

# Legislative Council Panel on Transport

## 2015 Policy Agenda

### Transport-related Policy Initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau

#### Introduction

The 2015 Policy Agenda sets out the Government's initiatives in the coming year. This paper elaborates on those initiatives that are relevant to the land transport portfolio.

#### 2015 Policy Agenda – New initiatives

##### *Chapter 2 - Land, Housing and Transportation*

**(a) While furthering railway development, carry out a Public Transport Strategy Study to look into important issues relating to other transport services to enhance the complementarity amongst different services, so that the public can enjoy efficient services and reasonable modal choices. We will also study the future development of Light Rail.**

2. The Government conducted three comprehensive transport studies ("CTS") in the past. The CTS-3 completed in 1999 has laid down the broad directions of using railway as the backbone of our transport system as well as the roles and positioning of various public transport services, i.e.

the light rail and franchised buses would serve as mass carriers and feeders to the heavy rail, and other public transport services would basically play a supplementary role. Such directions, roles and positioning are still valid. Notwithstanding, the expansion of the railway network has indeed brought some impact on other public transport services. We will therefore carry out a Public Transport Strategy Study (“PTSS”) to review the roles and positioning of other public transport services comprehensively and systematically. Some important topical issues of greater concern to the trades would also be examined. The objective is to enhance the complementarity amongst the various public transport services so that the public can enjoy efficient services with reasonable modal choices on one hand, and the public transport operators can enjoy sustainability within their respective niche areas and functions on the other.

3. We briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Transport on 25 November 2014 on the work plan of the PTSS (see **Annex 1**). We plan to report to the Panel on the first topical issue in the first quarter of 2015. Upon completion of the PTSS, we will compile a consolidated report.

**(b) Take forward seven new railway proposals in phases by 2031, pursuant to the Railway Development Strategy 2014 announced in September 2014. We will start by commencing detailed planning work for the Tuen Mun South Extension, the Northern Link (and Kwu Tung Station) and the East Kowloon Line.**

4. The Government has commissioned a consultant to conduct a study for the Review and Update of the “Railway Development Strategy 2000”, with a view to updating the long-term railway development blueprint for Hong Kong. Having considered the comments collected in the two

rounds of Public Engagement exercise, the consultant has completed the study and submitted the overall recommendations to the Government. We announced the “Railway Development Strategy 2014” (“RDS-2014”) on 17 September 2014. Having regard to transport demand, cost-effectiveness and the development needs of New Development Areas and other developments, we recommend seven new railway projects be completed in the planning horizon up to 2031, including the Northern Link and Kwu Tung Station, Tuen Mun South Extension, East Kowloon Line, Tung Chung West Extension, Hung Shui Kiu Station, South Island Line (West) and the North Island Line. The preliminary cost estimate of all the seven recommended railway schemes is in the order of \$110 billion (in 2013 prices).

5. For indicative planning purpose, we preliminarily propose that the recommended railway projects be implemented between 2018 – 2026. The Government will carefully consider all relevant factors and strike a reasonable balance among various interests of the community when mapping out the way forward for each railway project. In particular, we will critically examine the financial implications of each individual project to the Government and consider the most appropriate implementation programme and financial arrangement for each projects. In addition, for railway projects which are contingent upon the progress of New Development Areas and new residential developments, the implementation timetable of the railway schemes may be adjusted depending on the latest timetable for the implementation of those New Development Areas and residential developments.

6. When the seven recommended projects covered in the RDS-2014 are completed, the total length of Hong Kong’s railway network would

lengthen from 270 km in 2021 to over 300 km by 2031, and the number of stations would increase from 99 in 2021 to 114 by 2031. This level of rail coverage (that is about 75% of the local population and about 85% of job opportunities), plus the potential extensions beyond 2031, would be conducive to the fulfilment of our planning, development, transport and environmental objectives in the horizon of 2031 and beyond.

7. We shall first start off the detailed planning work for the implementation of Tuen Mun South Extension, Northern Link (and Kwu Tung Station) and East Kowloon Line. The taking forward of individual projects is contingent upon the outcome of detailed engineering, environmental and financial studies relating to each project, as well as updated assessment of passenger transport demand and availability of resources at the time. Prior to the finalisation of any new railway schemes, we will further consult the public on such details as the detailed alignment, locations of stations, mode of implementation, cost estimate, mode of financing and actual implementation window.

**(c) Enhance our monitoring of the MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”) in tandem with railway development to ensure that MTRCL can deliver new railway projects in a cost-effective manner; provide safe and reliable railway services; and maintain an overall high standard of corporate governance.**

8. The Government understands that members of the public have high expectation of MTR service. In this connection, the Government will continue to proactively carry out its duty as the majority shareholder of MTRCL and enhance monitoring of the MTRCL. We will require MTRCL to strengthen its management to ensure high-quality services and

proper delivery of new railways, as well as early identification of risks faced by the MTRCL in different aspects and the necessary reform so as to maintain an overall high standard of corporate governance.

9. MTRCL earlier announced the establishment of two new committees under the MTRCL Board, namely the Capital Works Committee and Risk Committee. These two new committees will facilitate more in-depth and focused monitoring of construction progress and overall risk management of the MTRCL (including railway service, and maintenance and repair). Furthermore, in view of the recent challenges and experience in implementing railway projects, we have enhanced the communication with the MTRCL to better understand the progress of the construction works. Based on the detailed construction programme on the critical activities of various railway projects prepared by the MTRCL, we keep close monitoring of the implementation of the various railway projects for timely requesting the MTRCL to implement necessary mitigation measures as early as possible and complete the new railway projects according to the construction programme. Relevant experience will also benefit our monitoring work of implementing the new railway projects under the RDS-2014 in future.

