

# **立法會**

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### **Paper for the House Committee meeting on 12 July 2024**

#### **Report of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to the Development of the Northern Metropolis**

#### **Purpose**

This paper reports on the deliberations of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to the Development of the Northern Metropolis (“the Subcommittee”) formed under the House Committee.

#### **Background**

2. In October 2021, the Government put forward the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy, proposing to develop the northern part of the New Territories into a metropolitan area ideal for people to live, work and travel. The Government published the [Northern Metropolis Action Agenda](#) (“the Action Agenda”) on 30 October 2023. As pointed out in the 2023 Policy Address, the Northern Metropolis is to adopt an “industry-driven and infrastructure-led” approach as its key planning axle, forging a major hub for Hong Kong to integrate into the overall development of our country.

3. The Administration’s vision is to develop the Northern Metropolis into a “new international Innovation and Technology (“I&T”) city”, integrating quality life, industry development, culture and leisure. Under this vision, the Administration has specific development goals under different aspects, including providing land and housing; industry-driven planning to achieve a better home-job balance; promoting integration of the Greater Bay Area (“GBA”); infrastructure-led, railways as backbone; developing a Northern Metropolis University Town (“NMUT”); ecological conservation, urban-rural integration; developing diversified arts, culture, sports and youth facilities; and establishing presence of government departments to drive development.

#### Four major zones

4. As set out in the Action Agenda, the Northern Metropolis, from the west to the east, will be divided into four major zones, namely the High-end Professional Services and Logistics Hub, the I&T Zone, the Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone, and the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle. The areas covered by the four major zones are shown in **Appendix 1**, with strategic positioning and development theme of each zone summarized in paragraphs 5 to 9 below.

##### *High-end Professional Services and Logistics Hub*

5. Situated in the west of the Northern Metropolis, this zone covers new towns in Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai, Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen (“HSK/HT”) New Development Area (“NDA”) and Yuen Long South under development, as well as Lau Fau Shan/Tsim Bei Tsui/Pak Nai area (“Lau Fau Shan”) under planning. This zone is just a bay away from the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone (“Qianhai Cooperation Zone”) and the Nanshan District in Shenzhen, and is connected with the Shenzhen Bay Port via the Shenzhen Bay Bridge.

6. This zone can work with the Qianhai Cooperation Zone and Nanshan District in such areas as finance, professional services and logistics services, promoting and deepening high-end economic cooperation. It can be transformed into a modern services centre and a hub for talents travelling frequently between the two places, serving the entire GBA. High-end professional services will be the industry positioning for HSK/HT. HSK/HT can help enterprises in Qianhai, Nanshan and elsewhere in the Mainland to expand their overseas markets by capitalizing on Hong Kong’s unique strengths in professional fields such as finance, insurance, legal and other professional services that are in line with international practices. Adjacent to the Shenzhen Bay Port, HSK/HT is well placed to become a major modern logistics hub. Lau Fau Shan area will be positioned as a digital technology hub, supported by eco-tourism industry.

##### *Innovation and Technology Zone*

7. Situated at the heart of the Northern Metropolis, this zone covers San Tin Technopole (including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen I&T Park (“HSITP”) in the Loop and San Tin areas), and extends southwards to the Ngau Tam Mei area. San Tin Technopole is the focus of development in this zone. It also serves as the core of industry development of the entire Northern Metropolis. Adjacent to the Shenzhen I&T Zone, San Tin Technopole is strategically positioned as a hub for clustered I&T

development, which will create synergy with the Shenzhen I&T Zone and become a new community for quality, healthy and green living. Land will be reserved in Ngau Tam Mei for use by post-secondary institutions, with a focus on scientific research, to complement the I&T development in San Tin Technopole, promoting “research, academic and industry” collaboration.

#### *Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone*

8. Situated to the east of San Tin Technopole, this zone covers three boundary control points (“BCPs”), namely, Lo Wu, Man Kam To and Heung Yuen Wai. Major developments include the existing new towns in Fanling/Sheung Shui, Kwu Tung North/Fanling NDA under construction, and New Territories North (“NTN”) New Town (including Lo Wu/Man Kam To) under planning. There is potential to develop various BCP-related economic uses and uses requiring larger land area for operation, for instance, business services, retail financial services, healthcare services and leisure consumption, etc.; and to provide space for emerging industries and re-industrialization, allowing the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries.

