

**The Hong Kong Institute of Planners**  
**Our Comments on the Policy Address 2022**

**General**

1. We welcome the many policy initiatives from Mr. Li Ka-chiu, the Chief Executive of HKSAR, as contained in the Policy Address. There are many quantifiable policy targets with definite time frames given in the Policy Address concerning important aspects of land supply, creating land reserve, public housing, strategic planning and development, railway and highway development, attracting talent, Key Performance Indicators, etc. Many of these initiatives are ground-breaking and positive. **As such, we support the Policy Address in general and appreciate that the Government is on the right track.**
2. We note that many of the policy initiatives are consistent with our suggestions passed to the CE in the context of the public engagement exercise on the Policy Address. The Policy Address is a very good starting point for actions in this Government term. Having said the above, we emphasize that it is imperative that the Government has to put the initiatives into actions and realise the various plans and programmes, paying due regard to the socio-economic trends and resources implications. We are concerned whether the Government has sufficient resources to deliver the initiatives in their entirety, particularly within a relatively short time frame. As such, and the cost and benefit and priorities of the plans, projects and programmes have to be subject to close examination before actual implementation in order to optimize their benefits to Hong Kong.

**Specific**

We wish to highlight some of our suggestions for the Government to take into account in the next steps:-

3. We recommend the CE to consider our suggestion of forming a **representative Land Commission with public participation**, so as to promote and secure public support in speeding up land supply and creating a land reserve.

4. The Policy Address exercise demonstrates the importance of efficient and effective public engagement in public policy making. In this context, we wish to highlight that the **streamlining of the Town Planning Ordinance** must give due regard to all the relevant principles of openness, fairness, public engagement, efficiency and effectiveness. Whilst we support streamlining proposals in general, particularly those on administration and implementation procedures, we wish to point out that the prevailing Town Planning Ordinance in general serves our society well, and, therefore, we recommend that the Government to be cautious and only well-justified refinements should be made to the TPO. Please refer to our position paper on Streamlining (attached) for details.
5. The initiatives of establishing CE's Policy Unit and the new department on Northern Metropolis (NM) are well supported. **Strong planning professional inputs** as an integral part of multi-disciplinary team are needed in the set up of the Policy Unit and the new NM department, which is expected to comprise of professionals and specialists in various fields.
6. The policy initiatives of establishing a steering committee on Integration into National Development and a steering committee on Northern Metropolis with the CE as the chair are well supported. Recognizing the paramount leading role of the CE in strategic planning, we recommend that the CE also takes up the leading role in formulating a **Mayor's Plan for Hong Kong**, which should include a comprehensive citywide town plan and a strategic development plan to promote Hong Kong's role as Asian global city and achieve sustainable development, carbon neutrality, desirable urban climate and social justice.
7. The **double-ageing problem** is aggravating. We recommend the CE to conduct a timely review of the **Urban Renewal Strategy (URS)** and to inject funding into the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and review the existing over-generous compensation policies to ensure adequate resources for implementing the Urban Renewal Strategy. The recent district studies undertaken by the URA, including Yau Mong, Sham Shui Po, Tsuen Wan, must be viewed and reviewed in the holistic context of URS, in order to formulate a practical and meaningful approach to contain urban deterioration and promote urban regeneration.

8. The various initiatives relating to health care are well supported. In addition, we recommend that the Government adopts an initiative of building Hong Kong as a **health city**, comprising reinforcing the preparedness against pandemic, creating a healthy built environment with generous public and green open spaces catering for walking, exercising, relaxing and cycling. Wider pavements, decent and affordable living space especially for elderly, mixed uses are also important for healthy living. To achieve this, **district planning efforts** to formulate a well-coordinated framework for improving the physical fabric, particularly the inner urban areas, should be doubled.
9. The various initiatives relating to improve the hygiene are well supported. We recommend the Government to adopt a set of comprehensive initiatives of improving the **quality of life** of Hong Kong as a whole, including improving air ventilation, enhancing heritage preservation, promoting green buildings and neighbourhoods, and implementing smart city measures. Whilst the various policy measures to attract talents are well noted, a good quality of life is essential for retaining talents.
10. The various initiatives on railways and highways are supported in principle. We observe that the planning and construction of railways and highways should speed up to address the congestion problems and go hand-in-hand with the new development areas to ensure adequate transport services in the future. However, in addition, we recommend that the Government should look at the transport issue from a holistic angle, including considerations of sustainability and practicability. Given Hong Kong's compactness, demand management in terms of restraining car ownership and use and promoting public transport, cycling and walking should also be included as an important policy initiative.

**Public Affairs Committee**

**The Hong Kong Institute of Planners**

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