10. Despite that MTR service has been internationally recognised as having a high standard, and that the number of railway incidents has remained stable in recent years, the Government sees the need to require MTRCL to properly invest in its system maintenance and train renewal, as well as enhancing monitoring of the safety and reliability of railway service, in view of the expanding railway network and increase in train frequencies. In this connection, the Government will increase the manpower of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, which is the statutory

regulatory authority on railway safety, to enhance safety inspection and supervision.

## **2014-15 Policy Agenda – On-going Initiatives**

### ***Chapter 2 - Land, Housing and Transportation***

**(d) Exploring the development of public housing (including the redevelopment of Wah Fu Estate) at six government sites, which are expected to provide about 11 900 additional housing units, following the partial lifting of the administrative moratorium on development of Pok Fu Lam. We also propose to take forward the construction of the South Island Line (West) to address the transport needs arising from the new public housing developments and other development projects in the area in accordance with the Railway Development Strategy 2014 announced by the Government.**

11. As stated in item (b), the RDS-2014 recommends seven new railway projects be completed in the planning horizon up to 2031, including the South Island Line (West). In support of Government's partial lifting of the administrative moratorium of Pok Fu Lam, we shall implement the South Island Line (West), subject to the actual programme for the development and redevelopment of public housing in the Wah Fu area, so as to address the emerging transport demand in the long run and maximize development potential in the vicinities.

- (e) Co-ordinating and overseeing the remaining construction works of the West Island Line after its partial commissioning in December 2014, with a view to opening the Sai Ying Pun Station for public use and achieving full commissioning in 2015.**

12. Since the commissioning of the West Island Line (“WIL”) on 28 December last year, passengers can directly head for HKU Station and Kennedy Town Station of WIL from Sheung Wan Station without making interchange. WIL offers a convenient choice to the residents and employment population along the line for commuting between Central / Sheung Wan and Western District. We will keep co-ordinating and overseeing the remaining construction works of WIL, with a view to opening Sai Ying Pun Station within the first quarter of this year and completing the works of the remaining entrance of the station at Ki Ling Lane this year.

- (f) Co-ordinating and overseeing the construction of the Kwun Tong Line Extension, with a view to commissioning the project in 2016 in accordance with the revised target programme put forward by the MTRCL.**

13. The Kwun Tong Line Extension (“KTE”) is an extension of the Kwun Tong Line from Yau Ma Tei, via Ho Man Tin, to Whampoa. The construction works of KTE commenced in May 2011. According to the agreement signed between the Government and MTRCL, the target commissioning date for KTE is August 2015.

14. As the excavation works for the platform tunnel between the East and West concourses of Whampoa Station is still in progress and there are

uncertainties about the varying underground geological conditions to be encountered, the revised target commissioning of KTE in mid-2016 as advised by the MTRCL is still at risk. We will continue to co-ordinate and oversee the construction works of KTE, and have requested the MTRCL to implement effective mitigation measures as early as possible, in particular for the critical excavation works at both ends of the platform tunnel between the East and West concourses of Whampoa Station by deploying additional plants and labour, and extending the working hours of excavation works if the environmental condition is allowed, with a view to commissioning the project in 2016.

**(g) Co-ordinating and overseeing the construction of the South Island Line (East), including efforts to overcome the technical challenges at Admiralty Station, with a view to commissioning the project in end 2016 in accordance with the revised target programme put forward by the MTRCL.**

15. The South Island Line (East) (“SIL(E)”) is a new railway corridor from South to North of Hong Kong Island. It starts from South Horizons on Ap Lei Chau to Admiralty via Lei Tung, Wong Chuk Hang and Ocean Park. The construction works commenced in May 2011. According to the agreement signed between the Government and MTRCL, the target commissioning date of SIL(E) is December 2015.

16. In order to connect the expanded part of Admiralty Station with the platforms of SIL(E) and the Shatin to Central Link (“SCL”), the expansion work at Admiralty Station needs to carry out the underpinning works underneath the existing tunnels of the Island Line to facilitate the excavation below. In the course of excavation, the degree of weathering



of the rock is found lower than expected. This in effect makes the excavation more difficult. As safety must be given the highest priority, it is a big challenge to carry out the excavation work. At present, the MTRCL has to significantly improve the progress of the underpinning works under the tunnels of Island Line at Admiralty Station in order to achieve the revised target commissioning of SIL(E) in end 2016 as advised by the MTRCL. We will continue to co-ordinate and oversee the construction works of SIL(E), and have requested the MTRCL to implement effective mitigation measures in a timely manner, including the adoption of blasting method to expedite the excavation work of the underpinning works for the tunnels of Island Line, with a view to commissioning the project by end 2016.

**(h) Co-ordinating and overseeing the construction of the Shatin to Central Link (“SCL”), including efforts to mitigate part of the delay to the “Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section” of the SCL arising from the archaeological works at the To Kwa Wan Station, with a view to commissioning the “Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section” in 2019 as far as possible. In light of the risk in completing the works of the “Hung Hom to Admiralty Section” in end 2020 as scheduled, co-ordinating and overseeing the review of the commissioning programme by the MTRCL.**

17. Upon completion, SCL will form two strategic railway corridors, namely the “East West Corridor” and the “North South Corridor”. The “East West Corridor” will connect the Ma On Shan Line with the West Rail Line, while the “North South Corridor” will extend the existing East Rail Line to Admiralty Station. The construction works of SCL commenced in

July 2012. According to the agreement signed between the Government and MTRCL, the target commissioning date for the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section of SCL is December 2018 while the target commissioning date for the Hung Hom to Admiralty section of SCL is December 2020.

