

ITEM FOR ESTABLISHMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

HEAD 118 – PLANNING DEPARTMENT Subhead 000 Operational expenses

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the creation of the following supernumerary post in the Planning Department for a period of three years from 13 May 2011 to 12 May 2014 –

1 Chief Town Planner
(D1) (\$99,400 - \$108,650)

PROBLEM

The Planning Department (PlanD) needs dedicated staffing support at the appropriate directorate level to lead two dedicated teams to provide professional planning support and secretariat services to the new pilot District Urban Renewal Forums (DURFs) to be set up under the new Urban Renewal Strategy (URS).

PROPOSAL

2. The Director of Planning, with the support of the Secretary for Development, proposes to create a supernumerary Chief Town Planner (CTP) (D1) post in PlanD for three years with effect from 13 May 2011.

JUSTIFICATION

The New URS and the DURFs

3. The Chief Executive announced in his 2010-11 Policy Address the publication of the draft text of a new URS for public consultation before finalisation

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in early 2011. The new URS envisages the setting up of new advisory platforms, DURFs, in the old urban districts to collect views from professionals and the local community, to strengthen urban renewal at the planning stage with a people-centred, bottom-up and district-based approach, and to develop and formulate blueprints for sustainable urban renewal. During the public consultation period, we attended two special meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Development on 20 November 2010 and 7 December 2010 respectively to listen to public views. At the close of the public consultation on 13 December 2010, 74 written submissions were received. We are currently refining the text of the new URS in the light of public comments received. The public comments received in relation to DURF mainly concern the membership and operation of the pilot DURFs.

4. In coming up with a holistic and integrated approach to urban renewal, it is envisaged that DURF will discharge the following functions –

- (a) recommending the scope of and strategy for urban renewal in the areas concerned, including the buildings/areas to be rehabilitated, redeveloped or preserved; district beautification; etc.;
- (b) commissioning at an early stage Social Impact Assessments;
- (c) initiating public engagement activities to gauge public views on urban renewal in the areas concerned; and
- (d) making suggestions to relevant government departments on commissioning district-based surveys, planning studies and public engagement activities on related issues for further deliberation.

5. To ensure that urban renewal is more systematically implemented taking into account the local characteristics and aspirations, each DURF (to be appointed by the Government) will be chaired by a professional familiar with urban renewal issues. The other members will be drawn from a wide cross-section in the local community. The work of DURFs will be facilitated by the government departments concerned. The proposed membership of DURFs includes members of District Councils (DCs)/Area Committees, professionals, established non-governmental organisations/groups in the district and business associations providing service/operating in the district as well as representatives of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and relevant government departments.

/Setting

Setting up of DURFs on a Pilot Basis

6. The first pilot DURF will be set up in Kowloon City where there is a large number of dilapidating buildings and URA has not carried out many redevelopment projects. According to the survey conducted by the Buildings Department (BD) in early 2010, there were some 1 000 old buildings aged 50 years or above in Kowloon City which accounted for 27% of the total number of 4 000 such old buildings in the territory. Of these 1 000 old buildings in Kowloon City, about 320 required quick remedial works or had obvious defects^{Note} and they accounted for 31% (the highest percentage of all districts) of all such buildings in Hong Kong.

7. Under the new URS, URA will provide “flat for flat” as an alternative option to cash compensation and ex-gratia payment to the owner-occupiers of domestic units affected by URA’s redevelopment projects. As a pilot scheme, the Chief Executive-in-Council has endorsed the granting of up to two sites at Kai Tak Development to URA at full market value reflecting the conditions of the land grant for producing some 1 500 to 2 000 small and medium-sized flats. These flats will be offered to owner-occupiers affected by urban renewal projects in Kowloon City and the nearby districts. Apart from advising the Government on district-based urban renewal initiatives, the Kowloon City DURF will be instrumental to the effective synchronisation and successful implementation of the pilot “flat for flat” scheme at Kai Tak Development. With the benefit of the experience of the Kowloon City DURF, we plan to establish a DURF in another district around the latter part of this year to fully test out the new people-centred, bottom-up and district-based approach to urban regeneration.

