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Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2009 06:00PM
Subject: Request for presentation on the meeting on 22 Oct 09

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Hong Kong , 21 October 2009

Hon. Miriam Lau

Chair

SubCommittee on Matters Relating to Railways under the Panel on Transport

Legislative Council

panel_t@legco.gov.hk

Dear Ms Lau,

I am writing to request an opportunity for our Expert Group on the Express Railway Link to make a presentation to your Railways SubCommittee on our alternative proposal for Hong Kong ' s high speed connection into the national Express Railway System.

As you may be aware, rather than an inner-city station in West Kowloon separate from the existing rail networks, we propose to connect the existing network of stations to the national express railway system using one integrated station. We believe that the transport benefits of this alternative are far superior as a result of the unique topography of our city (the centre is a harbour) and congestion problems in the districts surrounding West Kowloon .

Our studies show that the success and failures of express rail stations in other countries is entirely related to connectivity with core destinations. We understand the perceived value of a city-centre terminus, however in Hong Kong - connectivity is best achieved by integrating the national express railway with our airport express and our west rail networks in Kam Sheung Road .

On top of that, the alternative could produce HK\$30 billion savings in capital cost, and reduce the funding gap. It will also enable a lower fare structures for travelers (predominantly visitor from the mainland) at a lower cost to Hong Kong tax payers.

Moreover, our calculations show that the alternative will reduce the overall journey time for the majority of users - whether they use rail or vehicular transport to connect between their destination/origin and the express rail. These calculations take into account distance, mode of transport, speed, congestion risk and transfer times.

By situating the Hong Kong terminus in Kam Sheung Road , we would significantly reduce traffic demand in West Kowloon . The planned HK\$11bln access improvements in West Kowloon - which mitigate but do not solve the traffic problems - can then be reduced.

Reducing traffic, as well as eliminating the need for the station works area and the protective works over the rail tracks, would greatly enhance the planning of the West Kowloon Cultural District.

Let me make clear that we fully support the early connection of Hong Kong with the national high speed rail network. We believe that the alternative can deliver on this, taking into account the time needed for land resumption, design, approvals and construction. As for land resumption, our proposed locations would reduce the number of properties to be resumed below 50, significantly less than what is needed under the government proposal.

To clarify, Government has undertaken an evaluation of using the West Rail and Kam Sheung Road for connecting with the ERL some years ago. However, this considered an underground station on the east of the west rail station and the use of existing facilities for the Express Rail. Our proposal is for the terminus to be located on the west side of the existing West Rail station and entirely above ground, and build a new spur line to extend the airport express railway for express connections to Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and Tsing Yi.

We believe the sum of all these benefits constitutes a significant public interest issue and that it would be beneficial to the community to have a clear comparison and choice. We therefore request with great urgency for our Expert Group to be given the opportunity to explain the differences to the legislators and answer any queries in the forum of your SubCommittee in early November before they vote on the funding application.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could accede to our request.

Your sincerely,




Albert Lai

Chairman

The Professional Commons

Attached: Copy of Advertisements to inform the public of the Integrated Option

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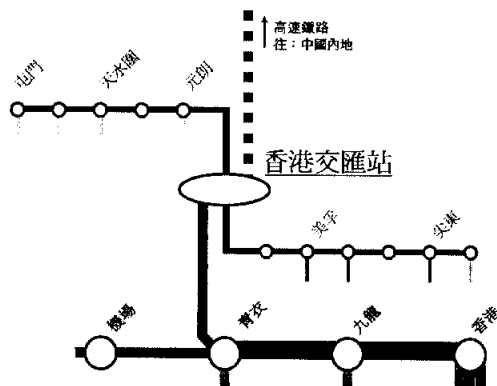
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建造成本	逾250億元	最少500億元
節省旅程時間	有多達400萬香港居民受惠，包括全港島及大部分新界地區市民	只有約40萬香港居民受惠
車資	可降低投資成本及營運成本，使車資更平	較高投資成本及高營運成本，導致更高車資
道路交通	無論施工或營運期間，均不影響市區交通	在施工期內，佐敦/尖沙咀一帶將受嚴重影響；營運後西九龍交通擠塞更為嚴重
便利遊客	從機場經香港交匯站到邊境： 50分鐘	從機場經西九龍站到邊境： 62分鐘
轉車安排	步行2分鐘便可轉乘高鐵與港島快線或西鐵線	從西九站到九龍站轉車須步行12分鐘，上落共20層樓高的路程
發展及就業機會	刺激新界發展，提供就業機會	推高市區樓價，剝奪新界發展機會



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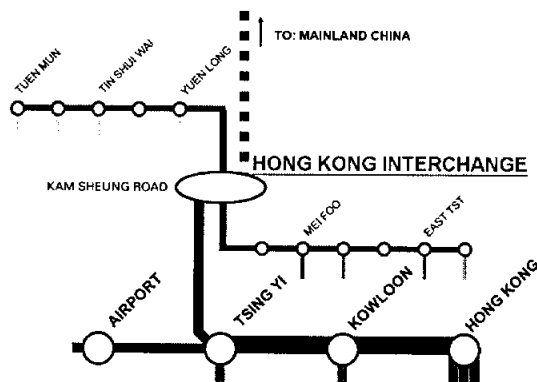
A Better Express Rail for ALL Better, Faster, Cheaper

Total cost saving HK\$25 billion = HK\$4,000 per HK citizen.

Cheaper total journey fares — Faster total journey times.

Better access to and from your Hong Kong destinations.

	Integrated Option Proposed by Express Rail Expert Group	West Kowloon Option Proposed by Government
Construction Cost	\$25 Bln	\$50 Bln (or more)
Journey Time	Faster for 4 million residents from home/office, including HK Island and NT	Only faster for 0.4 million residents
Train Fare	Lower capital and operating cost resulting in cheaper fare structure	Higher capital and operating cost, resulting in more expensive fare structure
Road Traffic	No disruption in congested urban area during construction and after completion	Serious impact on Jordan/TST during construction. Severe impact on roads and congestion in West Kowloon after completion.
Tourist Benefits	From airport to boundary via HK Interchange Station: 50 Minutes. Avoiding congestion in West Kowloon/TST	From airport to boundary via West Kowloon Station: 62 minutes. Concentrating all traffic in congested areas.
Station Interchange	2 minutes walk between platforms within integrated HK Interchange Station; up and down equivalent to 2 storeys	12 minutes walk between WK Station and Kowloon Station; up and down equivalent to 20 storeys
Development and Job Opportunities	Stimulate development and job opportunities in NT	Further escalate urban property prices and deny development opportunity for residents of the NT



Integrated Option:
Express Rail check-in/arrival at **FOUR** express stations in **Hong Kong, Kowloon, Tsing Yi** and **New Territories**. Direct connection with all West Rail stations.

The Express Rail Expert Group supports a full integration of the rail networks of Hong Kong and the Mainland. Why should everyone first have to go to West Kowloon before they can travel to China? Why should every visitor first have to come to West Kowloon before they can go to their hotel? Why spend HK\$25bln more? Let's think again. If you support a better express rail for Hong Kong, then go to our website www.betterrail4hk.org

www.betterrail4hk.org
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