18. According to the recommendation under the Environmental Impact Assessment Report for SCL and under the close supervision of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (“AMO”), the archaeological work at To Kwa Wan Station commenced in November 2012 and the archaeological fieldwork was completed in December 2013. Over 500 coins mainly dated to the Song dynasty were found while piling works were carried out at the launching shaft for tunnel boring machines. Upon the request of AMO, the independent archaeological team of the contractor of SCL commenced in December 2013 the additional archaeological work at the launching shaft and the work was completed in April 2014. A square-shaped stone well of the Song-Yuan period and stone building remnants were discovered in the course of the additional archaeological work. Therefore, AMO requested MTRCL to extend the archaeological work to cover the whole station. The relevant archaeological work commenced in April 2014 and was completed in September. More remnants of the Song-Yuan period were then discovered. To facilitate the additional archaeological work, MTRCL temporarily suspended the works within the extent of the archaeological work. AMO has been reporting to the Antiquities Advisory Board (“AAB”) about the archaeological discoveries. As regards the conservation options for the archaeological discoveries, the Development Bureau, Transport and Housing Bureau

together with the relevant departments consulted the AAB, Legislative Council and District Council. Having considered views collected, the Antiquities Authority (the Secretary for Development) made a decision on 8 December 2014 on the conservation options for the archaeological discoveries within the extent of the station.

19. Owing to the additional archaeological work at To Kwa Wan Station, and the conservation arrangement for the artefacts unearthed and remnants, the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section of SCL is currently suffering an accumulative delay of at least 11 months. In accordance with the decision of the Antiquities Authority, the Highways Department (“HyD”) has instructed MTRCL to carry out necessary adjustments to the design and construction of To Kwa Wan Station, in order to match with the conservation options and endeavor to mitigate part of the delay in the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section. For the Hung Hom to Admiralty section, there are risks for its completion by end 2020 due to the delay in handing over of sites at Wanchai North and the construction of the enabling works for preserving flexibility for the construction of a convention centre at the topside of Exhibition Station. We have requested the MTRCL to explore with the tenderers/contractor of Exhibition Station for feasible delay recovery measures in order to mitigate the delay in the Hung Hom to Admiralty section as far as possible.

**(i) Co-ordinating and overseeing the construction of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (“XRL”) for commissioning in 2017.**

20. The Government entrusted the construction and commissioning of XRL project to MTRCL. Construction works commenced in January 2010. The Government has all along been monitoring the XRL project entrusted to MTRCL for design and construction in a prudent manner, with a view to achieving early project completion and commissioning of service.

21. In May 2014, MTRCL stated that the new target for the commissioning would be by the end of 2017. HyD, with the assistance of its monitoring and verification (“M&V”) consultant, has completed its review on the MTRCL’s proposed Programme to Complete (“PTC”). HyD considers that the PTC could be attained provided that the target progress is met for the critical contracts and various major conditions are satisfied. We will monitor the progress of the remaining works of the Hong Kong section of the XRL against the PTC.

22. At the same time, MTRCL informed the Government in July 2014 that the Cost to Complete (“CTC”) for the Hong Kong section of the XRL would be \$71.52 billion (additional insurance costs and Project Management Cost included). Based on the information provided by MTRCL, HyD, with the assistance of its M&V consultant, has largely completed the review of MTRCL’s CTC. HyD has urged MTRCL to review again the CTC in view of the reports of the MTRCL Independent Board Committee (“IBC”) and HyD’s review findings.

23. Besides, the MTRCL IBC, established to review the revised schedule for the commissioning of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL, has published two reports. The reports have recommended enhancements to MTRCL's system and processes. For example, it is recommended that the MTRCL Board should establish a Capital Works Committee to oversee any project involving design and/or construction with a capital value of a certain material size, etc. Among other things, as mentioned in Item (c) above, MTRCL has earlier announced the establishment of the Capital Works Committee and Risk Committee under the MTRCL Board. The Government expects MTRCL to propose early to the Government a comprehensive and practicable solution after taking into full consideration the report prepared by the IBC's independent experts and the issues raised by the HyD, with a view to completing and commissioning the Hong Kong section of the XRL according to the PTC. At the same time, the Government expects MTRCL to conduct a better risk management in project management and monitoring, as well as budget control.

24. In May 2014, the Government appointed an Independent Expert Panel ("IEP"), chaired by a retired judge with two overseas experts in engineering as members, to conduct a thorough examination of the project management and cost control mechanism and practices of the MTRCL regarding the Hong Kong section of the XRL project, as well as the project supervision mechanism adopted by the Government. The objective is to identify problems and the reasons behind them, as well as to make recommendations on improvement. The IEP has completed the review and submitted its report to the Chief Executive on 15 December 2014.

The Government has to seek legal advice with regard to publishing the report.

- (j) Overseeing the construction of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link originally scheduled for completion in 2017, with a view to overcoming the challenges and commissioning the project early.**

25. The Central-Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link project (“CWB”) is very important in coping with the serious traffic congestion of the northern coast of Hong Kong Island. HyD commenced the construction works of this mega and complex project in 2009 and has been endeavouring to commission the CWB in 2017 as originally scheduled. In view of the many challenges and uncertainties ahead which may lead to works delay, HyD will continue to work with its consulting engineers and resident site staff in closely monitoring the works progress and strive to adopt appropriate measures to expedite the works progress, such as enhancing construction methods and sequences, with a view to commissioning the CWB as early as possible. Upon the commissioning of the CWB, it will only take about five minutes to drive from Central to Island Eastern Corridor at North Point. The east-west traffic on Hong Kong Island will become more direct and smoother.

- (k) Overseeing the widening works of Tolo Highway/Fanling Highway between Island House Interchange and Fanling – Stage 2,**

**with a view to coping with the anticipated increase in traffic demand in the north New Territories.**

26. The widening of Tolo Highway and Fanling Highway between Island House Interchange and Wo Hop Shek Interchange is another major road works project, which aims to cope with the anticipated increase in traffic demand in the north New Territories. The project is implemented in two stages. The works for the first stage are the widening of an approximately 5.7 kilometre (km) long section of Tolo Highway between the Island House Interchange and Tai Hang, and had been substantially completed in March 2014. The works for the second stage are the widening of an approximately 3 km long section of Fanling Highway between Tai Hang and Wo Hop Shek Interchange, and which have commenced in July 2013. The works for the second stage were originally scheduled for completion in 2018. However, due to the longer-than-expected time required for land resumption and clearance, the works for the second stage are now anticipated to be completed in 2019.

