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14 December 2017

Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Attn: Mr Derek Lo)

Dear Mr Lo,

**Legislative Council Finance Committee**

**FCR(2017-18)47: Proposed Creation of a  
Permanent Post of Chief Landscape Architect in the  
Architectural Services Department**

Thank you for your letter of 12 December 2017, enclosing the Honourable HUI Chi-fung's request for information relating to the proposed creation of a permanent Chief Landscape Architect post in the Architectural Services Department. Our responses to the questions raised are set out in the following paragraphs.

**(1) Qualifications**

We fully agree that urban forestry is not just about visual interest and aesthetics. Landscape Architects (LAs) are tasked to come up with landscape proposals which are functional, manageable and sustainable. Good landscape designs should be able to foster a sense of place and belonging among their user community, and will not generate care and maintenance issues. By virtue of their professional training, all LAs have knowledge in vegetation ecosystem design with a view towards downstream asset management and maintenance.

As trees are one of the key elements of landscapes, arboricultural knowledge can enhance LAs' effectiveness in carrying out their duties across all stages of a project, from planning, design, implementation to management. Where appropriate, LAs will seek urban arboricultural advice to enrich maintenance considerations. We have also included comprehensive arboriculture courses by renowned international organisations including the International Society of Arboriculture, LANTRA, and the Myerscough College in the training menu of Government LAs to deepen their understanding of downstream urban arboricultural practices. This knowledge is best served in drafting vegetation maintenance plans, and when procuring urban arboricultural contractors for maintenance works. However, as LAs and arborists are two different professions, it is not appropriate to make the arborist qualification a prerequisite for LA appointments. This notwithstanding, if a specific post can benefit from urban arboriculture qualifications, we will arrange the post incumbent to obtain the requisite training.

## **(2) Tree Management**

The Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) under the Development Bureau (DEVB) has been proactively arranging a variety of tree asset management training programmes for tree management staff, including LAs, at managerial, supervisory and frontline levels to enhance their professional knowledge in arboriculture to enable them to perform tree management work in a professional and effective manner. We have also arranged Government LAs to attend overseas courses and visits to learn from the experience of other jurisdictions in place-making, constructed ecologies, holistic landscape and vegetation management.

## **(3) Biodiversity**

The Government is committed to taking forward initiatives as mapped out in the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2030+. One of the key missions of the GLTMS is to foster a holistic approach towards Hong Kong's urban landscapes and to enhance liveability by mainstreaming biodiversity in our urban environment, and to promote resilient and adaptive landscapes, and vegetation diversity in our urban landscapes.

GLTMS promotes the “right tree, right place” principle, vegetation diversity and blue-green eco-services in landscape projects. Guidelines were issued in 2010 to promote the use of native plants species in public works projects. GLTMS is currently conducting a study to guide street tree selection and community plant mixes with the objective to diversify species selection to build a resilient urban forest. LAs working in various bureaux and departments are involved in the conservation, planning and development and life-cycle management of urban and countryside landscapes.

Please let me know if you require further information. I can be reached by phone at 3509 8272 or by e-mail at [joeylam@devb.gov.hk](mailto:joeylam@devb.gov.hk).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joey Lam', written in a cursive style.

( Joey Lam )  
for Secretary for Development