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Panel on Development
Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning
Meeting on 24 September 2010
The way forward for the Subcommittee

Purpose

This paper seeks the views of the Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning (the Subcommittee) on the need for the Subcommittee to continue its work in the 2010-2011 legislative session and on the way forward.

Background

2. The Subcommittee was set up under 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 areas of the Subcommittee's study, as agreed by the Panel, include the following --

- (a) short-term, medium-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.

Work of the Subcommittee

3. Under the chairmanship of Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, the Subcommittee has held seven meetings, and conducted three site visits to the harbour and various locations along the harbourfront. The Subcommittee has studied the following major issues --

- (a) major strategies adopted by the Administration in formulating and implementing harbourfront enhancement initiatives;
- (b) planned harbourfront enhancement measures on government land and private land in the short term, medium term and long term;
- (c) connectivity of the harbourfront areas for pedestrian access both on Hong Kong Island and on the Kowloon side;
- (d) major harbourfront issues discussed by District Councils;
- (e) the Administration's harbourfront enhancement initiatives and existing constraints;
- (f) the operation, design features and management mode of selected facilities, viz. Avenue of Stars, Ma Wan Park and Tsing Yi Waterfront Promenade;
- (g) public-private-partnership approach in harbourfront development;
- (h) Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront;
- (i) the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee's achievements and final recommendations on harbourfront management;
- (j) overseas experience in waterfront developments collated from visits made by the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee and the Secretary for Development;
- (k) the latest work on harbourfront enhancement carried out by the Harbour Unit of Development Bureau; and
- (l) the establishment of the Harbourfront Commission.

4. In the course of the Subcommittee's study, the Subcommittee considered it useful to conduct a duty visit to selected cities with successful experience in waterfront planning and management, viz. Vancouver, New York, Boston and Baltimore. The Subcommittee decided on 26 June 2009 to conduct a duty visit to these cities and the proposed visit was endorsed by the House Committee on 10 July 2009. In planning for the visit, the Subcommittee noted that the Administration was conducting studies on the waterfront management and operation models in certain overseas places. The Subcommittee considered it useful to make reference to the findings of those studies and decided to conduct the duty visit later. On 2 July 2010, the Administration briefed the Subcommittee on, among others, overseas experience in waterfront developments. The Subcommittee considered the information and decided to undertake the duty visit in late September 2010, which was approved by the House Committee on 9 July 2010.

5. In late August 2010, having regard to the latest circumstances including some interested members' unavailability for the duty visit, and after consultation with the other delegation members, Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, Chairman of the Subcommittee and leader of the delegation, advised that the duty visit should not be proceeded with for the time being. Subcommittee members would be consulted on the way forward for the Subcommittee, including whether the Subcommittee would continue its work in the 2010-2011 legislative session and whether and how the duty visit should be pursued.

Advice sought

6. Against the above background, the Subcommittee may consider whether it would continue its work in the 2010-2011 session to study issues including --

- (a) development of continuous waterfront promenades on both sides of the harbour;
- (b) adaptive re-use of idle or under-utilized Government facilities on harbourfront sites;
- (c) wider application of the public-private-partnership approach in harbourfront development and management; and
- (d) harbourfront initiatives under the consideration of the newly established Harbourfront Commission, such as enhancing accessibility to the Kai Tak waterfront and harbourfront developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing.

The Subcommittee may also consider whether the Panel on Development would discuss these issues.

7. As regards the duty visit, members may consider the way to take forward the matter, including the appropriate time (e.g. during Easter break) and whether to visit cities such as Singapore if the Subcommittee decides to pursue the duty visit. Information about Singapore's waterfront enhancement initiatives and management has been provided in the Information Note (LC Paper No. IN18/08-09) on "Waterfront Management in Selected Cities" prepared by the Research and Library Services Division of this Secretariat. Taking into consideration the time required for logistical arrangements and for lining up the visit programme with the relevant consulate general, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office and hosting organizations, a lead time of some three months will be needed if the Subcommittee considers that the duty visit should be further pursued.

8. If the Subcommittee decides to continue its work and pursue with the duty visit in the 2010-2011 session, a period of not less than nine months will be required. The Subcommittee may wish to note that in accordance with House Rule 26(c), a subcommittee should complete its work within 12 months of its commencement and report to the relevant Panel. If it is necessary for a subcommittee to work beyond that 12 months, the subcommittee should, after obtaining the endorsement of the relevant Panel, report to the House Committee and give justifications for an extension of the 12-month period. The Subcommittee last reported to the House Committee on 20 November 2009 and obtained its agreement to continue working in the 2009-2010 session.

9. Subject to members' views on the need for the Subcommittee to continue its work in the new session, the Panel on Development will take a decision on the matter at its first meeting in the new session on 14 October 2010. Upon approval by the Panel on Development, a report will be submitted to the House Committee to seek its endorsement for the Subcommittee to continue its work in the 2010-2011 session.