**(1) Preparing for the implementation of the Central Kowloon Route, including the carrying out of detailed design and relevant procedures, with a view to further taking forward the project.**

27. We need to construct the Central Kowloon Route (“CKR”), linking Yau Ma Tei Interchange in West Kowloon with the Kowloon Bay and Kai Tak Development in East Kowloon, so as to reduce the traffic volumes along the major east-west corridors, thus relieving the existing traffic

congestion problem and coping with future traffic need. Detailed design for the tunneling and other road works is underway. Following gazettal of the proposed road scheme under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap 370) in November 2013, we have been handling the objections received thereafter. Upon the authorisation of the proposed road scheme, resources will be sought for early implementation of the project. Upon the commissioning of the CKR, the journey time between West Kowloon and Kowloon Bay via CKR would take around 5 minutes, thus resulting in a saving of 25 to 30 minutes when compared to the journey time without CKR.

**(m) Overseeing the construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge local projects to dovetail with the commissioning of the Main Bridge within Mainland waters.**

28. The Hong Kong – Zhuhai – Macao Bridge (“HZMB”) is an unprecedented cross boundary project jointly constructed by the three governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. Spanning over the Lingdingyang, it is a mega and complicated project. From the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities (“HKBCF”) to the Zhuhai-Macao Boundary Crossing Facilities, the bridge is 41.6 km long. Applying the latest technologies, after completion, the bridge will be the longest bridge cum tunnel sea-crossing in the world. The entire HZMB project consists of the HZMB Main Bridge in the Mainland waters being carried out by the HZMB Authority (“HZMBA”); and the link roads and boundary crossing facilities which are responsible by the three governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao.



29. The HZMB was targeted for completion by end 2016 when it was planned. The HZMBA as well as the three governments have been implementing the projects against this target. However, as the HZMB project is huge and complicated, there are many technical challenges during both the design and construction stages. Regardless of whether it is the HZMB Main Bridge or the related projects of the three sides, difficulties of the construction and pressure in meeting the programme schedule are encountered.

30. With safety and quality assurance as the major premises, the HZMBA and the three governments have been reviewing the progress of the various projects as well as overcoming and handling the concerned difficulties. According to the compilation and assessment of the latest works progress as of the third quarter last year, the Joint Works Committee of the Three Governments (“JWC”) jointly set up by the three governments opined that it would be very difficult for the entire HZMB project to be completed at the same time by end 2016. It also reported this to the HZMB Task Force meeting, chaired by the National Development and Reform Commission and attended by representatives of the relevant Central Authorities and the three governments, held in the latter half of November last year. The meeting requested the JWC and the HZMBA to further conduct an in-depth and objective analysis on the programme with a view to coming up with a programme target.

31. As for the local projects in Hong Kong, HyD has also conducted a comprehensive assessment. According to the original plan, the HKBCF should commence construction in end 2010. However, due to the judicial review (“JR”) case regarding the Environment Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Reports, the reclamation works of the HKBCF could only commence in

about a year later, i.e. in November 2011; and the superstructure works commenced construction in April last year (2014). Hence, the programme is extremely tight. At the same time, the project also faced construction difficulties and challenges such as the unstable supply of materials, shortage of labour, restriction in airport height and constraints in environmental protection requirement, etc. The Hong Kong Link Road (“HKLR”) project was originally planned to commence construction in mid-2011. Also affected by the JR case regarding the EIA reports, the commencement of works had to be deferred to May 2012. Apart from the compressed programme, the project also faced challenges such as environmental protection restrictions, complex site conditions and the requirement of Construction Noise Permit, etc.

32. According to the current progress, coupled with the various difficulties and challenges mentioned above, it appears that the HKBCF and the HKLR projects cannot be completed in time by end 2016. As for the anticipated completion date, HyD is still reviewing it. Together with its consulting engineers as well as resident site staff, HyD will closely monitor the works progress, supervise the contractors, ensure safety and quality and endeavour to implement the projects to dovetail with the commissioning of the Main Bridge.

33. To prepare for the commissioning of the HZMB, the three governments have set up the Co-ordination Group on Cross-boundary Matters. The Co-ordination Group is actively pressing ahead with the relevant policy studies and discussing the relevant cross-boundary transport arrangements. The scope of the policy studies covers regulation and quota system of cross-boundary vehicles, toll level for cross-boundary vehicles, traffic management, operation and maintenance, rescue and emergency

plan, enforcement coordination, customs clearance facilitation, etc. We will, having regard to the functions and characteristics of the HZMB, put in place transport arrangements which complement the local road system to bring HZMB's benefits for the economy and transport into full play.

**(n) Continuing to pursue bus route rationalisation vigorously to enhance network efficiency, improve service quality, ease traffic congestion and reduce roadside air pollution.**

34. Since 2013, the Government and franchised bus companies have pursued route rationalisation with greater vigour, including using the Area Approach<sup>1</sup> to do so to bring maximum overall benefits to the districts concerned. Route rationalisation for Tuen Mun and North District using the Area Approach was commenced in 2013 and has been completed. In addition to the regular annual Route Development Programmes, the Government and franchised bus companies have, with reference to the experience in Tuen Mun and North District, used the Area Approach in rationalising bus routes in Shatin, Tai Po, Tsing Yi and Yuen Long last year. These rationalisation proposals have been rolled out by phases since the third quarter of 2014 and will be fully implemented in the first quarter of this year. We will continue with our efforts to rationalise bus routes to further enhance the overall network efficiency and service. Meanwhile, based on the experience with respect to the Tuen Mun Road Bus-Bus Interchange (“BBI”), we have set up a BBI at Tsing Sha Highway Toll Plaza, with a view to facilitating passengers to interchange between New Territories East and urban area, as well as to enjoy more attractive interchange concessions.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Area Approach, bus service is reviewed holistically for a district as a whole, rather than on a route-by-route basis. Routes with persistently low patronage will be rationalised, while service of existing routes will be strengthened and new routes will be introduced to meet the service demand.

