

DRAFT

Opening Remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Housing at the LegCo Special Finance Committee Meeting (Transport) on 6 March 2012

Honourable Chairperson,

Today, I would like to brief Members on the part of the Estimates and our priority areas under the Transport portfolio in the new financial year.

2. The allocation for the transport portfolio in the new financial year is \$35.5 billion, of which it includes the estimated expenditure of a number of cross-boundary and domestic transport infrastructure projects.

3. Firstly, let me report the latest update of the **major transport infrastructure** projects. We commenced the construction works of the West Island Line, the South Island Line (East), the Kwun Tong Line Extension and the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, and expect them to be completed accordingly in 2014 and 2015.

4. On the other hand, the detailed planning and design of Shatin to Central Link is almost completed, and the necessary statutory procedures are now at the final stage. We will strive to apply for funding approval within this legislative session, with a view to commencing construction this year.

5. As regards another **cross-boundary transport infrastructure** project the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB), works in respect of the Main Bridge, Immersed Tube Tunnel and the Artificial Islands commenced and have been progressing well. These works are expected for completion in 2016. For the local projects of the HZMB, the Finance Committee approved the funding for the related works last year, and the reclamation works for the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities commenced immediately in late 2011. The tendering work for the Hong Kong Link Road is still on-going. The local projects have been affected by about one year because of a judicial review case, we are now compressing the works programme and are confident that the various local works can be completed to dovetail with the target of commissioning the HZMB Main Bridge in 2016.

6. Further, we are also pressing ahead with our **local road infrastructure projects**, including Stage 1 of the Tolo Highway and Fanling Highway widening works, Central-Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link and widening of Tuen Mun Road. We are also

DRAFT

pushing ahead the planning and design of a number of projects including Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link, Tuen Mun Western Bypass, Central Kowloon Route, Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel and Stage 2 of the Tolo Highway and Fanling Highway widening works.

7. At the same time, we secured funding approval from the Legislative Council for taking forward the design of the barrier-free access facilities retrofitting works at about 180 existing footbridges, elevated walkways and subways and the phase 1 retrofitting of barrier-free access facilities. The first phase of the retrofitting works has commenced. We plan to apply funding approval for phase 2 retrofitting works this year, and hope to complete the bulk of the retrofitting works by 2016-17.

8. On **civil aviation**, we will strengthen Hong Kong's position as an international and regional aviation centre. We will continue to proactively pursue expansion in the bilateral air services arrangements. Regarding the proposals arising from the review of the Air Transport Licensing Authority's regulatory regime, the relevant legislative amendments has been passed by the Legislative Council and will be implemented this year. In terms of hardware, the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) will continue to implement a midfield expansion project to increase the handling capacity with air traffic demand up to 2020. For the long-term development of the airport, AAHK launched a public consultation in mid 2011 on the Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030. AAHK recommended to the Government in end 2011 that the three-runway system should be adopted as the blueprint for development. The Government is carefully considering the AAHK's recommendation with a view to making an early decision for the commencement of the next stage of work, which includes the environmental impact assessment, the associated detailed design and the financing arrangements.

9. On **maritime and logistics development**, we will continue to assist the industry to take advantage of opportunities arising from vibrant shipping and logistics development in Asia, as well as the positioning of Hong Kong as set out in the National 12-5 Plan. For example, we will reinforce the local maritime cluster by supporting manpower development and undertaking promotional activities. In terms of hardware, both the preliminary feasibility study of developing Container Terminal 10 ("CT10") at Southwest Tsing Yi and the "Study on the Strategic Development Plan for Hong Kong Port 2030" are underway and are expected to be completed by end of the year. We will carefully

DRAFT

consider the study results, global and local economic situation, the performance of the port sector, and the views of stakeholders to decide the need for CT10 development. Separately, we are proceeding with the dredging of the Kwai Tsing container basin and its approach channel to facilitate the new generation of ultra-large container ships to visit Hong Kong Port.

10. On the logistics front, Hong Kong has the advantages for development into a high value goods inventory management and regional distribution centre. To support the industry, we have already made available two logistics sites for the industry to construct modern logistics facilities. We will continue to identify suitable land for logistics and port back-up uses for meeting development needs. Separately, we shall continue to work with the industry to promote e-logistics, as well as to implement measures which would help enhance the operating efficiency of the sector.

11. On **road safety**, we will continue to enhance road safety through legislation, enforcement, as well as publicity and education. Last year we introduced legislative amendment proposals to combat drug driving. The new legislation will be enacted for implementation in mid March.

12. We have also introduced legislative amendments to the Road Traffic Ordinance to defer speeding behaviour of public light bus drivers and to enhance the safety of public light bus operation. The proposed measures include imposing a maximum speed limit for light buses, mandating all light buses to install speed limiters, making electronic data recording device a basic equipment on newly registered vehicles, and requiring applicants of public light bus driving licence to attend a mandatory pre-service training course.

13. As to the measures of traffic management, cross-boundary transport, and the long term railway development study, I do not intend to go into details here.

14. My colleagues and I would be pleased to answer questions from Members. Thank you Chairperson.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
March 2012**