#### *Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle*

9. Situated in the easternmost part of the Northern Metropolis, this zone mainly comprises Robin’s Nest, Lin Ma Hang, Sha Tau Kok, Yan Chau Tong, as well as coastal villages and the outlying islands. With abundant natural resources including nature reserve, marine parks, Geopark and a number of traditional rural townships, this zone has the potential for recreation and tourism development. The Administration will implement the Phase Two scheme on opening up Sha Tau Kok Frontier Closed Area (“FCA”) (except Chung Ying Street) progressively from early 2024 to further promote cultural and eco-tourism. The Hong Kong Special Administration Region (“HKSAR”) Government will explore with the Shenzhen Municipal Government the feasibility of establishing a Hong Kong Sha Tau Kok and Shenzhen Shatoujiao cultural tourism zone.

### **The Subcommittee**

10. The Subcommittee was appointed by the House Committee on 8 April 2022 to review the implementation of the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy, monitor the progress of related works or programmes, and make recommendations on the future development of the Northern Metropolis. The terms of reference and membership of the Subcommittee are set out in **Appendices 2** and **3**, respectively.

11. Under the chairmanship of Hon LAU Kwok-fan, the Subcommittee has held a total of 10 meetings since the commencement of its work in May 2023 and received 5 written submissions from the public. The organizations which have given views to the Subcommittee are listed in **Appendix 4**. The Subcommittee has also conducted three duty visits to study the latest development of I&T, tourism and logistics industry, respectively, in Shenzhen.

### **Subcommittee's deliberations**

12. The Subcommittee has focused its work on the following aspects of the development of the Northern Metropolis:

- (a) implementation mode of land development projects;
- (b) transport infrastructure;
- (c) land use for logistics industry;
- (d) I&T, and San Tin Technopole;
- (e) post-secondary education development and NMUT;
- (f) smart, green and resilient strategies;
- (g) environment and ecological conservation;
- (h) tourism development; and
- (i) clearance arrangement and services at BCPs.

### Implementation mode of land development projects

13. Members note that the Administration will adopt an industry-driven approach in planning and providing land in the Northern Metropolis to promote the development of different industries including I&T, modern logistics, environmental protection, construction, agriculture and fisheries, healthcare/life and health technology/Chinese medicine, tourism, arts, culture and sports, professional services and education. Members consider that the Administration should closely monitor future changes in market demand and development trend of Hong Kong and other GBA cities, and suitably adjust or expand the types of industries worthy of promotion in the Northern Metropolis. They have called on the Administration to change its approach from the previous over-emphasis on regulation to focusing on promoting development and providing services, thereby expediting the development of the Northern Metropolis. Members have suggested that to facilitate a more coordinated design for the development of local districts

and expedite the provision of public facilities, the Administration should explore the mode of “large-scale land disposal” adopted in the Mainland.

14. The Administration has advised that in the development of the Northern Metropolis, the Administration will adopt a development model of high efficiency and quality, taking into account Hong Kong’s actual circumstances and making reference to the experience of other places including Mainland where appropriate. The Administration has, in 2023, announced the adoption of “Enhanced Conventional New Town Approach” to implement the various NDAs in the Northern Metropolis and the relevant revised in-situ land exchange arrangements, including the broadening of sites eligible for in-situ land exchange to include not only residential and commercial sites, but also sites for industries and privately-run community or welfare facilities.

15. The Administration has further advised that the facilitation made for the in-situ land exchange arrangements for the Northern Metropolis would allow landowners’ in-depth participation in the development of the Northern Metropolis in a manner that complies with the Administration’s planning, while expediting the delivery of the NDAs. The Administration would also proactively explore the mode of “large-scale land disposal”, by selecting sizable land parcels with commercial returns and community facilities in some NDAs, for the successful bidder-developer of the project to develop and construct the project collectively.

