

By post and fax at 2868 4497

28 April 2017

Strategic Planning Section
Planning Department
16/F, North Point Government Offices
333 Java Road
North Point, Hong Kong

Dear Sir/Madam

**Views on “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy
Transcending 2030”**

In response to the “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy
Transcending 2030”, the Institution is pleased to provide herewith our views on the
subject for your consideration.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



Ir Joseph K H CHOI
President
The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers

Enc

Enclosure

**Views from the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers on
“Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy
Transcending 2030”**

INTRODUCTION

The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) holds the position that Hong Kong should continue to excel ourselves in sustaining our competitive edge globally as well as enhancing the condition for living and employment. As the “Hong Kong 2030 Study: Planning Vision and Strategy” (“HK2030”) launched by the Administration in the last decade has presented a good guidance on where and how Hong Kong should go forward as a competitive and sustainable city, the HKIE is of the opinion that now is the opportune moment for formulating a longer range vision through launching the “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030” (“HK2030+”). This is especially significant in view of the recently rapid development and change in the international scene as well as the evolving internal demand for better livelihood.

2. The HKIE in general supports the vision and planning goal under the “HK2030+” as enshrined in the “HK2030” to position Hong Kong as the Asia’s World City and achieve the overarching goal of sustainable development. To further strengthen long-term competitions and position, the HKIE agrees to the three proposed building blocks as the driving directions of the territorial development strategy through improving the liveability, embracing new challenges and creating sustainable capacity. With the aspiration of improving Hong Kong’s development and betterment of citizens’ livelihood, the HKIE would like to provide further views and recommendations on the “HK2030+” in the ensuing sections.

VIEWS ON THE THREE PROPOSED BUILDING BLOCKS

Building Block 1: Planning for a Liveable High-density City

3. The HKIE notes that the “HK2030+” now focuses on eight components for improving liveability in the high-density city context of Hong Kong. We suggest that more explanations should be put forward to demonstrate how these components would map onto the 39 attributes under 10 categories of the Quality of Living Survey to progressively upgrade the overall liveability of Hong Kong in the medium to long term.

4. For Hong Kong to pursue as a liveable compact high-density city, we are of the view that having an effective long-term housing strategy is necessary. Apart from looking for new land resources to construct new residential units, the HKIE agrees that urban regeneration as addressed in the “HK2030+” is essential to support a rolling housing supply target. It is noted that a bulk of Hong Kong’s existing building stock will reach the age of 70 years or above by 2046. The Administration is suggested to step up initiatives with prudent but effective policies to rejuvenate the extensive old urban fabric. Regular reviews on the urban renewal strategy in the territory will also be required.

5. Due to fragmented ownerships and compensation arrangements, acquisition of ageing private housing units under the existing regulations and policies can take a long lead time and be very costly. The Administration should strive for a healthy cost control and efficient project management for undertaking private housing renewal projects. For demolition of a group of ageing housing blocks in an old urban area, the Administration should review the concerned lease conditions carefully and coordinate for flexible and appropriate redevelopment solutions to maximise the efficient use of land obtained.

6. Along with the housing strategy, the HKIE considers that the Administration should set clear directions and targets in regard to population distribution and density on the proposed development plans. It is suggested to conduct review on the maximum domestic plot ratio as well as other development restrictions under the “HK2030+” to optimise the development potential of the current residential development projects.

7. The HKIE also considers that along the urban renewal initiatives, the uniqueness and characteristics of the urban districts should be preserved and designed to enrich the living condition. Given the predicted ageing population in Hong Kong, we expect that the concept of “age-friendly” and “ageing in place” can be further promoted and built in the development of our future city.

8. On the other hand, a clear policy on maintaining an optimal private/ public housing ratio should also be established to address different housing needs of all ages and classes. Sufficient housings with affordable price should be made available for younger generations.

Building Block 2: Embracing New Economic Challenges and Opportunities

9. It is essential for Hong Kong to secure partnership with our international counterparts and explore our niches for future development, especially that Hong Kong is to target to position as the “super-connector” under the Belt & Road Initiative. In order to achieve a united cohesion between economic, technological and social development, the HKIE is of the opinion that the Administration should provide a clearer perspective and further elaborations on how the future vision in Hong Kong can be reflected and translated into the initiatives of the “HK2030+” to create a diversified economy.

10. With a view to taking full advantages of ongoing development plans, we suggest the Administration to endeavor to explore the possibilities of more effective development in the Airport North Commercial District, Topside Development at Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge as well as Tung Chung New Town Extension.