Need for Dedicated DURF Teams to be Headed by a New CTP Post

8. To provide adequate professional and technical support to the two pilot DURFs, we need to establish dedicated professional teams comprising both town planners and survey/technical officers in PlanD to assist in developing annual work programmes and performance indicators, and taking stock of all extant district studies on urban regeneration (redevelopment, rehabilitation, preservation and revitalisation) to build up the necessary database at the district level to facilitate the work of DURFs. Each dedicated team will provide secretariat support; handle extensive public engagement/envisioning work, including launching internet-based

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^{Note} BD launched a special operation to inspect all private buildings aged 50 years or above in the territory after the building collapse at No. 45J Ma Tau Wai Road in January 2010. In BD’s report, buildings are grouped into four categories according to their conditions, namely, Category I - buildings requiring emergency remedial works; Category II - buildings with obvious defects found; Category III - buildings with minor defects found; and Category IV - buildings with no apparent defect. A total of 1 032 buildings in the territory are under Categories I or II.

public consultations and organising public consultation forums/workshops and discussions with relevant committees/bodies; carry out urban renewal-related planning studies and surveys such as district aspirations surveys, baseline studies including local economic, demographic, building conditions studies, and social impact and other technical assessments; oversee technical studies and consultancies; prepare Urban Regeneration Plan and Action Area Plans; and formulate implementation strategies as advised by the DURFs.

9. To facilitate the early setup of the Kowloon City DURF, a supernumerary CTP post has been created in PlanD under delegated authority since 15 November 2010 to coordinate the required preparatory work. This post is due to lapse in mid-May this year. Continued dedicated directorate support at the CTP level for the two pilot DURFs is required –

- (a) to prototype and develop the modus operandi for the pilot Kowloon City DURF and lead the first dedicated DURF team in rendering secretariat support and providing advice to the Kowloon City DURF, planning and supervising the conduct of social impact assessments, planning and related studies; planning extensive community and interest group engagement activities on the district urban renewal proposals; advising on the related planning and other statutory procedures and actions; interacting with the Kowloon City DC and with other government and non-government stakeholders through meetings and collaborative projects; supporting the Kowloon City DURF in formulating recommendations on the scope and strategy for urban renewal in this pilot district;
- (b) to refine the modus operandi for DURFs based on the experience in Kowloon City, set in train the preparation for the establishment of the second DURF before the end of 2011 and also to render the required professional and secretariat support to the second pilot DURF upon establishment; and
- (c) to update LegCo and DCs on the work progress of the pilot DURFs from time to time and conduct a detailed and timely review on the effectiveness of DURFs and the way forward for the DURF regime before the end of three years.

10. We need proper professional input at the appropriate directorate level to formulate and refine the DURF model in accordance with the people-centred, bottom-up and district-based urban renewal approach and to see to its successful implementation. In particular, the CTP will spearhead effective communication and interaction between the DURFs and a wide cross-section of stakeholders,

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including the local communities, the Government, URA, DCs, district leaders, political parties, professional groups, and other non-government organisations, which is a complex and delicate balancing act beyond the capability of a senior professional. In addition, strong leadership is required to oversee social impact assessments and various planning and technical consultancy studies, which are essential in assisting the DURFs in formulating Urban Regeneration Plan and Action Area Plans for the areas concerned, which would include buildings/areas to be rehabilitated, redeveloped or preserved, district beautification and implementation strategies, etc. During this process, considerable professional input from a directorate officer with the necessary experience is required to ensure that these recommended urban renewal initiatives, having taken account of public aspirations and comments, are in line with the overall development framework of the district, and embrace the concept of sustainable development and building a quality city. It is therefore operationally necessary to have a dedicated CTP post to head the teams in rendering the required level of support to the two DURFs to ensure proper implementation of the DURF model within the intended timeframe.

11. Based on PlanD's operational experience of launching and monitoring large-scale public engagement exercises, and the commissioning and follow-up of major planning studies, for example, the Frontier Closed Area Study and the Study on Development of Lok Ma Chau Loop, we consider it necessary to have the dedicated attention of a team of professional staff headed by a directorate officer to provide the requisite level of intensive support. As the work of the DURF teams will involve not only recommending, supervising and following up on planning studies, but also a full range of secretariat support to the pilot DURFs, the recommended level of staffing support is considered operationally necessary and the workload of the proposed CTP post is expected to increase further upon the establishment of the second DURF. The supernumerary CTP post, to be designated as CTP/DURF, is proposed to be created for a period of three years to see through the DURF setup and its subsequent review. The long-term staffing requirement for supporting DURFs will be reviewed in the light of operational experience.