#### Transport infrastructure

16. The Subcommittee has studied the Hong Kong Major Transport Infrastructure Development Blueprint (“the Blueprint”) promulgated by the Administration in December 2023, focusing on the major transport infrastructure projects outlined therein for the development of the Northern Metropolis. Members have called on the Administration to enhance the infrastructure of the Northern Metropolis to promote internal and external transport connectivity in the area; promote the orderly implementation of major infrastructure projects, such as the ‘three railways and three major roads’, the ‘two railways and one major road’, and the green transit system in HSK/HT NDA and adjacent areas; and holistically consider the transport and logistics demand brought about by population growth, employment and economic activities in the Northern Metropolis and other major planned development areas. They have sought information on the planning parameters on which the implementation programmes of the proposed major transport infrastructure projects over the various stages of the development of the Northern Metropolis as outlined in the Blueprint are based.

17. The Administration has advised that the commissioning targets listed out in the Blueprint are pragmatically derived based on the transport and logistics demand arising from all the known development projects. In response to changes in planning parameters, individual projects may need to be reassessed, or with its implementation programme adjusted correspondingly.

18. The Administration has explained that transport infrastructure projects involve huge public resources and have significant socio-economic impacts. In deriving implementation priority, it is essential to balance many factors, including land use and the residential, employment and economic activities associated with the development; local and cross-boundary transport and logistics demand and future growth projections; condition of the existing transport network and system; financial requirements, economic returns, transport efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the project; the Government's fiscal position and the use of public resources; complexity and technical considerations of the works, expected implementation programme, site handover, project interfaces and other engineering considerations and the capacity of the industry; and potential impacts on the local area and the environment, as well as public and community views.

19. In light of the latest planning of NDAs and adoption of the "infrastructure-led" and "capacity-creating" planning principles, the Administration will holistically review and implement various transport infrastructure projects in a progressive manner to meet the transport demand arising from the long-term development of the Northern Metropolis.

#### Land use for logistics industry

20. In view that HSK/HT NDA in the Northern Metropolis is positioned as a major modern logistics hub, members urged the Administration to carefully plan the land use for high-end logistics industry in the Northern Metropolis and adopt measures to accommodate existing operators in logistics industry displaced by resumption of land for government projects, e.g. for future I&T use, in the Northern Metropolis. Members opine that logistics industry and residential developments could complement each other as the latter could provide labour supply for the industry. For example, HSK/HT NDA, which will serve as the major areas for the development of modern logistics industry in the Northern Metropolis, is also one of the major sources of future housing land supply.

21. The Administration has advised that according to the strategy of "East in East out, West in West out" for cross-boundary goods traffic, cross-boundary goods vehicles could travel to/from the eastern and western parts of Guangdong respectively. Suitable land has been reserved for

modern logistics use near Shenzhen Bay BCP in the western part and Heung Yuen Wai BCP in the eastern part of the Northern Metropolis. The proposed land would be connected to highway systems and major roads for efficient traffic of goods.

22. The Administration has further advised that a strategic plan is in place for the development of logistics industry in NDAs in the Northern Metropolis. For example, HSK/HT, with over 60 hectares of industrial sites reserved, is well placed to become a major modern logistics hub. Most of the land could be developed for multi-storey buildings for modern logistics industries to accommodate some brownfield operators affected by government projects. The Administration will also provide compensation to eligible business operators affected, as well as facilitation arrangements for their relocation.

#### Innovation and technology, and San Tin Technopole

23. Members consider it important to put in place policy measures for enhancing development and cooperation of I&T industry in San Tin Technopole with that in the Shenzhen I&T Zone. Members have pointed out the need to build a comprehensive and vibrant I&T ecosystem, and provide accommodation and community facilities for I&T talents in the San Tin Technopole to develop it into an integrated community suitable for work and residence. Given the close proximity between San Tin Technopole and Shenzhen, the Administration should facilitate cross-boundary flow of people and skills, contributing to more intensive collaboration in I&T development.