11. Apart from “hardware” development, there is also a need to plan for “software” development to lay down a more appropriate ground and environment to meet the future challenges. We support the vision to move Hong Kong to be a knowledge-based economy. Hong Kong also needs to cultivate a favourable condition for start-ups, e-commerce and smart city. In order to sustain a diversity of economic sectors with a range of skills for all industries, we consider that the education system and manpower policy should be strengthened to foster sufficient and adaptable human capital to support the future development.

Building Block 3: Creating Capacity for Sustainable Growth

Development Capacity

12. Given that various deliberations have already been taken place in the community for the development plans in Lok Ma Chau Loop, Wang Chau, Hung Shui Kiu, reclamation works of Tung Chung, and urban renewal/ rejuvenation etc., the HKIE considers that the “HK2030+” should consolidate and address the concerns and outcomes of these discussions. Exploration on other potential reclamation sites outside Victoria Harbour should also be considered as appropriate.

13. While pursuing the infrastructural development of Hong Kong, the HKIE considers that care on our environment is equally important. As many mega scale construction works will be taken place under the “HK2030+”, stringent pollution control should be taken to mitigate and avoid undesirable impacts on our ecology and environment. The Administration should be determined to protect and further enhance our environment so as to sustain a desirable living place and enhance the biodiversity. We urge the Administration to uphold the pollution control and step up enforcement on environmental impact assessments. Clear guidelines on determination of the ecological value of lands should also be introduced.

Transport and Other Infrastructure Capacity

14. In view of the saturated carrying capacity of the existing railway system and road networks in the urban and new town areas, the HKIE is of the view that more elaborations should be provided to reveal how the “Railway Development Strategy 2014” can sufficiently address the initiatives for the future development beyond 2030 under the “HK2030+”.

15. Apart from building new transport infrastructures, the Administration should take a step further to adopt a smart mobility system to make more efficient use of the spare capacities in the transport network for shaping a better mobility future in Hong Kong. The smart mobility system can promote co-operative connection between vehicles, pedestrians and the road environment to enhance mobility safety as well as enable autonomous driving. As a move to facilitate the development of the smart mobility system, we support to put in place policy measures that are conducive to technological advancement and growth on traffic control.

16. With regard to vehicular pollution which has long been listed as one of the biggest contributors to air pollution in Hong Kong, we urge the Administration to enhance the promotion of public transportation, implement traffic management to relieve both the current traffic problem and environmental effects, seek ways to monitor the growth of private vehicles as against the road network growth, and promote the adoption of electric vehicles.

Smart, Green and Resilient City Strategy

17. The HKIE welcomes the initiatives of developing Hong Kong into a Smart City through the “Smart, Green and Resilient City Strategy”. By making use of innovation and technology to address urban challenges, the Smart City strategy not just improves sustainability, efficiency and safety of our city, but also enhances city attractiveness to

global business and talents, and inspires continuous economic development. Hence, Hong Kong needs to cultivate a common vision of embracing innovation and technology in the community.

18. In order to promote the development of innovation and technology to create new momentum for economic growth, the Administration should take a proactive role in driving for big data held by the Government or key public service providers available for public use through cross-Departmental collaboration and enhanced public-private partnership. We also suggest exploring the use of big data analytics within the Government to further enhance the efficiency in administrative operations.

19. As for the implementation of green initiative in constructions in the new development areas, we agree that district cooling system is to be designed in the new development areas for making the city environmentally-friendly. The use of district cooling system could help reduce the energy consumption and carbon dioxide emission.

City Universal Accessibility

20. To embrace universal accessibility of the city and reinvent the public realm into quality space for healthy living, the concept of walkability in the planning and design of the built environment and pedestrian networks should be widely adopted from new development areas to the existing urban areas. Meanwhile, we support the Administration to share more data for assessing commuting patterns of the public, in order to enable a better planning and design for accessibility and traffic infrastructure development.

CONCEPTUAL SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Metropolitan Business Core

21. The East Lantau Metropolis (ELM), as one of the strategic growth areas, is envisaged to be the third generation of Central Business District (CBD) in addition to Central and East Kowloon to form the metropolitan business core according to the “HK2030+”. To facilitate better understanding from the public on the justifications of establishing a new CBD instead of mere expanding the existing CBDs, the HKIE suggests the Administration to provide more elaborations on how the ELM can efficiently connect to the two existing CBDs, reinforce the existing business core, and create a new metro front in the territory.

