Seminar Topic:
OD2018 Series: Technical Seminar on Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong
(Jointly organized by HKIE-CPDC and HKIE-YMC)
Reporter: Mr. Keith Cheng

Once a beacon of modernization and prosperity, the sleepless city takes pride to stand amongst London and New York to be the top international cities. However, over the last decade, our city slowly lost its edge to other cities like Shanghai and Singapore. Being plagued by common problems of a metropolis like aging population and aging urban systems, Hong Kong must be transformed into a smart city to improve efficiency and sustainability.

On 10th January, Mr. Albert Wong, Director of PricewaterhouseCoopers Advisory Services Limited shared his thoughts on Smart City to young engineers. He talked about the direction that Hong Kong could progress to become a Smart City and the hurdles that it will face.

People-centric goals are set to guide the Smart City development: a higher quality of living, a friendly environment for business and innovation, a digitally integrated society and a contributing member towards environmental protection. When it comes to the specific direction of development, different cities have their own set of challenges and capabilities. Six Smart Themes are developed that are catered to Hong Kong and are currently under public consultation: Smart Mobility, Smart Living, Smart Environment, Smart People, Smart Government and Smart Economy. Smart Mobility will be in priority because transportation is a huge struggle for many citizens. Improvement in this sector will be welcomed and serve as a positive introduction for future Smart City development.

In the end of his sharing, he talked about Open Data, which represents the idea of information sharing without restriction between the public sector, private sector, academia and citizens. It will be the bedrock and defining feature of a successful Smart City but the conflict between Open Data and privacy will be one of the biggest challenges. In order to resolve this conflict, the aforementioned stakeholders will need to recognize the mutual benefits that Open Data would bring and set reasonable standards for data sharing.

We would like to thank Albert for his insightful sharing on smart city and showing us the role that engineers play in the development of Smart City.