24. The Administration concurs that cross-boundary innovative elements including the flow of talent, materials and data are key to the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (“the Co-operation Zone”)’s advantages of “one river, two banks” and “one zone, two parks”. In this regard, the HKSAR Government will continue to actively collaborate with Shenzhen, ensuring the smooth flow of cross-boundary I&T elements. As San Tin Technopole is strategically positioned to be a hub for clustered I&T development, its spatial planning will align with the development positioning of the Cooperation Zone and fully integrate with the strategy on enhancing Hong Kong’s I&T competitiveness to pave way for the future development of the Cooperation Zone in a forward-looking manner. For example, San Tin Technopole can provide relatively large pieces of I&T land for the enterprises which are interested in setting up presence in the area to develop a mass production base.

25. The Administration has supplemented that the consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan for the I&T land in the San Tin Technopole (outside of the Loop) being conducted by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau aims at recommending specific I&T uses in the I&T value chain for development on different land parcels in the area, the infrastructure and supporting facilities as required. For developing different technology industries in the Northern Metropolis, different criteria and necessary supporting facilities would be required. The Administration would further explore with relevant I&T industries on the required facilities when there is a need.

*Attracting businesses and talents*

26. Members have urged the Administration to step up measures to attract more strategic I&T enterprises and talents to Hong Kong. With the formation of a ‘data cluster’ in the Northern Metropolis, favourable conditions conducive to the establishment of digital infrastructure, such as advanced data centres and artificial intelligence (“AI”) supercomputing centres, should be provided to promote the development of technology enterprises in the areas of big data, AI, and life and health technology industry. Members’ other suggestions for I&T development in the Northern Metropolis include measures and supporting facilities to nourish and support I&T start-ups, digital infrastructure and data sharing facilities, and developing the Northern Metropolis into a cyber security hub.

27. The Administration has advised that it would actively promote Hong Kong as an international city to attract I&T enterprises from the Mainland and overseas, especially those with a competitive edge and strategic significance, to set up businesses in Hong Kong in order to accelerate the overall development of the local I&T industry. With the supply of I&T land in the Northern Metropolis, the Administration strives to provide I&T enterprises with an option of high quality I&T site to establish R&D and design centres, pilot production bases and/or mass production facilities for related industries.

28. The Administration has further advised that AI and data science, life and health technology, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies has been identified as the key areas for Hong Kong’s I&T industry. In the 2023 Policy Address, a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme<sup>1</sup> was announced to promote the development of “new industrialisation” for the downstream sector, providing financial assistance to encourage enterprises from industries of life and health technology, AI

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by the Finance Committee on 17 May 2024.



and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies in setting up smart production facilities in Hong Kong.

29. To foster the development of InnoLife Healthtech Hub in HSITP, the 2024-2025 Budget announced that \$200 million would be allocated to provide assistance to start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes. In addition, funding support is available for I&T start-ups and companies to engage I&T talents and conduct R&D work. They are also eligible for enhanced tax deduction for R&D expenditures. The Administration will continue to identify suitable land for developing digital infrastructures, including data centres, and incorporate smart facilities into the planning to promote smart city development. The Common Spatial Data Infrastructure has been established to provide the institutional structure for data sharing. For cyber security, the Administration strives to attract I&T enterprises and investment, including leading cyber security companies, to set up their businesses in Hong Kong such as in Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport.

*Electricity demand, green infrastructure and facilities for low-altitude economy*

30. Members have enquired about measures to meet the high demand for electricity to support data centres, AI facilities, and other smart and green facilities to be developed in the Northern Metropolis. They have suggested developing low-altitude economy for delivering samples (including clinical and biological samples) for research or trials across the border, and enquired about the planning on implementing the necessary facilities to support such development.

31. The Administration has advised that it will reserve land for data centres and other energy-demanding facilities in places with potential in developing I&T industry in the Northern Metropolis, for example, San Tin Technopole and Sandy Ridge. If the development of industries give rise to special demand for electricity, the Administration will follow up with the power companies and relevant departments to tie in with the future development. The Administration is open to adopting new and renewable energy, including green power, and cooperating with private enterprises in developing, e.g. data centres in Sandy Ridge. As regards the delivery of data, including test samples across the border, the Administration will continue to actively solicit country's support in formulating cross-boundary policies to facilitate the smooth flow of innovation elements, including talent, materials and data, across the boundary.

