

**Progress Report on the Motion**  
**“Expediently implementing the construction of cross-boundary**  
**transport infrastructures between Hong Kong and the Mainland”**

**Purpose**

At the Legislative Council meeting on 7 February 2007, the motion moved by Hon Cheung Hok-ming, as amended by Hon Albert Ho Chun-yan, on “Expediently implementing the construction of cross-boundary transport infrastructures between Hong Kong and the Mainland” was carried. This paper aims to brief members on the progress made by the Administration on implementing the cross-boundary transport infrastructures concerned.

**Cross-boundary Transport Infrastructures**

2. To further strengthen the linkage between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and to facilitate the economic development of the two places, we have been making sustained efforts to enhance existing cross-boundary transport infrastructures. We are also pressing ahead with a number of such projects and studies, such as the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor (HK-SWC), Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line (Spur Line), Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (ERL), Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) and the Liantang/ Heung Yuen Wai Control Point. We will continue to monitor closely the progress of these projects and studies.

3. The HK-SWC, our fourth vehicular boundary crossing, is expected to come into operation in mid 2007 to tie in with the commissioning of the boundary crossing facilities (BCF) at Shekou. Also, the Spur Line is expected to come into operation in the first half of 2007.

4. As regards the ERL, the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) has been commissioned to conduct a study on the corridor options of the Hong Kong section and is expected to submit the relevant report in mid 2007. We will follow up closely on the progress of the study and, taking into account its findings and the latest planning parameters provided by the Mainland, we will select a corridor option which is both cost-effective and most convenient to the travelling public.

5. As for the HZMB, the HZMB Advance Work Coordination Group (AWCG) set up by the three governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao has already reached agreement on the alignment and landing points of the HZMB. The feasibility study of the HZMB has also been substantially completed. Currently, the two remaining issues that require further study are the locations of BCF under the mode of “separate locations of BCF” and the financing arrangements. The AWCG is pressing ahead with the studies, with a view to finalising the feasibility study report and submitting it for approval by the Central People’s Government (CPG) as soon as possible. Relevant follow-up work will commence after approval has been given by the CPG.

6. Meanwhile, the preliminary planning studies regarding the development of the Liantang/ Heung Yuen Wai Control Point are progressing well. The Hong Kong/Shenzhen joint study and the Hong Kong internal planning study commenced in December 2006 and January 2007 respectively. We will continue to take forward the planning studies concerned, which are scheduled for completion in early 2008.

### **Cross-boundary Ferry Services**

7. We have been closely monitoring the public’s demand for cross-boundary ferry services. Having regard to the rapid development of land transport and the expected commissioning of two new control points in the middle of this year, our assessment is that there will not be any major increase in the number of cross-boundary ferry passengers in the coming few years.

8. Besides, cross-boundary transport infrastructure is planned on a territory-wide instead of a district-level basis. As the two cross-boundary ferry terminals still have capacity to cope with future growth in passenger demand, we consider it not necessary to commit public funds to build another cross-boundary ferry terminal at Sha Tin. Cross-boundary ferry operators may operate new routes from existing cross-boundary ferry terminals in response to passenger demand.

## **Local Ancilliary Transport Infrastructures**

9. The Northwest New Territories Traffic and Infrastructure Review (the Review) concluded that with the existing and committed road networks, together with necessary improvement measures (including the widening of Castle Peak Road and Yuen Long Highway), we would be able to cope with the traffic (including those generated from the HK-SWC and the HZMB) up to 2016 and that no new major highway infrastructure projects will be required. In fact, Route 10 (Northern section) has been included in the Review as one of the possible options. We will further consider under the Review whether Route 10 should be provided and if yes, its implementation timetable.

10. To ensure that new transport infrastructures will be provided in a timely manner beyond 2016, we have been conducting further investigation and engineering feasibility studies on the proposed road projects as necessary, including the Tuen Mun Eastern Bypass, Tuen Mun Western Bypass, Tuen Mun - Chek Lap Kok Link, Link Options between Tuen Mun and Lantau, and the Tsing Yi- Lantau Link. Our objective is to get the necessary advance work done as much as possible at the present stage so that relevant construction work can start as soon as possible when the implementation programmes for the various planned developments in the region become clearer.

11. As regards the utilisation of Route 3, we will continue to discuss with the franchisee of Route 3 possible measures to rationalise the utilisation of the road and the non-tolled Tuen Mun Road, including the option of extending the franchise in exchange for toll reduction.

12. Concerning the proposed construction of the Easterly Link Road, we have explored with the franchisee of Route 3 the possibility of constructing it in the form of public-private-partnership. Our major principle is that any arrangement would have to be in the overall interest of the community from both the financial and traffic management perspectives. We consider that if the effect of the ELR in reducing travelling time and achieving traffic diversion is insignificant and that the ELR would not bring about economic benefits, it would not warrant the spending of a substantial amount of public funding for its construction.

13. As regards the improvement works of Tuen Mun Road (TMR), the following projects are in hand:-

- (a) widening the section at Tsing Tin Interchange from a dual 2-lane to dual 3-lane carriageway;
- (b) widening the Town Centre Section (TCS) from a dual 2-lane to dual 3-lane carriageway; and
- (c) re-constructing and improving the expressway section to meet the prevailing expressway standard, including the provision of full-width hard shoulder, as far as practicable.

14. The abovementioned TMR projects are supported by the Transport Panel. Subject to the satisfactory passage of the necessary statutory procedures, we plan to commence the widening works at Tsing Tin Interchange in 2007 for completion by 2009, commence the widening works at TCS in 2008 for completion by 2010, and commence the improvement works at the expressway section in 2008 for staged completion by 2012.

15. Last but not least, we have studied in detail the proposal of widening the TMR expressway section to dual four-lane configuration, and reported the findings to the Transport Panel. The study result reviewed that due to geographic constraints, there will be great difficulties in widening part of the expressway section to dual four-lane configuration, especially at Siu Lam, Sham Tseng and Tin Kau Interchange, where the carriageway is extremely close to the nearby residential blocks and other road structures. In addition, if the TMR expressway is to be widened to dual four-lane, the construction time, construction cost and area for land resumption will be significantly increased, bringing about much more adverse impacts on the public. In view of the above, we have no plan to widen the TMR expressway section to dual four-lane configuration at this stage.