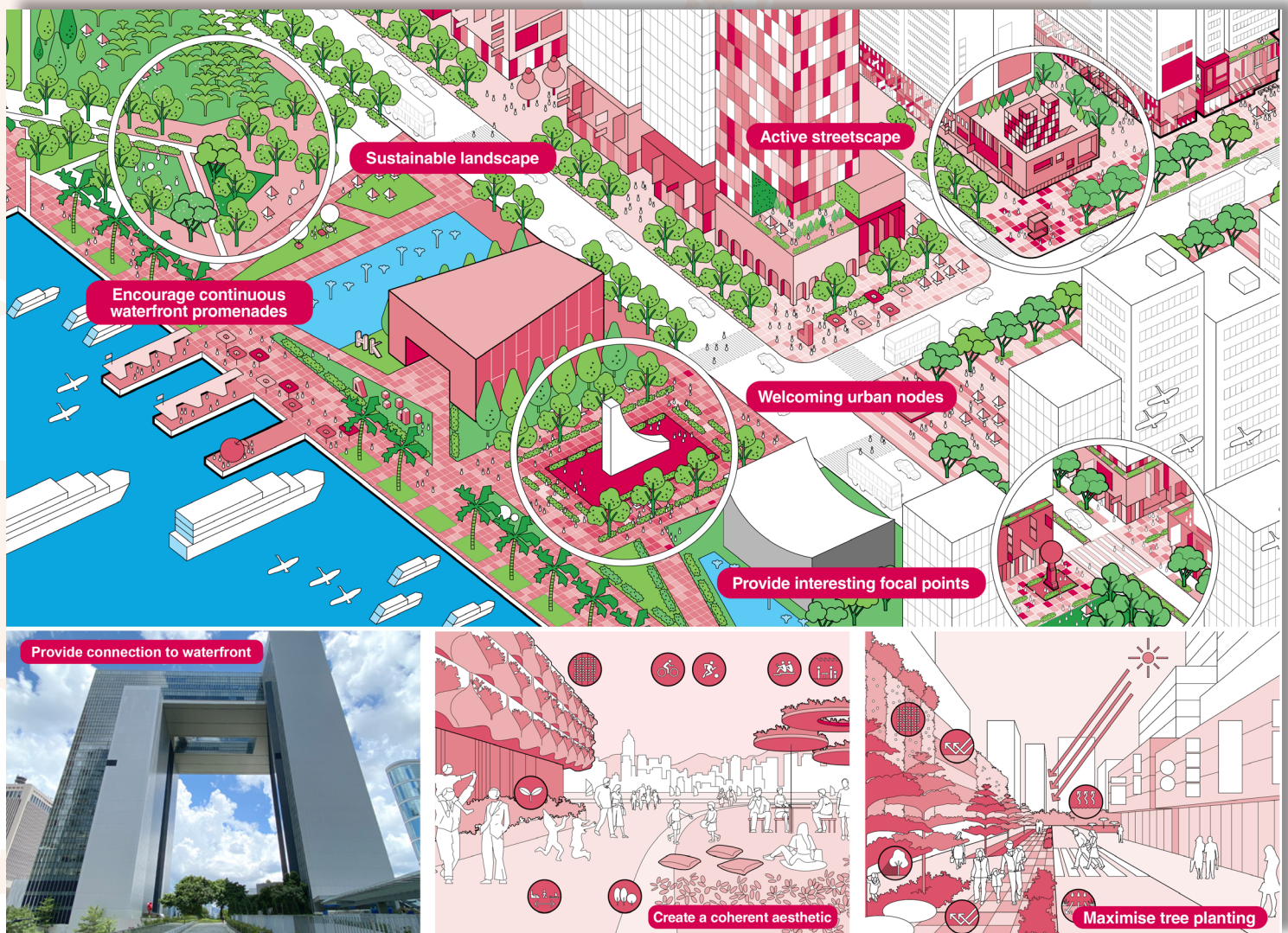
*Pedestrian-friendly Movement Network*



### 3. Engaging Public Realm

Public realm refers to accessible public spaces which form linkages and places. These spaces come in different forms - streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks, waterfront promenade, etc., and collectively they play an important role in promoting urban liveability and well-being. Each development should seek out opportunities to enhance the public realm with a view to enriching our quality of living and the image of the city. The relevant guidelines include:

- (i) Welcoming Parks and Plazas;
- (ii) Accessible Waterfronts and Water Edges;
- (iii) Attractive Streetscapes;
- (iv) Robust and Sustainable Landscapes; and
- (v) Inviting Street Furniture.