Post-secondary education development and Northern Metropolis University Town

32. As mentioned in the Action Agenda, the Administration will develop NMUT by reserving more than 60 hectares of land in HSK/HT, Ngau Tam Mei and NTN New Town for post-secondary campus development. Members have suggested that the Administration should develop NMUT into a research and development (“R&D”) and technology transfer base supporting the area; and encourage post-secondary institutions to strengthen cooperation with renowned Mainland and overseas institutions, and create synergy through sharing resources and enhancing collaboration with industries in the area.

33. The Administration has advised that its goal is to nurture a diversified pool of talents, provide students with broader international perspectives, elevate the competitiveness of Hong Kong and enhance Hong Kong’s momentum of development. In addition, the Administration will endeavour to develop NMUT where post-secondary institutions are encouraged to strengthen cooperation with renowned Mainland and overseas institutions, enhance collaboration with the industry sector in the area in support of the development of vocational and professional education and training (“VPET”), and attract more overseas academic and research talents to Hong Kong. In considering the development options for NMUT, it will ensure alignment with the vision of the Northern Metropolis and the strategies and positioning of the four major zones set out in the Action Agenda. At the same time, the Administration will fully capitalize the huge development opportunities brought by the Northern Metropolis to the post-secondary education sector in Hong Kong, particularly to support the strategy of building Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub.

34. Members have enquired about the measures to promote commercialization of R&D outcomes of post-secondary institutions, as well as nurturing talent with applied skills and knowledge to support industries’ keen manpower demand, thereby contributing to the economic development of Hong Kong.

35. The Administration has advised that the land of the Northern Metropolis is planned on the basis of the industry-led principle, with different strategic positioning and development themes for each zone in the area. For example, Ngau Tam Mei is one of the stations of the future Northern Link and just one station away from San Tin Technopole, which is located at the I&T zone of the Northern Metropolis. The Administration plans to reserve sites in the Ngau Tam Mei area for the use of post-secondary institutions to tie in with the I&T development of the San Tin Technopole,

and focus on nurturing talent development of the area, including talent with applied skills and knowledge through fostering VPET development, research and professional talents needed for I&T development, and providing manpower support for the needs of industrial development.

36. Members opine that to develop the Northern Metropolis is to actively respond to and capitalize on the national development strategies and the 14th Five-Year Plan, which supports Hong Kong to develop into an international I&T centre. As against this backdrop, members have suggested that the Administration step up measures to strengthen the development of post-secondary education in NMUT in areas such as natural science, marine economy, aerospace technology and biomedical engineering.

37. The Administration has advised that the Government will strengthen the talent pool in key areas such as I&T. In the coming three years, the target key performance indicator is that 60% of the University Grants Committee-funded universities' students would be studying subjects relevant to Hong Kong's development into the "eight centres" in the 14th Five-Year Plan.

#### Smart, green and resilient strategies

38. The Subcommittee has studied the smart, green and resilient ("SGR") strategies for the Northern Metropolis setting out the implementation of SGR elements in three aspects, namely, sustainable planning and urban design, integrated SGR infrastructure system, and smart and green mobility. Members consider that the Administration should ensure equal emphasis on industry development and environmental protection in respect of the development of the Northern Metropolis to achieve green and sustainable development. In view that extensive areas of the Northern Metropolis are low-lying land, they have urged the Administration to expedite the infrastructure for taking forward the concept of "Sponge City" in NDAs in the Northern Metropolis to reduce the threat of flooding.

39. The Administration has advised that the planning of NDAs in the Northern Metropolis has incorporated various design elements of "Blue Green Infrastructure" to improve the resilience of the drainage system. These "Blue-Green Infrastructure" design elements included implementing measures such as construction of flood storage facilities, improvements to and revitalization of existing river channels, construction of floodable open spaces, etc. In addition, the Administration will construct a regional park with flood storage lakes and a district open space with flood retention function. In normal days, these parks and open space will serve as public recreational space with a green and naturalistic environment, while under

extreme weather conditions, the same facilities will serve as flood attenuation facilities.

