

香港特別行政區政府
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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26 June 2017

Dear Ms LO,

**Request for Putting “Bicycle-friendly Policy”
on the Agenda of the Panel on Transport**

Thank you for your letter of 12 May 2017 to the Secretary for Transport and Housing (STH). I am authorised to reply as follows.

The Government’s transport policy is based on public transport and aims to reduce reliance on private cars. At the same time, we endeavour to promote walking and cycling for short-distance commuting and as “first mile” and “last mile” connection between public transport stations and living places or office. The STH has clearly stated on different occasions, including at the meetings of the Panel on Transport and in his replies to Members’ questions, that the Government has long regarded bicycles as a green mode of transport, rather than for recreational purposes only.

The Government endeavours to foster a “bicycle-friendly” environment in new towns and new development areas given that the cycle track networks in these areas are more comprehensive. For many places in the urban areas, road traffic is very heavy with narrow and crowded roads, and with numerous bus and minibus routes and frequent on-street loading and unloading activities. Owing to road safety considerations, the Government has all along been adopting a prudent approach and does not encourage the public to use bicycles as a mode of commuting on busy roads in the urban areas.

Regarding the cycling policy and supporting measures mentioned in Hon LAU Kwok-fan’s letter, the Government has been actively taking forward the relevant work. On enhancing cycle tracks and cycling facilities, the Transport Department (TD) engaged a consultancy in 2013 to study ways to improve the cycling facilities in the existing nine new towns¹. The study has been substantially completed. The consultancy identified and proposed improvement to around 900 locations. The improvement measures concerned include providing more public bicycle parking spaces; providing additional safety facilities at some sharp bends, steep ramps and pedestrian crossings; and installing collapsible plastic bollards for segregating two-way cycle tracks. The first round of improvement works involving around 100 locations commenced in phases last year and is expected to be completed within two years. As for the remaining 800-odd locations which are identified as requiring improvement, the relevant works will be implemented progressively having regard to the resources available and works procedures.

Another important cycling supporting measure is to provide appropriate bicycle parking spaces. At present, there are more than 57 000 free public bicycle parking spaces across the territory. The aforesaid consultancy study conducted by the TD has recommended the provision of a total of around 7 000 additional bicycle parking spaces at 290 locations, amongst which 1 000 spaces are expected to be available in phases by 2018. In addition, the TD has already updated the Transport Planning and Design Manual by including new bicycle rack designs such as “double-deck parking system” and “1-up-1-down parking rack” as standard designs. TD will consider installing such racks at appropriate locations to provide more bicycle parking spaces.

As regards whether bicycles should be allowed to use other roads, from the perspective of road safety, shared use of roads is neither a desirable nor prudent approach because the speeds of bicycles, pedestrians and vehicles differ. The Government considers it safer to provide cycle tracks for the use by bicycles which are segregated from pedestrian pavements and carriageways.

¹ The existing nine new towns are Shatin/Ma On Shan, Tai Po, Sheung Shui/Fanling, Yuen Long, Tin Shui Wai, Tuen Mun, Tseun Wan, Tung Chung and Tseung Kwan O.

The Legislative Council had an in-depth debate on the motion on “Formulating a bicycle-friendly policy and designating bicycles as a mode of transport” on 15 June. Moreover, the STH responded to Hon LEUNG Che-cheung’s oral question on “bicycle-sharing service” on 21 June. During the two discussions, we have already explained in detail the rationale underlying the Government’s policy on promoting a “bicycle-friendly” environment. We have also heard Members’ views and suggestions, and will give due consideration to them and take follow up actions as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

(Alex Lau)
for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c.:

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