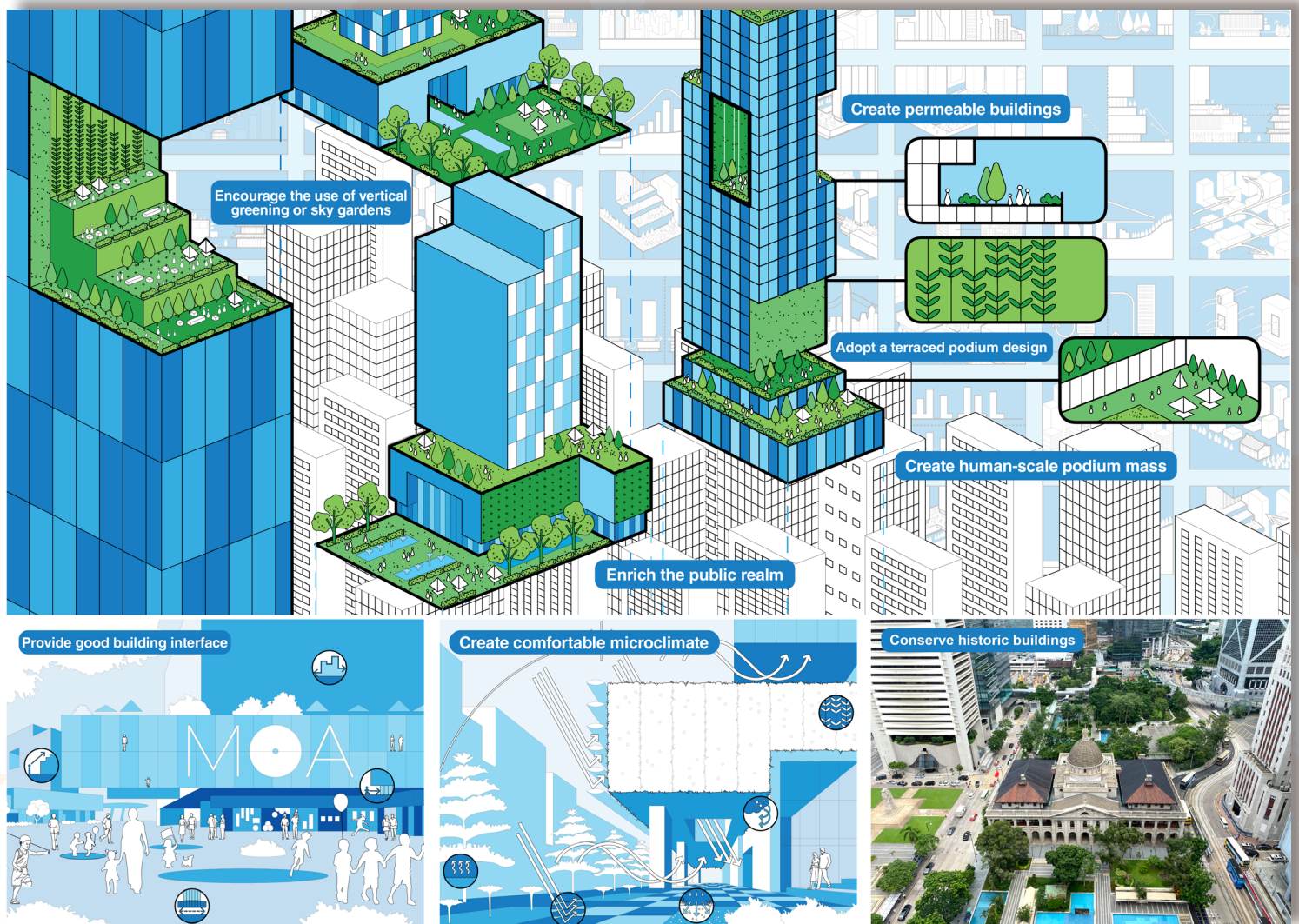
*Engaging Public Realm*

## 4. People-Centric Building Design

In a compact high-density city like Hong Kong, buildings are the dominant features in the cityscape. The private sector plays an important role in shaping the built environment through architecture and design of spaces between and around buildings. For a vertical city where high-rise buildings prevail, it is particularly important to address how tall buildings meet the ground since it is the base or low zone of building(s) that interacts most with the pedestrians. Buildings should seek to contribute positively to pedestrians' experience as well as to a green and healthy built environment.

The relevant guidelines include:

- (i) Human Scale Emphasis;
- (ii) Urban Heritage Regeneration; and
- (iii) Sustainable Built Environment.



*People-centric Building Design*



## Engagement with Stakeholders

Experts in design-related disciplines were actively involved in the Study. At the early stage of the Study, views of relevant professional bodies and institutions as well as government departments have been gathered through interviews to facilitate an objective assessment of the original UDG in terms of its effectiveness and usability. Key stakeholders in the field, such as professional institutes, developers association, educational institutes, other statutory bodies and organisations, and relevant government bureau/departments have been consulted on the draft revamped UDG. Through discussions with stakeholders, the direction of the Study has become clearer. Their valuable and practical ideas have shaped the final product of the UDG.