40. Members have enquired about the potential and feasibility of deploying various technologies in the infrastructure of the Northern Metropolis, e.g. multi-functional smart lamp posts, facilities for collecting real-time city data, facilities for promoting low-altitude economy, new and renewable energy such as hydrogen energy, etc.

41. The Administration has advised that multi-functional smart lamp posts with sensors would be installed on some roads in the Northern Metropolis to provide smart lighting and collect real-time city data including meteorology, air quality and traffic flow. The Administration is open to adopting new and renewable energy, and building smart city facilities in the Northern Metropolis, including provision of charging facilities for electric vehicles in both Government and non-Government buildings. Low-altitude activities involved many fields and might be developed in an integrated manner with various socio-economic activities. In general, low-altitude economy might include transport of people and goods which require reservation of flat land areas such as rooftops of buildings for taking-off and landing of vehicles.

42. As regards measures to support smart and green mobility in NDAs in the Northern Metropolis, members have proposed the production of high-definition maps for auto-driving vehicles, installation of super-charging stations for electric vehicles and transport facilities to enable mobility under extreme weather conditions.

43. The Administration has advised that the Lands Department has been formulating digital topographic maps and will continue with such tasks for the Northern Metropolis and other relevant bureau/departments (“B/Ds”) will consider members’ suggestion of installing facilities such as super-charging stations and providing transport facilities to enable mobility under extreme weather conditions in the Northern Metropolis.

#### Environment and ecological conservation

44. The Northern Metropolis Development Strategy released in 2021 proposed to establish a Wetland Conservation Parks (“WCPs”) System, with a view to conserving the wetlands with ecological values in the Deep Bay, increasing environmental capacity for the Northern Metropolis, and achieving co-existence of conservation and development. The Subcommittee has studied the preliminary recommendations of the Strategic Feasibility Study on the Development of Wetland Conservation Parks System (“the Feasibility Study”).

*Development and management of Wetland Conservation Parks*

45. Members consider that the Administration should develop other WCPs in parallel with the development of Sam Po Shue WCP in order to expedite and increase efficiency in establishing the WCPs System. When resuming land for the development of WCPs, the Administration should explore collaborations with private land owners for developing WCPs through public-private partnership. In implementing the WCPs system, the Administration should take into account the positioning, functions and the respective forecast annual visitor reception capacity of the proposed WCPs in order to achieve the balance between conservation and development.

46. The Administration has advised that the Sam Po Shue WCP will be the first park to be developed as recommended in the Feasibility Study. Development of the Sam Po Shue WCP will be in phases, starting with the fishponds and wetlands in the northern part of the park, thereby prioritizing the conservation of the core bird flight path. Construction of first phase (involving Government land) will commence in 2026 or 2027 at the earliest, with a target date for completion in 2031. The full completion of the Sam Po Shue WCP is tentatively scheduled for 2039 or earlier, with an aim of tying in with the completion of San Tin Technopole development. Establishing the Sam Po Shue WCP first with the theme “Biodiversity and Aquaculture in Harmony” could protect the flight path for migratory birds as soon as possible, while creating synergy with the existing conservation areas, thereby conserving the wetland ecosystem in the Deep Bay area more effectively, facilitating the modernization of aquaculture industry, and providing eco-education and eco-recreation facilities and experiences for public enjoyment.

47. Regarding the other parks, the Administration has advised that Hong Kong Wetland Park (“HKWP”) Expansion Area will be positioned as “Wetlands for Learning” to create synergy with adjacent existing HKWP to provide eco-education experience for the public. Nam Sang Wai WCP will be positioned as “an Eco-tourism Paradise” to capitalize on the existing popular local leisure facilities/activities to further promote eco-tourism resources. Hoo Hok Wai WCP (including Sha Ling/Nam Hang Area) will be positioned as “a Rural Retreat” to utilize the habitat resources to provide rural experiences/activities. The Administration will review in due course the development of these proposed parks, with reference to the experience of planning and establishing the Sam Po Shue WCP and will consider various options for developing the WCPs system, including land resumption and public-private partnership.