- (o) Continuing our efforts to alleviate road traffic congestion, including studying and following up the recommendations recently submitted by the Transport Advisory Committee to the Government.**

35. The Government has adopted a multi-pronged approach to tackle road traffic congestion by improving transport infrastructure, expanding and improving public transport (“PT”) system, and managing road use. As regards managing road use, we will continue to study the introduction of new technologies, including intelligent transport systems, to enhance the effectiveness of traffic management.

36. As road traffic congestion has increasingly become a cause for concern in our community, the Secretary for Transport and Housing invited the Transport Advisory Committee (“TAC”) to conduct a study on road traffic congestion in March last year. The TAC submitted the “Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong” (“the Report”) to the Secretary in December last year. The Report has put forward a host of short, medium and long-term recommended measures. The Government is carefully studying the suggestions of the Report, and will respond when appropriate.

- (p) Implementing the policy on “Universal Accessibility” announced in August 2012 by installing lifts at the existing public walkways maintained by the Highways Department to help the elderly and other people in need move around with greater ease. We will continue with the detailed design and supervision of the construction works for the priority projects selected in each**

**district by the respective District Councils and subsequently confirmed to be technically feasible.**

37. The Government has been installing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways maintained by HyD) for years (the “Original Programme”) on the recommendation of the Equal Opportunities Commission. The implementation of the remaining 154 items under the “Original Programme” continues. Most of the items are anticipated for progressive completion until 2018 as scheduled.

38. In addition, the Government launched the new policy on “Universal Accessibility” in August 2012. There was overwhelming response from the public and lift installations at about 250 public walkways were proposed (the “Expanded Programme”). In the first half of 2013, we invited all the 18 District Councils (“DCs”) to prioritise the new items in their districts proposed by the public. The DCs were generally very supportive of the new policy, and each of them selected three public walkways for priority implementation (see Annex 2). We have largely completed the technical feasibility studies and investigation works for these public walkways selected by the DCs. We also reported the study findings and preliminary proposals to the DCs in the first quarter of 2014. The detailed design works for those items confirmed to be technically feasible and supported by the DCs have commenced. Most of the retrofitting works items are anticipated to be completed from 2017 to 2018 in phases.

**(q) Taking forward the higher ranking proposals for the provision of hillside escalator links and elevator systems which are found technically feasible.**

39. The Government established in 2009 a set of comprehensive, objective and transparent scoring criteria for assessing proposals for hillside escalator links and elevator systems (hereafter referred to as “hillside escalator links”) to determine the priority for conducting preliminary technical feasibility studies for the 20 project proposals received at that time. Upon completion of the assessment, the results were reported to the Legislative Council Panel on Transport in February 2010. Two proposals were screened out initially, and 18 others were ranked (please see **Annex 3** for details).

40. Construction works for two of the 18 ranked proposals have already commenced. The first-ranked “Pedestrian Link at Tsz Wan Shan” has been included under the Shatin to Central Link project. Construction works commenced in July 2012 and are scheduled for completion by phases by 2016. The thirteenth-ranked “Yuet Wah Street Pedestrian Linkage” is being implemented by the Civil Engineering and Development Department under the Kwun Tong Town Centre Redevelopment project. Construction works commenced in April 2013 and are scheduled for completion in the fourth quarter of 2015.

41. Besides, out of the top ten ranked proposals, HyD has completed the preliminary technical feasibility studies of the proposals ranked second

to ninth and is conducting different stages of investigation, design and associated preparation works. As for the proposal ranked tenth, the “Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Lai King Hill Road and Lai Cho Road”, it is revealed in the preliminary technical feasibility study that the project involves two dangerous private slopes. HyD will revisit the project after the owners concerned have completed repairing the dangerous slopes satisfactorily.

42. The Government’s original plan is to conduct the preliminary technical feasibility studies for the top ten ranked proposals in the assessment by batches, and then follow up on the lower ranked proposals after the implementation of the top ten proposals is on track. Subsequently, upon reviewing the manpower resources of the relevant departments, we have commenced the preliminary technical feasibility studies for the proposals ranked eleventh (“Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Tai Wo Hau Road and Wo Tong Tsui Street”) and twelfth (“Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System at Luen On Street”). These two studies were completed in the second and third quarters of 2014 respectively. HyD is preparing to employ consultants to take forward the site investigation and preliminary design works of these two systems. We will continue to bid for resources to implement the hillside escalator links proposals for which construction has not yet commenced.

**(r) Taking forward the proposed pedestrian environment improvement schemes in Yuen Long, Causeway Bay and Mong Kok.**

43. We are planning projects to improve the pedestrian environment in several areas with high pedestrian flow, such as Causeway Bay, Mong Kok and Yuen Long, in Hong Kong. The projects involve improvement works such as construction of footbridge systems and widening of space for pedestrian activities. This will help create a convenient and comfortable pedestrian environment, thus encouraging the public to walk.

44. As regards the scheme in Yuen Long, we are taking forward relatively smaller-in-scale improvement measures, including widening of pedestrian crossings and footpaths at road junctions, etc. Seven of these measures have been completed, while the remaining two are anticipated to be completed in 2015. For the proposed footbridge extending southward from West Rail Long Ping Station to Kau Yuk Road as a relatively larger-in-scale improvement measure, investigation and detailed design works commenced in December last year. The works are anticipated to be completed in about two years' time.

45. As for the proposed footbridge system in Mong Kok, we commenced further investigation studies in October 2013. The scope covers assessment of the anticipated usage of the proposed footbridge system, impacts to the traffic, environment and underground utilities during its construction and operation stages, etc. The works are anticipated to be completed in about two years' time.