## Way Forward

The revamped UDG will be promulgated later in 2021. It serves as a best practice guide, not regulatory requirements, to lead the readers through a thinking process for achieving a more responsive urban design. Innovation and creativity are encouraged to achieve design excellence. The success of the Revamped UDG would depend on participation of different parties, including professionals, developers, government bureaux/departments or anyone involved or interested in urban design.

The revamped UDG is a 'live' document with a structure which is easy to revise and update. The valuable ideas collected during the stakeholders engagement but yet to be incorporated into the revamped UDG could be potential topics for review or expansion in future as and when opportunity arises.

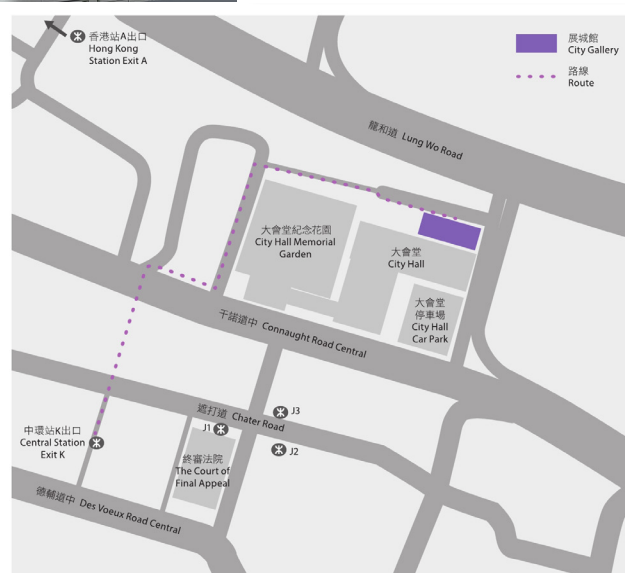
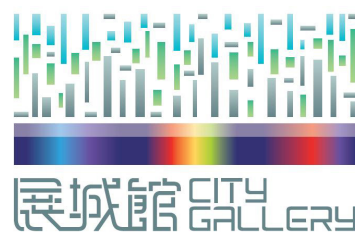
## FRESH LOOK OF THE CITY GALLERY

Hong Kong constantly amazes the world with its compact and vibrant cityscape and blue-green assets. Do you want to know how the city has evolved and shaped through various planning initiatives? Do you want to find out more about the features and tales of Hong Kong's city development? The City Gallery is the perfect place to appreciate our city in a glimpse.