48. Members have enquired about the details of the management models of WCPs in future and consider that the Administration should explore developing WCPs in cooperation with the Mainland.

49. The Administration has advised that the consultant of the Feasibility Study has recommended three options of management models of the proposed WCPs for consideration: (a) direct management by the Government and engage contractor(s) through tendering process to undertake management and/or maintenance work; (b) collaboration with non-government organizations, local communities, and agriculture and fisheries associations for management of the parks under a regulatory framework formulated by Government department(s); and (c) explore collaborations with private land owners in managing the WCPs through public-private partnership.

50. The Administration has supplemented that there has been close cooperation with the Mainland on wetland conservation. The Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site of Hong Kong and the Guangdong Neilingding Futian National Nature Reserve of Shenzhen are ecologically linked and formed integral parts of the Shenzhen Bay (Deep Bay) wetland ecosystem. Hong Kong has signed a framework arrangement agreement with the Mainland to establish a “sister wetland” relationship between the two pieces of said wetlands and promote joint efforts in the conservation of Shenzhen Bay (Deep Bay) wetlands. A working group has also been formed to implement the necessary measures for cooperation.

*Support for aquaculture, eco-tourism, etc.*

51. Members consider that conservation and development of various industries could co-exist in WCPs and have called on the Administration to implement measures and provide facilities to support the development of aquaculture and eco-tourism in WCPs.

52. The Administration has advised that during the public engagement exercises, the Administration held briefing sessions and meetings with relevant stakeholders, including green groups, eco-tourism operators, local agriculture and fisheries associations, local communities and developers to seek their views on the preliminary recommendations of the Feasibility Study. With the establishment of a fisheries research centre in San Tin Technopole, modernized aquaculture will be promoted to enhance fisheries resources to promote economic activities. The proposed area of Sam Po Shue WCP will be rezoned as “Other Specified Uses annotated Wetland Conservation Park” to facilitate the establishment of suitable supporting facilities such as visitor centres, picnic sites, public toilets and camping

sites, etc. Transport infrastructures will be substantially enhanced in San Tin Technopole, which will benefit visitors accessing Sam Po Shue WCP.

### Tourism development

53. The Subcommittee has studied the tourism development opportunities in the Northern Metropolis. Members have called on the Administration to strike a balance between conservation and development in promoting tourism in the Northern Metropolis, and to integrate education, R&D, culture and sports with tourism; strengthen the conservation and utilization of wetlands, country parks and other natural features; and carefully assess visitor reception capacity and provide supporting facilities for tourism spots, and plan and design new tourism offerings and products that encourage visitors to stay overnight.

54. Members have recommended that the Administration study the gradual lifting of the FCA restriction of Sha Tau Kok and Chung Ying Street, and fully promote the recreation and tourism development of areas such as Sha Tau Kok, Robin's Nest, Lin Ma Hang, Yan Tong Chau, as well as coastal villages and the outlying islands; and study the feasibility of developing a cultural tourism zone with Shenzhen incorporating Shenzhen Bay, Lo Wu and the Wutong Mountain area of Mainland, etc.

55. The Administration has advised that it will assess visitor reception capacity, provide supporting facilities for tourism spots and promote the diverse tourism elements within Northern Metropolis at suitable junctures as and when various parts of Northern Metropolis are developed in order to cater for the interests of wide-ranging visitor segments while developing immersive in-depth tourism activities in the light of the new travel trends. In addition, it has organized competitions such as the "Deeper into Hong Kong: Creative Itinerary Design Competition" to encourage the travel trade to design more thematic tours which will last for a few days to encourage overnight stay.

56. In future, the Administration will continue to promote tourism development in Sha Tau Kok under the principle of "low density, high quality" and through enriching its historical and cultural elements. Relevant B/Ds including the Development Bureau, the Transport and Logistics Bureau and the Security Bureau will enhance relevant land use planning, transport and BCP supporting facilities to facilitate the accessibility of tourist spots for visitors. The HKSAR Government will also explore with the Shenzhen Municipal Government the feasibility of developing a cultural tourism zone in Sha Tau Kok on the Hong Kong side and Shatoujiao on the Shenzhen side, so as to promote collaboration on cultural tourism in Sha Tau Kok under the principle of "complementarity and mutual benefits".