Non-directorate Support

12. The proposed CTP post will be underpinned by a dedicated team in serving each of the two pilot DURFs. Each team will comprise four non-directorate posts at the ranks of Senior Town Planner, Town Planner/Assistant Town Planner, Senior Survey Officer (Planning), and Senior Technical Officer (Cartographic). The first DURF team for Kowloon City will be established on 1 April 2011 to be followed by the establishment of the second team later this year to tie in with the setting up of the second pilot DURF before the end of 2011.

Encl. 1 13. The proposed job description of the CTP post is at Enclosure 1. The
Encls. 2&3 existing and proposed organisation charts of PlanD are at Enclosures 2 and 3 respectively.

/ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

14. The Administration has considered the feasibility of URA providing the staff/resource support to DURF but this is not preferred as urban regeneration covers more than redevelopment of buildings. We also consider it appropriate for DURFs to operate within the purview of the Government as their establishment is an initiative under the new URS, which is a government strategy.

15. We have critically examined whether the existing CTPs in PlanD have spare capacity to absorb the work arising from DURF. With the streamlined establishment of PlanD following the deletion of two vacant CTP posts in July 2009 vide ESC paper EC(2009-10)5, the incumbents of the existing posts are already fully committed in their existing workload. It is operationally not possible for them to take up the whole range of duties to be entrusted to the proposed CTP post. Details of the work schedule of the existing CTP posts are at Enclosure 4.

Encl. 4

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

16. The proposed creation of the supernumerary CTP post will bring about an additional notional annual salary cost at mid-point of \$1,265,400. The additional full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, for the post is \$1,692,000.

17. The notional annual salary cost at mid-point and full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, for the creation of the eight non-directorate posts mentioned in paragraph 12 above are \$4,755,120 and \$7,424,000 respectively.

18. We will include the necessary provision in the annual Estimates of the relevant financial years from 2011-12 onwards to meet the cost of the proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

19. We consulted the LegCo Panel on Development on the proposal vide an information paper issued on 14 January 2011 (reference: LC Paper No. CB(1)1076/10-11(01)). Members noted the proposal and raised no objection at the Panel meeting on 25 January 2011. During public consultation of the URS Review, professional bodies such as the Hong Kong Institute of Planners, Hong Kong Institute of Architects, Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Hong Kong) supported the setting up of DURF to collect public views on urban renewal so as to build consensus.

/ESTABLISHMENT

ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

20. The establishment changes in PlanD for the last two years are as follows –

Establishment (Note)	Number of posts			
	Existing (as at 1 February 2011)	As at 1 April 2010	As at 1 April 2009	As at 1 April 2008
A[^]	25#	25	27	27
B	244	245	241	236
C	499	498	497	488
Total	768	768	765	751

Note:

- A - ranks in the directorate pay scale or equivalent
- B - non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is above MPS point 33 or equivalent
- C - non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is at or below MPS point 33 or equivalent
- [^] - excluding supernumerary posts created under delegated authority
- # - as at 1 February 2011, there was no unfilled directorate post in PlanD

CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS

21. The Civil Service Bureau supports the proposed creation of a supernumerary CTP post for three years in PlanD to provide professional planning support and secretariat services to the new pilot DURFs. The grading and ranking of the proposed post are considered appropriate having regard to the level and scope of the responsibilities and the professional input required.

ADVICE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DIRECTORATE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

22. As the post is proposed on a supernumerary basis, its creation, if approved, will be reported to the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service in accordance with the agreed procedure.