Strategic Growth Areas

22. The ELM together with the New Territories North (NTN) are proposed as the two strategic growth areas under the “HK2030+”. To facilitate obtaining public support and consensus, we expect that more detailed information could be provided to determine how these areas would align with the overall economic and social development strategies in Hong Kong. In particular to the ELM, a detailed cost-benefit analysis and forecasts should also be conducted to provide substantive grounds of adopting it as a strategic growth area.

23. In addition, noting that new potential development areas, such as Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling, San Tin/Lok Ma Chau and Man Kam To, have been identified under the NTN, the

Administration is suggested to review the carrying capacity of the existing transportation system connecting these areas to prepare for the needs of the future substantial population and vehicle growths.

24. It is noted from the “HK2030+” that the maximum housing capacity of all developments under the proposed spatial framework is about 9 million in terms of population, including a 10% buffer for the peak population projected to reach 8.22 million by 2043 under the baseline projections. The Administration is suggested to provide more details for the basis of such a projection and the buffer percentage. Meanwhile, according to the Hong Kong Population Projections 2015-2064 issued by Census and Statistics Department in 2015, the resident population is projected to reach the peak of 8.22 million in mid-2043 (at an average annual growth rate of 0.4%), and then gradually decline to 7.81 million in mid-2064 (at an average annual rate of decrease of 0.2%). The Administration is therefore suggested to provide further elaborations and justifications to ensure that the future land supply and housing development under the “HK2030+” can be optimally responding to this possible decrement in the long term as well as the floating population trend that may happen.

Development Axes

25. In relation to the proposed leveraging the creation of the knowledge and technology corridor which links up to the east of the New Territories, the HKIE supports the suggestion on developing the science park/ industrial estate near Liantang/ Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point. We would, however, expect more projection figures to demonstrate how synergies can be achieved and further values can be created through the proposed Eastern Knowledge and Technology Corridor.

26. Regarding the proposal on a more balanced home-job spatial distribution to help relieve the directional traffic demand, the HKIE considers that more initiatives are required to address the reduction on commuters’ travelling time. We also expect that the Administration will place more consideration on the importance of the matching between the skill sets of the residents in various development areas as against the competence requirement of the manpower for the employment opportunities there.

PLANNING RATIONALES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

27. While targeting for the future beyond 2030, the HKIE considers it also beneficial to conduct a review of the status and progress of Hong Kong since the promulgation of the “HK2030” study to assess the overall achievements, outstanding initiatives, restrictions and difficulties, which will facilitate the public to deliberate on the “HK2030+”.

28. For the updated study of the “HK2030+”, the HKIE opines that it is necessary to set out a master programme highlighting the time-based action plans, action priorities, resources needed, and possible contingency tactics, taking into account the current development status of Hong Kong and the surrounding regions. To ensure smooth and orderly implementation of the initiatives under the “HK2030+”, we view that the master programme should also take into consideration of ensuring sufficient manpower and financial resources available.

29. The strategic visions and directions proposed under the “HK2030+” and the associated key actions cover a wide array of policy areas. To ensure that the proposals of the “HK2030+” could be carried forward to timely actions, cross-Bureau and cross-Departmental collaboration is essential to foster and harness capabilities across the Government in support of the overall strategic framework.

30. The “HK2030+” involves every citizen, while the stakeholders’ concerns and perspectives are multifaceted. To facilitate better understanding of the basis and foundation for the formulation of various initiatives and proposals under the “HK2030+”, the HKIE suggests the Administration to provide a clear outline of the decision processes that have been undertaken and reveal how the proposals would have been the best advisable option with the most effective appropriation of limited resources under the challenges and constraints envisaged. For such a long-range planning of the “HK2030+”, more information about the decision alternatives that have been identified/considered, cost-benefit analyses done, research data collected, and consultations/stakeholders surveys results obtained would certainly facilitate the community for an informed deliberation of the subject matters.

CONCLUSION

31. The HKIE is pleased to see that the Administration has engaged the professional community and the public to provide inputs and comments on the “HK2030+”, and considers that if more platforms and channels of consultation and promotion of the “HK2030+” can be launched, it will not just enhance the public awareness on this important planning subject of Hong Kong but also facilitate wider participation from the stakeholders.

32. As the blueprint in the “HK2030+” will inevitably touch on various essential policies in Hong Kong, and the implementation of the proposed initiatives will require the corresponding strategies with regard to financial provisions, manpower planning (i.e. labour supply, skills sets of future workforces), environmental protection (i.e. strategy on combating climate change, conservations), and city development (i.e. smart city, urban renewal) etc., the HKIE would like to invite the Administration to convey more details on the overall policy framework and particulars of other relevant strategies to enable the public to have a more comprehensive understanding and deliberations on the “HK2030+”.