46. The 2014 Policy Address announced a pilot study on underground space development in selected strategic urban areas including Causeway Bay and Happy Valley; the relevant work falls under the Development Bureau. As the proposed subway system in Causeway Bay is geographically covered in the pilot study, we consider that we should



review the need for the proposed subway system as well as its implementation plan and timetable after taking into account the results of the pilot study. We reported the relevant progress to the Development, Planning and Transport Committee under the Wan Chai District Council in June last year. At the present stage, we are taking forward short-term measures supported by the said Committee such as widening of pedestrian crossings, with a view to improving the at-grade pedestrian environment along the alignment of the proposed subway. The relevant works are anticipated to be completed this year.

- (s) We have rolled out a pilot scheme in Tai Po under which new improvement measures to local cycle tracks have been implemented and new bicycle parking facilities have been installed. We are currently reviewing the effectiveness of the scheme and exploring how the above new measures could be implemented in nine new towns.**

47. We will continue to strive to promote a “bicycle friendly” environment in new towns and new development areas, including improving existing cycle tracks and bicycle parking facilities, as well as strengthening publicity and education on cycling safety. We have rolled out a pilot scheme in Tai Po, under which new improvement measures to cycle tracks have been implemented and new bicycle parking facilities have been installed. We are now reviewing the effectiveness of the pilot scheme. We have also commissioned a consultancy study on how to implement the new measures identified under the Tai Po pilot scheme in nine new towns. The study will also review the traffic conditions of various bicycle prohibition zones to see whether it is necessary to maintain the prohibition at some of these roads, and whether improvement measures

are required. The study is expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

### ***Chapter 3 – Poverty Alleviation and Support for the Disadvantaged***

- (t) Enhancing transport services for persons with disabilities through improvement to rebus service. We are also examining ways of further improving the accessibility of transport services for persons with disabilities.**

48. The Government has been encouraging public transport operators to facilitate Persons with Disabilities to use their services. For franchised buses, over 75% of the bus fleet comprises wheelchair accessible low-floor vehicles. It is expected all franchised buses will be of low-floor design by 2017 so long as their deployment is operationally viable<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, the Government has been encouraging the trade to introduce wheelchair accessible taxis. With regard to railway service, there is at least one barrier-free access in every MTR station. About 90% of the MTR stations have either been installed with lifts connecting concourse and street level, or do not require installation of lifts if the stations are at-grade, equipped with ramps for wheelchair access, or can be accessed via lifts of nearby shopping malls or stations. It is expected that by 2018 all remaining MTR stations (except Tin Hau Station) will be installed with lifts (or do not require installation of lifts as abovementioned) to facilitate passenger access from concourse to the ground level.

49. Through the Topical Study under the PTSS to be commenced

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<sup>2</sup> Low-floor buses are not suitable to run on some road sections in Lantau due to steep gradients and sharp bends.

shortly, we will review how the access of persons with disabilities to public transport services can be further enhanced, having regard to the actual operating situation and environment (including compartment size and loading capacity of vehicles), as well as long-term financial viability.

**Transport and Housing Bureau**

**January 2015**

## **Public Transport Strategy Study – Workplan**

The PTSS will comprise two parts, namely the Role and Positioning Review (“RPR”) and Topical Study.

### **I. RPR**

2. Against the background of using the railway as the backbone of our public transport system and taking into account the further expansion of the railway network, the Roles and Positioning Review will examine the roles and positioning of various public transport services. They include franchised buses, public light buses (“PLBs”), taxis, non-franchised buses (“NFBs”), Light Rail, trams and ferries. The major topics include:-

- (a) to review the extent of which the roles and positioning of various public transport services as laid down by the Third Comprehensive Transport Study remains applicable. In the course of the review, we will need to have regard to the availability of multi-modal choices and the delicate balance of the operating environment;
- (b) in light of the findings of (a) and the prevailing operating environment of various public transport services, to review whether some service adjustment should be made to ensure the long-term, healthy development of the public transport services. The major review areas will include issues previously raised by the Legislative Council (“LegCo”), transport trades and public. The issues are for examples:
  - (i) franchised bus service: to promote bus route rationalisation to enhance network efficiency, and having regard to the

implications for other public transport services, to explore whether it is feasible and desirable for franchised buses to attract more passengers by introducing different types of new services (e.g. point-to-point express routes, seat-only service, premium service with additional facilities (such as Wi-Fi)); and to explore whether it is feasible and desirable to install real-time bus arrival information systems for service improvement. During the process, we will carefully evaluate the long-term operational and financial implications of the proposals for the franchised bus trade, and the passenger demand for these new services;

- (ii) PLB service: having regard to the implications for other public transport services, to explore whether it is feasible and desirable for PLBs to increase the number of passenger seats. We will carefully assess the long-term operational and financial implications for the PLB trade, other public transport services and road traffic. To enable an earlier start of our study on this topic, we will include this issue under the Topical Study to examine the present situation and listen to Members' views;
- (iii) taxi service: having regard to the implications for other public transport services, to explore whether it is feasible and desirable to introduce new types of taxi service. For example, some LegCo Members have in the past suggested the introduction of premium taxi service to meet different passenger demand. However, as there is already an alternative service provided by hired cars, we have to carefully assess the implications for the supply and demand of taxis as well as for other trades;

- (iv) NFB service: there are currently over 7 000 NFBs in Hong Kong, providing different types of service comprising tour service, hotel service, student service, employees' service, international passenger service, residents' service and contract hire service. At present, the fare of NFB service is not subject to regulation, enabling services provided by NFBs to be more flexible in meeting market demand. Whilst the overall operation has been satisfactory, a slightly tight supply of school buses may have occurred. The provision of school bus service will thus be a topic for the Topical Study. As for the other NFB services, the situation of their demand and supply is generally stable. Nonetheless, having regard to the opening of new infrastructures in the pipeline, we will review whether there is a need to allow certain flexibility on NFB operation as appropriate to meet new service demand;
  
- (v) long-term development of the Light Rail: the LegCo Panel on Transport raised the issue on the long-term development of the Light Rail before. We will conduct an in-depth review. Major topics to be covered will include (1) the feasibility of increasing carrying capacity with the original design of the system; (2) the feasibility of upgrading the existing system to increase the carrying capacity; (3) the long-term demand of North West New Territories for public transport services; and (4) the roles of various public transport services including Light Rail in meeting such demand; and
  
- (vi) tram service: to explore whether it is feasible and desirable to

introduce modern tram system, vis-à-vis other public transport services, in new development areas.