**Proposed Job Description
Chief Town Planner/District Urban Renewal Forum**

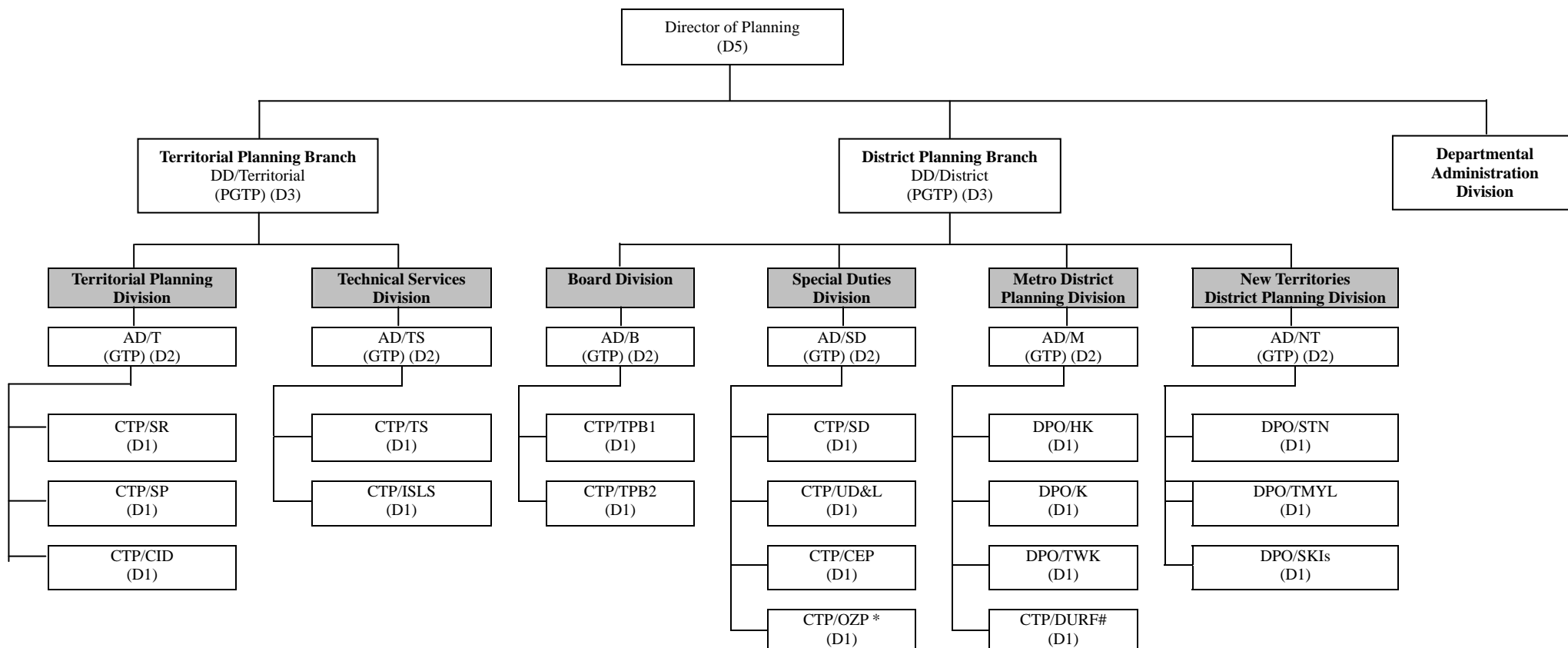
Rank : Chief Town Planner (D1)

Responsible to : Assistant Director/Metro

Major Duties and Responsibilities –

1. To perform the role of Secretary to the advisory platform of District Urban Renewal Forum (DURF) in the pilot areas.
2. To supervise and manage the provision of secretariat services and professional advice to enable effective operation and functioning of DURFs. To closely engage the major stakeholders in the process and attend meetings with various committees, professional groups, trade-related bodies, and non-government organisations (NGOs) as directed by DURFs as well as other liaison meetings/discussion forums/workshops/briefings to gauge the views of the stakeholders/organisations/concerned groups.
3. To help commission and manage the consultants in undertaking consultancy studies proposed by DURFs, formulate Urban Regeneration Plans for the areas, and to translate them, where appropriate, into detailed Action Area Plans for implementation. To keep in view other urban renewal initiatives by the government sector and the non-government sector in the pilot districts with a view to formulating an integrated urban renewal blueprint at the district level.
4. To help commission and manage the public engagement exercises, and present the findings to DURFs and, where appropriate, to present those findings to the relevant committees, professional groups, trade-related bodies, NGOs and any other bodies to facilitate the implementation of proposals.
5. To provide briefings for policy bureaux, departments, public utility agencies, the mass media and the general public on DURF related matters in the pilot districts.
6. To review and report the effectiveness of the pilot DURFs with a view to recommending the way forward of this pilot framework within the intended timeframe.
7. To perform managerial duties over the dedicated DURF teams with regard to the distribution of work, allocation of responsibilities, setting of work priorities and monitoring of work progress.
8. To carry out any other duties as assigned by Assistant Director/Metro.

