

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area Development Plan

Purpose

The Panel, through its letter dated 26 May 2017, requested the Government to provide information in relation to the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area (the Bay Area) development plan. This paper will elaborate on the opportunities brought about by the Bay Area development plan for the tourism industry in the region.

The Bay Area Development Plan

2. The successful development of a world-class city cluster in the Bay Area requires not only the capability of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao to fully leverage and organically integrate their different yet complementary advantages, but also a clearly defined role for each city in the coordinated development to avoid any adverse competition, so as to further enhance the global competitiveness of the Bay Area as a whole.

Tourism Development in the Bay Area

3. As regards tourism development, the Bay Area city cluster possesses abundant tourism resources with distinctive appeals, such as Guangdong's traditional Lingnan culture and Macao's entertainment and leisure resources. Hong Kong will highlight and play to the strength of our city's culture, charm as an international metropolis, the appeal of East-meets-West, as well as our vibrancy and diversity, with a view to attracting more overseas visitors to travel to Hong Kong and the Bay Area. The Government and the travel trade will work on the following two aspects to support the tourism development in the Bay Area.

4. Firstly, we will enhance the transport network. The greatest advantage of Hong Kong is its well-established international sea, land and air connections. Last year, the annual passenger throughput at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) exceeded 70 million, providing travellers the

flight services to and from about 190 locations worldwide. In terms of land transport, various major infrastructure projects, including the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) and the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL), will soon be completed. Upon the completion of the HZMB, the Western Pearl River Delta will fall within a 3-hour-commuting radius from Hong Kong. The travelling time from the HKIA to Zhuhai will be significantly reduced from approximately 4 hours to around 45 minutes. In addition, the commissioning of the XRL will greatly shorten the travelling time between Guangzhou and Hong Kong from approximately 2 hours to about 48 minutes, and also connect Hong Kong with the national high-speed rail network.

5. In terms of sea connection, Hong Kong's cruise tourism continues to flourish. The number of ship calls at the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal is expected to go up further to around 200, which is more than double the number of ship calls last year. Cruise itineraries departing from Hong Kong are diversified, with southbound itineraries covering Hainan and Southeast Asian countries; northbound itineraries covering Xiamen, Japan and South Korea, etc.

6. With Hong Kong's enhanced external transport network, Hong Kong will further promote "one-trip multi-destination" ("multi-destination") travel. In fact, in recent years, many visitors travelled to Hong Kong on a "multi-destination" basis. About 50 per cent of the visitors from short-haul markets travelled on a "multi-destination" basis while the corresponding figure for long-haul markets is over 90 per cent. With benefits from the abovementioned infrastructures, "multi-destination" itineraries from Hong Kong will be able to cover more Mainland provinces and cities. At the same time, the plentiful tourism products in the region will help attract more overseas visitors to travel to Hong Kong and other Bay Area cities, thereby enabling the potentials of tourism resources of the Bay Area to be fully developed.

7. Secondly, the Government will continue to move towards high value-added and diversified development, and also enhance Hong Kong's attractiveness and uniqueness. Our tourism development strategy and planning are to promote the diversified characteristics of Hong Kong in order to keep pace with the new market trend of pursuing in-depth and unique travel experiences.

8. As regards short and medium term development planning, in recent years, we have been developing cultural and creative tourism, including revitalising historical buildings into creative and cultural landmarks. The Government is now revitalising the Dr Sun Yat-sen Historical Trail by incorporating artistic elements to the Trail. The Hong Kong Tourism Board

(HKTB) has also launched the “Old Town Central” promotion project recently. In tune with the former Central Police Station Compound (commonly known as “Tai Kwun”) which will be opened in future, the Central and Western District will be transformed into a community filled with an “art-across-time” ambience. The Government is also actively promoting green tourism, including Hong Kong’s hiking trails, Geopark and island tours. At the same time, to attract new visitor segments, we endeavour to develop Hong Kong into an events capital through, for instance, the introduction of the brand new Formula E Championship and the first E-Sports and Music Festival. As regards tourism attractions, the Ocean Park and the Hong Kong Disneyland are both taking forward expansion and development plans.

9. In the long run, the Government is taking forward the “Kai Tak Tourism Node” project at the area adjoining the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, with a view to developing another premium attraction for local citizens and visitors from around the world.

10. The Government will continue to support the HKTB to establish co-operation platforms with Bay Area cities and to jointly develop more “multi-destination” tourism products, as well as encourage the Hong Kong travel trade to seize the opportunities and develop more travel products featuring the Bay Area for Hong Kong citizens and “multi-destination” visitors.

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
June 2017