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(Translation)

28 October 2021

Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Sophie LAU)

Dear Ms LAU,

**Road Maintenance and Streetscape Enhancement by the
Highways Department**

Thank you for your letter dated 25 August 2021 relaying comments from the Hon TSE Wai-chuen on the captioned subject. Our reply is as follows.

(1) With regard to paragraph 7 of the Legislative Council Paper No. CB(4)1436/20-21(01), there are about 1,500 public highway structures completed over 30 years age, accounting for about 30% of all public highway structures. Given that the number of aging structures will continue to rise each year, what is the estimated average annual increase in the number of these structures for the coming 6 years? Does the Administration have any policy to determine the priority of inspection and repair of these structures?

In the coming 6 years, there will be an average increase of about 90 highways structures each year that have been completed for more

than 30 years. The Highways Department (HyD) has incorporated the relevant inspection arrangement in road maintenance term contracts to regularly conduct comprehensive inspections of aging public highway structures. Subject to the inspection results and overall conditions of aging highway structures in the areas, HyD will prioritise the rehabilitation works and determine the scope, scale and construction scheme of the works.

(2) According to paragraph 5 of the abovementioned paper, the research findings of “Highly Modified Stone Mastic Asphalt” will be finalised in 2022. As at end May 2021, HyD has ascertained that its performance is better than the existing bituminous materials. What are the differences in terms of service life and economic benefit as compared with the existing bituminous materials?

Laboratory test results show that the “Highly Modified Stone Mastic Asphalt” jointly developed by HyD and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University performed better in terms of anti-deformation, anti-aging and anti-fatigue than the bituminous materials currently in use. In terms of economic efficiency, while the cost of laying the “Highly Modified Stone Mastic Asphalt” is higher than that of the existing bituminous materials, the new paving material is about 30% more durable which helps reduce the frequency of maintenance works and its impact on the public. HyD has selected some road sections with higher traffic flow and frequent road damage for carrying out site trials. HyD will continue to monitor the conditions of these road sections to evaluate the actual performance of the new paving material.

(3) According to paragraphs 12 and 13 of the abovementioned paper, not only have the streetscape beautification works enhanced the streetscape environment, but also create more temporary jobs. Please advise how the streetscape enhancement works are prioritised and the maintenance works after completion of the works. Has HyD considered ways to reduce the impact of smearing on the durability of the enhancement works?

Tying in with their annual maintenance and renovation programmes, HyD has prioritised the beautification works at selected bridges or subways with high pedestrian flow at prominent locations to add

thereon some patterns or colours. When carrying out enhancement works at the structures, taking into account factors such as design needs and future maintenance requirements, HyD will select suitable materials, including the use of paint and wallpaper with protective coating, so that they are easier to clean and hence reducing the needs for future maintenance.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Sibyl WONG)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

cc.:

Director of Highways (Attn: Mr Wai Keung NG) Fax : 2714 5216