Existing Organisation Chart of Planning Department



Legend:

- AD - Assistant Director of Planning
- B - Board
- CEP - Central Enforcement & Prosecution
- CID - Cross-Boundary Infrastructure & Development
- CTP - Chief Town Planner
- DD - Deputy Director of Planning
- DPO - District Planning Officer
- DURF - District Urban Renewal Forum
- GTP - Government Town Planner

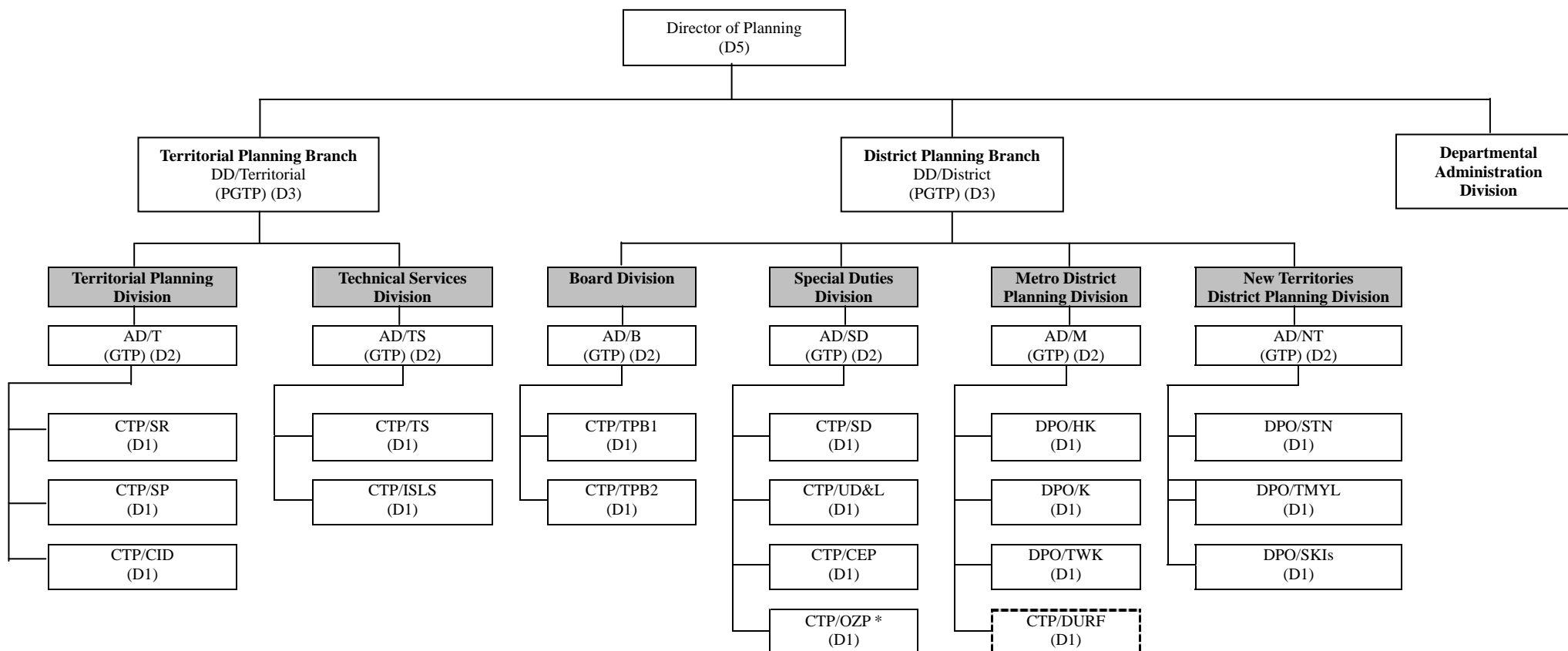
- HK - Hong Kong
- ISLS - Information Systems & Land Supply
- K - Kowloon
- M - Metro
- NT - New Territories
- OZP - Outline Zoning Plan
- PGTP - Principal Government Town Planner
- SD - Special Duties
- SKIs - Sai Kung & Islands
- SP - Strategic Planning

- SR - Studies & Research
- STN - Sha Tin, Tai Po & North
- T - Territorial
- TMYL - Tuen Mun & Yuen Long
- TPB - Town Planning Board
- TS - Technical Services
- TWK - Tsuen Wan & West Kowloon
- UD&L - Urban Design & Landscape

* Supernumerary post created under delegated authority due to lapse in early December 2011