The City Gallery, managed by the Planning Department, serves as a platform for showcasing the planning and infrastructure developments of Hong Kong. It was fully re-opened on 8 May 2021 after completion of the revamping works on parts of the building. The revamping works involved G/F, 3/F and 4/F with the installation of new exhibits and enhancement of facilities. Visitors are welcome to experience the new faces of the City Gallery.



*The City Gallery*





## Ground Floor

Entering the Reception Area, the City Gallery logo and its adjacent new showpiece 'Planning Eye' are there to attract eyeballs. The **'Planning Eye'** is an immersive multimedia show featuring an overview of the city development, its challenges and opportunities as well as its vision through the interactive display of LED sphere and city model.

Next to the 'Planning Eye' are two new interactive exhibits, namely **'Great World Cities'** presenting interesting facts of Hong Kong in comparison with some other cities and **'City Impression'** showing the best practices of Hong Kong and some other cities in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Whether you are an urban design advocate, nature lover, or city enthusiast, you will be fascinated by some of these innovative ideas and city solutions.



*Great World Cities*



*The Planning Eye*



*City Impression*

## Third Floor

Moving onto the third floor, our new shows in the multi-purpose hall present in greater depth the key planning and infrastructure development initiatives of Hong Kong over the centuries and our vision of becoming a liveable city. Along the seaside corridor, the interactive exhibits and digital display comprising three distinctive modular - the **'Planning Timeline'**, **'Coastline and Skyline'** and **'Street Name Stories'** highlight Hong Kong's major development milestones, coastline and skyline, evolution and interesting stories about some of the streets in the urban area. The technology-enhanced panels are equipped with motion sensors to enable visitors to explore the contents in a fun and touchless manner.



*Planning Timeline*



*Coastline and Skyline*

## Fourth Floor

The fourth floor is designed with cosy and playful elements. Book lovers would be thrilled to find the **'mini-library'** collection of books featuring urban planning and related topics. We also have children's books and books with brailles. You may choose to relax in the Community Lounge to read books or share with friends your planning insights.

Our new games **'Hong Kong Now and Then'** and **'Parallel Travellers'** may appeal those who would like to explore the transformative images of Hong Kong. You may also have fun in finding the 'City Gallery logo' in our diorama boxes of different themes in the **'Treasure Hunt'** game. Do not forget to take home your self-created visual image of Hong Kong in the **'Let's Plan Together'** game.