## II. Topical Study

3. The Topical Study will review eight topical issues that are of greater concern to the trades or have been given priority as they are time-sensitive. The topics include:-

- (a) **Franchised bus service:** to review how franchised bus service can be enhanced through bus route rationalisation and enhanced monitoring of and follow-up on the lost trip situation.
- (b) **Outcome of the review on taxi fuel surcharge:** in considering taxi fare increase applications, the Government would fully consider the changes in various cost and revenue items, including fuel costs. This arrangement has all along been able to take into account and balance the needs of different stakeholders and the actual operating conditions. Nonetheless, changes in fuel costs do put some pressure on taxi operation. Some members of the trade have therefore asked the Government to put in place a fuel surcharge. This can enable taxis to raise fare according to the fluctuation of fuel costs outside the normal fare adjustment mechanism. Yet, as introducing a taxi fuel surcharge will pass the burden to cope with a fluctuating fuel cost directly to passengers, the Government will have to consider very carefully if such an arrangement is appropriate. The community should also be given the opportunity to discuss the issue in detail. Meanwhile, the Transport Department has commenced a study on the experience elsewhere in implementing and not

implementing a fuel surcharge, as well as the impact of such a surcharge, if introduced. The Government will consider how to follow up based on the outcome of the study.

- (c) **Taxi service:** to review if the existing supply of taxi service can meet demand, having regard to the implications of any possible increase in taxis supply for other public transport services and the opening of new railway lines and various major infrastructures.
- (d) **School service:** to review if the existing arrangements concerning the issue of student service endorsement can meet demand, having regard to the supply and demand of non-franchised buses.
- (e) **Seating capacity of public light buses (“PLB”):** the trade has earlier proposed to increase the seating capacity of a PLB from 16 to 20 – 24. If the seating capacity of all PLBs increases accordingly, it would represent an increase of 25 – 50% in passenger capacity. This is equivalent to an addition of about 1 087 to 2 175 16-seat PLBs. Any increase in seating capacity will also require legislative amendments. We will assess the present situation and listen to views of LegCo Members and the trade as a topical issue under the Topical Study. The views so collected will be analysed under the Role and Positioning Review to see if the proposal is feasible and desirable, having regard to the long-term operational and financial implications for the PLB trade, other public transport services and road traffic management.
- (f) **Statutory cap on the number of PLBs:** according to the



Public Light Buses (Limitation on Number) Notice (Cap. 374K), the number of vehicles which may be registered as PLBs is capped at 4 350. This cap will be in effect until 20 June 2016. Having regard to the implications for the other public transport services and taking into account the seating capacity of each PLB, we will assess the supply and demand of PLBs and determine if the statutory cap should be adjusted.

- (g) **Role and long-term financial viability of ferries:** to conduct a mid-term review on the provision of special helping measures for the six major outlying island ferry routes during the three-year licence period from mid-2014 to mid-2017. In the course of this review, we will examine the role of ferries vis-à-vis other public transport services and possible ways to maintain their long-term financial viability.
  
- (h) **Accessible transport facilities for people with disabilities (“PwDs”):** to review how PwDs’ access to public transport services can be further enhanced, having regard to the actual operating situation and environment (including compartment size and loading capacity of vehicles), as well as long-term financial viability.

**“Universal Accessibility” Programme**  
**List of Priority Items under the “Expanded Programme” –**  
**54 locations (three for each district), involving a total of 57 items<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Item</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Highways Department Structure No.</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>(a) The retrofitting works for one priority item (NF295) have commenced and the retrofitting works for another priority item (HF142) are anticipated to be commenced in 2014-15</b>			
<b>Hong Kong Island</b>			
1	Central & Western	HF142	Across Connaught Road West leading to Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park
<b>New Territories</b>			
2	North	NF295	Across San Wan Road near Landmark North
<b>(b) The retrofitting works for 45 priority items are anticipated to be commenced in 2015-16</b>			
<b>Hong Kong Island</b>			
1	Central & Western	HF46	Across Possession Street near Lower Lascar Row
2	Eastern	HF63	Across Chai Wan Road near Shan Tsui Court
3		HF163	Across Siu Sai Wan Road near Harmony Road
4	Southern	HF104	Across Aberdeen Praya Road near Nam Ning Street
5		H186	Elevated walkway connecting Tin Wan Praya Road and Tin Wan Hill Road
6	Wan Chai	HS9	Across Canal Road East near Sports Road
7		HF85	At the Junction of Yee Wo Street, Pennington Street and Sugar Street

<sup>1</sup> Each District Council selected three public walkways (locations) for priority implementation, *viz.* a total of 54 public walkways (locations). Among them, some public walkways (locations) involve more than one structure number (item), resulting in a total of 57 priority items.