Supernumerary post created under delegated authority due to lapse in mid-May 2011

Proposed Organisation Chart of Planning Department



Legend:

- AD - Assistant Director of Planning
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* Supernumerary post created under delegated authority due to lapse in early December 2011
 [Dashed Box] Proposed supernumerary CTP post to be created with effect from 13 May 2011

**Workload of the existing Chief Town Planner (CTP) posts
in the Planning Department^{Note}**

Metro District Planning Division and New Territories District Planning Division

The six District Planning Officers (DPOs) (pitched at CTP rank) under the above two divisions oversee matters concerning forward planning, design and layouts, development control and implementation of developments in their respective districts; the preparation and processing for approval of Outline Development Plans, Layout Plans and Planning Briefs for public housing and private sector comprehensive development/redevelopment projects; the preparation, updating and amendment of Statutory Plans; the provision of planning input and advice in respect of urban renewal projects and other developments; and the preparation of papers and reports on objections/representations to statutory plans, planning applications etc. In discharging these duties, DPOs take an active part in the meetings of the Town Planning Board and District Councils and other ad hoc meetings. They are already fully occupied with a wide spectrum of work which is subject to statutory time limits. The DPOs of the New Territories regions are also busily engaged in the preparation of new Development Permission Area Plans/Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs) for areas not yet covered by statutory plans.

2. DURF is a distinct and new advisory platform for which the full-time attention of a CTP is required for developing and fine-tuning the modus operandi and assessing its effectiveness. The CTP will provide strategic leadership in the requisite professional planning work and the secretariat support to DURF, including conducting extensive public engagement, social impact assessment as well as planning and related studies with a view to formulating Urban Regeneration Plan and Action Area Plans for the areas concerned. The voluminous workload and complexity of the work involved in supporting the pilot DURFs setup, with the first to be established in Kowloon City, cannot be absorbed by DPO/Kowloon or other DPOs who are already fully engaged in district and forward planning matters for various districts under their jurisdiction. In particular, there are urgent tasks which require DPO/Kowloon's dedicated attention, namely the review of the remaining OZPs to impose suitable development control to meet the public aspirations and the imposition of appropriate development parameters for sale sites to facilitate their timely delivery. Of the OZP review exercise, representations with regard to the Wang Tau Hom & Tung Tau OZP and Ngau Tau Kok & Kowloon Bay OZP are being processed. In view of the above, it is considered not practical for DPO/Kowloon to take on the responsibilities of DURFs on top of his own schedule.

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^{Note} The CTP posts exclude supernumerary ones created for short-term purposes under delegated authority.

Board Division

3. The two CTPs/Town Planning Board are fully engaged in coordinating and vetting submissions to the Town Planning Board (TPB), Planning Committees (PCs) and Objection Hearing Committees (OHC) and providing services to TPB/PCs/OHCs including supervising the preparation of minutes of the meetings, publication of statutory plans and the release of information/decisions of TPB/PCs/OHCs; providing planning advice to and monitoring the operation of the statutory planning system; preparing submissions to Executive Council in relation to approval of draft statutory plans and reference back of approved plans for amendment; and coordinating matters relating to planning appeals, judicial review and other court cases. Given the increasing public aspirations for a better living environment and better quality of life, the public has become more forthcoming in offering their views on town planning matters, which results in an increase in the number of representations and comments with regard to gazetted statutory plans and planning applications to the TPB. Hence, the workload of dealing with matters related to the TPB, the meetings of which and the PCs are held every other week, is substantial and heavy. In view of the above, the two CTPs do not have spare capacity to take up the additional work of DURFs.

Special Duties Division

4. The Special Duties Division tenders support to special planning tasks, urban design and landscape matters, and conducts work on enforcement and prosecution against unauthorised developments in the rural New Territories. We have critically examined the distinct nature of work and the existing workload of the three CTPs in the division as outlined below and considered that they cannot be redeployed for taking up additional duties –

- (a) CTP/Special Duties is responsible for facilitating the detailed planning and urban design of the new Central harbourfront; overseeing and coordinating housing land supply; reviewing industrial land, Government, Institution or Community facilities, schools and open space; providing planning inputs to major government infrastructure projects; facilitating the planning and development of large-scale planning projects of territorial importance; and conducting and managing planning studies to boost land and housing supply, for example, the studies on Anderson Road Quarry and Cha Kwo Ling, Ex-Kaolin Mine sites.
- (b) CTP/Urban Design and Landscape is responsible for overseeing the urban design and landscape input on submissions under the Town Planning Ordinance and Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, and other urban design and visual impact matters arising from development proposals; management of urban design-related studies; and management of term consultancies on air ventilation

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assessment, etc. For example, some major technical studies include the Feasibility Study on Urban Climatic Map and Standards for Wind Environment, and Study on Establishment of Simulated Site Wind Availability Data for Air Ventilation Assessments in Hong Kong, etc.

