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Panel on Development

**Proposed duty visit of the Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning
to study overseas experience in waterfront planning and management**

Purpose

This paper invites members to consider a proposal for the Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning (the Subcommittee) to conduct a duty visit to New York, Boston, Baltimore and Vancouver to study the experience of these cities in waterfront planning and management.

Background

2. The Subcommittee was appointed by the Panel on Development in November 2008 to monitor and study the planning, land use and related issues in respect of the harbourfront areas on both sides of the Victoria Harbour. The major issues to be studied by the Subcommittee, as agreed by the Panel, include the following --

- (a) short-term and long-term initiatives to enhance the environment and accessibility of harbourfront areas for public enjoyment;
- (b) development of continuous promenades along the harbourfront;
- (c) planning control in respect of development projects at harbourfront sites; and
- (d) institutional arrangements for the planning and management of harbourfront areas.

3. The Subcommittee has held five meetings and discussed the Government's policy on harbourfront planning and implementation plans for harbourfront enhancement initiatives. The Subcommittee also conducted a round-the-harbour tour in February 2009. In the course of the study, the Subcommittee considered it worthwhile to make reference to relevant overseas

experience, and had asked the Research and Library Services Division (RLSD) of the Legislative Council Secretariat to gather information on the experience of New York, Singapore, Sydney and Vancouver in waterfront planning and management. The Subcommittee also requested the Administration to provide information on overseas harbour authorities covered by the Administration's relevant studies conducted in the past. RLSD and the Administration briefed the Subcommittee on their respective research findings at the meeting on 11 June 2009. Taking note of the research findings, members considered that to facilitate the Subcommittee's study, it would be useful for the Subcommittee to conduct a duty visit to a few cities with successful experience in waterfront planning and management.

4. A circular was issued on 15 June 2009 to invite Subcommittee members to give views on the proposed duty visit, including the timing and places for the visit. Having regard to individual members' views given in response to the circular the Subcommittee decided at its meeting on 26 June 2009 to conduct a duty visit to New York, Boston, Baltimore and Vancouver, as these cities possess successful experience in waterfront planning and management and their experience is relevant to the circumstances in Hong Kong.

Proposed duty visit

Objectives of the proposed visit

5. The objectives of the proposed visit are as follows --
- (a) to obtain first-hand information on the cities' waterfront development/regeneration strategies and enhancement initiatives;
 - (b) to study the cities' institutional arrangements for waterfront planning and management, and the key challenges and opportunities in waterfront development/regeneration; and
 - (c) to exchange views with the parties involved in the waterfront planning and management of the cities.

Proposed timing of the visit

6. To tie in with the Subcommittee's work plan, the proposed visit is tentatively proposed to last for about 9 days from 25 September to 3 October 2009.

Participants of the visit

7. As waterfront planning and management is relevant to various policy areas such as town planning, tourism and environment protection, the Subcommittee proposes that the duty visit be open to all Legislative Council Members.

Funding arrangements

8. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an overseas duty visit account of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong organized by committees of the Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in excess of the available balance in a four-year term has to be paid by the Member personally.

9. A rough estimate of the expenditure (including airfare, travelling expenses, hotel accommodation and overseas subsistence allowance, etc.) to be incurred by each participating Member for the proposed visit is about \$37,000 (economy class air passage) or \$90,000 (business class air passage).

Advice sought

10. Subject to the Panel's support for the Subcommittee to conduct the proposed duty visit, the Secretariat will work out the details of the proposed duty visit. Members are also invited to note that the permission of the House Committee will have to be sought on the proposed duty visit.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
30 June 2009