<b>Item</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Highways Department Structure No.</b>	<b>Location</b>
8		HF154	Across Gloucester Road and Percival Street near Sino Plaza
<b>Kowloon</b>			
9	Kowloon City	K14	Pui Ching Road Flyover across Princess Margaret Road
10		KF102	Across Hung Hom South Road near Hung Ling Street and Whampoa Street
11		KF106	Across Hung Hom South Road near Hung Hom Road
12	Kwun Tong	KF90	Across Lei Yue Mun Road near Tsui Ping Road
13		KS56	Across Kwun Tong Road near Ting On Street
14	Wong Tai Sin	KF58	Across Lung Cheung Road near Ma Chai Hang Road
15	Yau Tsim Mong	KF88	Across Ferry Street and Waterloo Road along West Kowloon Highway
16		KF89	Across Ferry Street at Junction of Dundas Street
17		KF94	Across Cherry Street, Ferry Street and Tong Mei Road
<b>New Territories</b>			
18	Kwai Tsing	NF51	Across Castle Peak Road – Kwai Chung Section near Wo Yi Hop Road
19		NF72A	Across Kwai Foo Road near Kwai Yi Road
20		NF229	Across Junction of Castle Peak Road – Kwai Chung, Kwai Chung Road and Lei Muk Road
21	Islands	NS230	Across Shun Tung Road near Lantau North Police Station
22		NF328	Across Yu Tung Road and Chung Yan Road

<b>Item</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Highways Department Structure No.</b>	<b>Location</b>
23		NF332	Across Yu Tung Road near Tung Chung Ha Ling Pei
24 – 25	North	NS51 & NS1 28	Across Jockey Club Road near Tin Mei House, Tin Ping Estate and Chi Shun Lane
26		NF134	Across Fanling Highway near Fanling MTR Station
27		NF193	Across Po Lam Road North near Lam Shing Road
28	Sai Kung	NF309	Across Po Ning Road near Po Shun Road
29		NF336	Across Tong Ming Street near Sheung Tak Shopping Centre
30	Sha Tin	NF73	Connecting Pai Tau Street and Sha Tin MTR Station
31		NS287	Across Ma On Shan Road and Hang Tai Road near Ma On Shan Rail Tai Shui Hang Station
32		NF316	Across roundabout at Che Kung Miu Road and Mei Tin Road
33	Tai Po	NF156	Across Tai Po Road – Yuen Chau Tsai near Kwong Fuk Estate
34		NF191	Across Ting Kok Road connecting Tai Yuen Estate and Fu Heng Estate
35		NS87	Across On Po Road near Nam Wan Road and Sun Hing Garden
36	Tsuen Wan	NF186	Across Tai Chung Road near Heung Che Street
37		NF251	Across Yeung Uk Road and Ma Tau Pa Road
38		NF288	At Sai Lau Kok Road near Exit A of Tsuen Wan MTR Station

<b>Item</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Highways Department Structure No.</b>	<b>Location</b>
39	Tuen Mun	NS42	Across Tuen Hing Road near Tuen Mun Road
40		NF174	Across Tuen Mun Road connecting Tsing Hang Path and San Wo Lane
41		NF315	Across Lung Mun Road near Lung Mun Light Rail Station
42 – 43	Yuen Long	NF148 & NF306	Connecting Yuen Long Plaza and Long Ping West Rail Station
44		NF305	Across Castle Peak Road and Long Lok Road near Yuen Long West Rail Station
45		NF376	Across Ping Ha Road near Exit B of Tin Shui Wai West Rail Station
<b>(c) The retrofitting works for the remaining 10 priority items will be commenced as soon as possible upon completion of their investigation and design works and obtaining support from the DCs</b>			
<b>Hong Kong Island</b>			
1	Central & Western	HF135	Along Cochrane Street near Tun Wo Lane
2 – 3	Eastern	HF92 & HF92A	Across Island Eastern Corridor near Quarry Bay Park
4	Southern	HF105	Across Aberdeen Praya Road near Ocean Court
<b>Kowloon</b>			
5	Kwun Tong	KF109	Across Shun Lee Tsuen Road near Shun Lee Estate Park
6	Sham Shui Po	KF69	Across Lai Chi Kok Road and Tonkin Street
7		KF97	Across Tai Po Road near Tai Who Ping Road
8		KS52	Across Tat Chee Avenue near To Yuen Street
9	Wong Tai Sin	KF56	Across New Clear Water Bay Road near Choi Wan Commercial Complex Phase II
10		KF76	Across Fung Tak Road near Lung Poon Street

**List of the 18 ranked Hillside Escalator Links Proposals**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Pedestrian Link at Tsz Wan Shan	This link is implemented under the Shatin to Central Link project.
2	Braemar Hill Pedestrian Link	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
3	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System at Cheung Hang Estate, Tsing Yi	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
4	Escalator Link and Pedestrian Walkway System at Pound Lane	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
5	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Kwai Shing Circuit and Hing Shing Road, Kwai Chung	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
6	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Castle Peak Road and Kung Yip Street, Kwai Chung	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
7	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Lai Cho Road and Wah Yiu Road, Kwai Chung	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
8	Pedestrian Link near Chuk	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been

	Yuen North Estate	completed.
9	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System at Waterloo Hill	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
10	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Lai King Hill Road and Lai Cho Road	It is revealed in the preliminary technical feasibility study that the project involves two dangerous private slopes. The Highways Department will revisit the project after the owners concerned have completed repairing the dangerous slopes satisfactorily.
11	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Tai Wo Hau Road and Wo Tong Tsui Street, Kwai Chung	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
12	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway at Luen On Street	The preliminary technical feasibility study has been completed.
13	Yuet Wah Street Pedestrian Linkage	This project is being implemented by the Civil Engineering and Development Department under the Kwun Tong Town Centre Redevelopment project.
14	Escalator Link System between Hong Sing Garden and Po	This proposal would be followed up after the smooth implementation of the

	Hong Road	higher-ranking proposals.
14	Lift System between Lai King Hill Road and Princess Margaret Hospital	The Hospital Authority is conducting ground investigation.
16	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Saddle Ridge Garden and Sai Sha Road	This proposal would be followed up after the smooth implementation of the higher-ranking proposals.
17	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Hing Shing Road and Tai Wo Hau Road	This proposal would be followed up after the smooth implementation of the higher-ranking proposals.
18	Escalator Link System between Sha Tin Sui Wo Court and MTR Fo Tan Station	This proposal would be followed up after the smooth implementation of the higher-ranking proposals.