- (c) CTP/Central Enforcement and Prosecution is responsible for overseeing the investigation, enforcement and prosecution of unauthorised development cases; formulating district enforcement strategies and guidelines; supervising the vetting of submissions of unauthorised development cases and handling complaints/queries on enforcement matters. There are a large number of cases and public complaints requiring prompt and timely action.

Territorial Planning Division

5. The Territorial Planning Division undertakes territorial and strategic planning including conducting thematic planning studies of territorial and cross-boundary significance. Given the closer regional cooperation between the Mainland, Macao and Hong Kong, there has been increasing involvement of CTPs in various studies and researches, particularly those with cross-boundary dimension. Hence, the three existing CTPs are unable to take up the work of DURFs. The major areas of responsibilities of the three CTPs are set out below –

- (a) CTP/Studies and Research is responsible for overseeing the undertaking of in-house and consultancy topical/thematic studies such as the Frontier Closed Area Study, New Development Areas Study (for example, Hung Shui Kiu) and the Hong Kong Island East Harbourfront Study; coordination of principal tasks in the implementation of proposals arising from the findings of planning studies and researches; and coordination of community engagement programmes. The officer also provides support to the work of the Harbourfront Commission, and in particular, providing secretariat service to the Task Force on Harbourfront Developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing.
- (b) CTP/Strategic Planning oversees the conduct of special research and studies, and manages the consultancy services relating to territorial development strategy, strategic developments and infrastructures in the areas adjoining the boundary, the Greater Pearl River Delta (PRD) Region and Guangdong Province, for example, the Study on Development of Lok Ma Chau Loop, the Enhancement of the Lau Fau Shan Rural Township and Surrounding Areas etc. Besides, the officer also oversees the review of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines and the conduct of Area Improvement Studies for various parts of the Territory.

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- (c) CTP/Cross-Boundary Infrastructure and Development is responsible for overseeing the conduct of transport research and studies relating to developments and infrastructures in the Mainland (in particular areas adjoining the boundary, the PRD Region and the Pan-PRD Region) such as the Cross-boundary Travel Survey; and provision of professional and technical support for various Hong Kong/Mainland/Macao liaison meetings on physical transport development and infrastructure projects. With closer regional cooperation and the dynamic changes in policies and factors affecting the planning and development of Hong Kong, Macao and the Mainland, there is an increasing and continuous need for researches with a cross-boundary dimension.

Technical Services Division

6. The Technical Services Division is responsible for providing professional/technical administration services, dissemination of planning information, coordination of grade management and training matters, formulation of departmental IT strategy, and assessment and forecast of territorial land supply. As the two CTPs are fully engaged in the following tasks, they have no spare capacity to take up additional responsibilities.

- (a) CTP/Technical Services is responsible for overseeing the preparation of practice notes and technical circulars; coordination of training and grade management issues; release of planning information; handling of public enquiries and complaints; implementation of outreach programme and publicity activities; and handling of Ombudsman's cases. In addition, the CTP is overseeing a major research project in the history and development of town planning in Hong Kong, the setting up of the permanent Hong Kong Planning and Infrastructure Exhibition Gallery due for opening in mid 2012, and operation of the interim exhibition gallery.
- (b) CTP/Information Systems and Land Supply is responsible for overseeing the implementation of IT projects; preparation of funding bids and tender documents for IT projects; conduct of researches on customising remote sensing, Geographical Information System, multimedia and 3D simulation technologies for land-use planning and presentation of planning studies; and updating of the Land Supply Database. Some major information and technology projects include the Three-Dimensional Planning Decision Support and Visualisation Systems, and aerial photograph information system. The CTP is also heavily involved in supervising the multi-disciplinary IT experts and planning professionals in the various IT projects to ensure that the various planning objectives could be met in an integrated manner.