*Hong Kong New and Then*



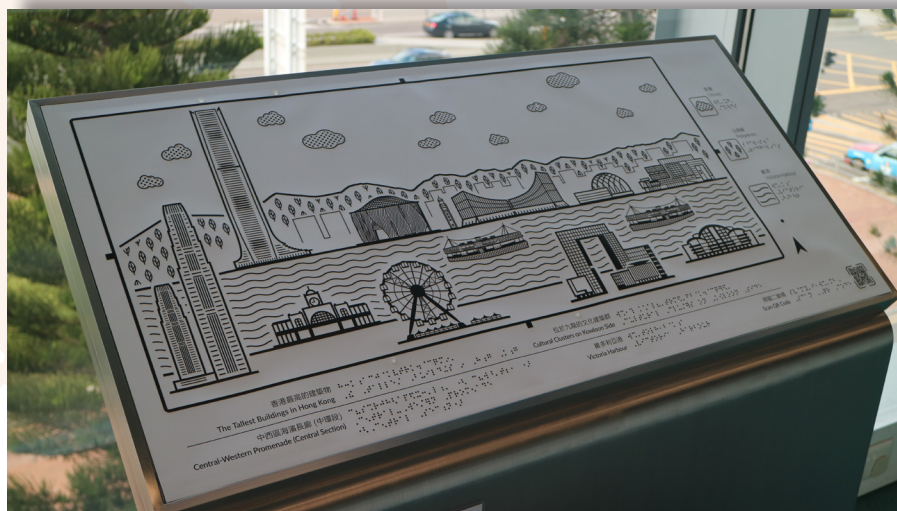
*Time Travellers*



*Community Lounge*

## Inclusive Exhibits

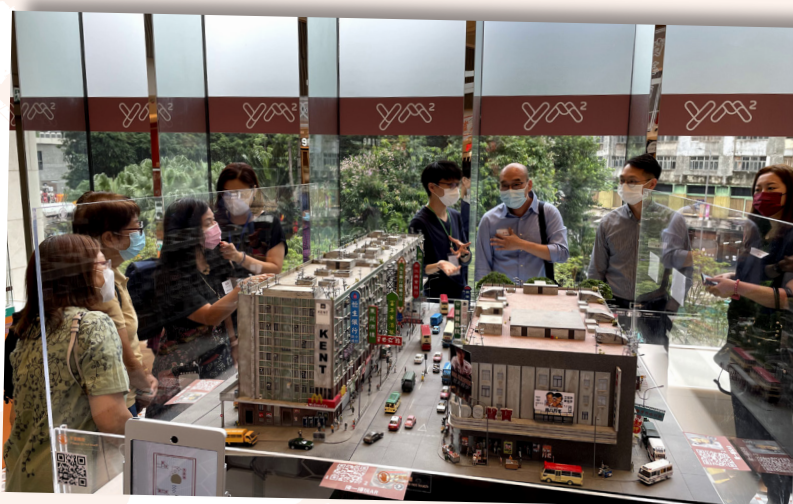
To facilitate 'People of difference' to meet the City Gallery, we have added various inclusive features. In addition to barrier-free access and facilities, the City Gallery has participated in the Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project whereby visitors can use a mobile application for indoor navigation. Various tactile exhibits with brailles are placed at various exhibits. Along the panoramic glass panel facing Victoria Harbour on 4/F, a 'Tactile Audio Interactive System' (TAIS) is installed to showcase the unique features of the harbour and the harbourfront areas. We hope that these inclusive facilities will attract people with different abilities.



*TAIS Exhibits*

## Embracing Challenges under New Normal

Under the New Normal situation whereby public venues are susceptible to temporary closure and intermittent suspension of public programmes, the City Gallery has sustained its roles as a platform for outreaching to the public and professional audience. We have embraced the challenges in the New Normal situation by using online platforms and collaborating with various professional bodies, government departments and other partners in organising webinars, exhibitions and monthly workshops for local, Mainland and overseas audience. We will continue engaging the community through both online and physical activities. Individuals and organisations are welcome to join the 'Friends of City Gallery' to stay tuned for further updates of our events and activities.



*Friends of City Gallery Visit*



*Monthly Workshops*







*Online Tour for HKFYG*



*Summer Planning School*

During January 2020 to June 2021, the City Gallery has organised a number of online talks and tours to students of primary schools, secondary schools, tertiary education institutes and youth groups. Several exhibitions were held at the City Gallery in 2020, including the 'Hong Kong Institute of Planners Award 2019 and 2020' and 'Planning and Design Competition on Transitional Housing in Hong Kong' organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Planners; 'Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to Caverns' organised by the Drainage Services Department; 'Smart Planning in the Digital Era' and 'Planning for a Livable and Healthy City' Exhibition cum Summer Planning School organised by Planning Department; 'Green Living@Lantau' exhibition organised by the Sustainable Lantau Office, etc. Online webinars reaching out various sectors included 'HKIP x SIP Webinar on Planning for a Healthy City', 'Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to Caverns', 'Smart Planning in Digital Era', and 'Enriching Knowledge Series for Geography Curriculum'. We also extended collaboration with the Hong Kong Federation of Youth (HKFYG) to provide trainings for the Young Ambassadors.



Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to Caverns @ DSD Webinar



City Gallery x Urban Renewal Exploration Centre Webinar



Planning for a Healthy City @ HKIP x SIP Webinar



Transitional Housing Hong Kong @ YPG Planning and Design Competition





*HKFYG Young Ambassadors*

For more information, please visit our newly revamped website at <https://www.citygallery.gov.hk/>



*Souvenirs of City Gallery*



*QR code of City Gallery Website*