

(Translation)

Motion on
“Formulating new policies on public and public housing estate markets”
moved by Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan
at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 3 December 2008

Motion as amended by Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, Hon WONG Yung-kan and Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit

That public markets perform the major function of supplying daily necessities to the public, yet the Administration’s approach in planning and managing public and public housing estate markets is very outdated, hence all along it is unable to boost customer flows effectively, and has even resulted in serious vacancy situation in some public and public housing estate markets, this Council urges the Administration to immediately formulate policies on public and public housing estate markets which meet the needs of a modern society, and particularly in view of the recent economic downturn and the worsening trend of the unemployment rate, it is necessary for the Administration to expeditiously enhance the competitiveness of public and public housing estate markets, and assist small traders in these markets in countering monopolization by supermarkets, so as to benefit the grassroots; the measures include:

- (a) prior to the building of new public markets in the future, having to take into account the factor of whether the lack of public markets in the districts concerned may lead to monopolization by supermarkets;
- (b) actively allocating resources to improve the business environment of markets, such as installing additional air-conditioning systems and escalators, improving the drainage design, etc, thereby facilitating the business operation of stall tenants and boosting customer flows to bring about long-term return;
- (c) analyzing in depth, from a market perspective, the needs of the districts to which the markets belong, and planning afresh the sizes of individual markets and installs, and types of commodities sold, layout of stalls and ancillary measures of individual markets;
- (d) adopting proactive letting policies, such as offering short-term rent concessions

to improve the situation of low occupancy and striving to assist traders in the markets in introducing new types of commodities or services, so as to inject new elements into the markets and bring into play their characteristics of trade mix; and

- (e) appropriately relaxing the tenancy conditions of market stalls so as to facilitate business operations as far as possible and enable traders to provide unique value-added services, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of the markets; and
- (f) during times of economic downturn, reducing the rents of public and public housing estate markets by half for a period of one year, so as to relieve the operating difficulties of small traders;
- (g) according priority to small shop operators who are affected by the rent increases of The Link Management Limited and are unable to continue their business to rent public and public housing estate markets at concessionary rent; and
- (h) developing public and public housing estate markets into markets for organic agricultural produce, thereby providing room for the marketing of organic farm products.