57. The Administration has further advised that the Action Agenda proposes to develop Lau Fau Shan as an extension to the HSK/HT NDA. Lau Fau Shan is positioned as a digital technology hub with potential for leisure and eco-tourism development. Subject to the development programmes of Lau Fau Shan and relevant infrastructures, as well as the prevailing tourism trend, the Tourism Commission will explore feasible options to enhance the tourism potential of Lau Fau Shan seafood market at an appropriate juncture.

#### Clearance arrangement and services at boundary control points

58. Members note that with multiple cross-boundary land BCPs<sup>2</sup>, the Northern Metropolis will play an important role in facilitating Hong Kong's development and integration with Shenzhen and connection with GBA. Members consider that these BCPs will continue to enable the two cities to be connected across the "Two Bays, One River" (i.e. Shenzhen Bay, Mirs Bay and Shenzhen River) and establish the basis of a high degree of close interaction between the two cities. Members have suggested that the Administration should expeditiously implement the streamlining of the clearance procedures between Guangdong and Hong Kong to facilitate the cross-boundary flow of I&T personnel.

59. In view of the increasing demand for passengers, vehicles and goods clearance services at different BCPs following the development of the Northern Metropolis, members have urged the Administration to review the services required at individual BCPs, consider whether more multi-functional BCPs should be established, and further enhance passenger clearance capacity and efficiency in order to facilitate the travel of I&T personnel of the Cooperation Zone between the two territories.

60. The Administration has advised that all BCPs serve passenger traffic while some also serve cargo freight traffic. For fresh food and livestock entering Hong Kong from the Mainland by land via the Man Kam To BCP and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge BCP, they are subject to inspection by staff of the Centre for Food Safety. Under the "East in East out, West in West out" strategy for cross-boundary goods traffic, cross-boundary goods vehicles travelling to/from the eastern and western parts of Guangdong respectively do not need to travel through the central parts of Shenzhen with busy traffic. The Administration will communicate

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<sup>2</sup> There are currently a total of seven land BCPs/ports along the boundary between Hong Kong and Shenzhen from the west to the east. Two of them are rail-based (Lo Wu and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line) while the other five are road-based (Lok Ma Chau, Man Kam To, Sha Tau Kok, Shenzhen Bay and Heung Yuen Wai).



with the Mainland authorities on the suggestion relating to increasing the number of BCPs servicing cross-boundary non-commercial private cars with an assessment on the required manpower support due to the large number of such private cars.

61. In order to further enhance passenger clearance efficiency, the HKSAR Government is now actively collaborating with the Mainland authorities concerned to press ahead with the implementation of “collaborative inspection and joint clearance” at the redeveloped Huanggang Port. Under this clearance mode, automatic channels/counters of both sides will be set up side by side within their respective jurisdiction at the boundary inside the port, such that outbound and inbound visitors only need to queue up to have their documents inspected and their identities verified once to pass through the immigration facilities of both sides in order to complete the respective immigration procedures, which is highly convenient. At present, the two governments have reached preliminary consensus on implementing the “collaborative inspection and joint clearance” mode at the new Huanggang Port and are discussing the operational details in depth.

62. To facilitate the travel of I&T personnel of the Cooperation Zone between the two territories, the HKSAR Government will collaborate with the Mainland authorities concerned to actively explore an innovative clearance mode which will allow designated personnel of both places to go through immigration clearance by using a cross-river footbridge. The HKSAR Government’s target is to allow I&T personnel of both sides who have pre-verified their eligibility to use facial recognition technology to verify their identities when crossing the border, thereby achieving contactless clearance.

### **Duty visits**

63. The Subcommittee has conducted the following three duty visits to:

- (a) Shenzhen Park of the Co-operation Zone and Guangming Science City in Shenzhen on 2 February 2024 to understand the development planning strategy and the latest situation of the two I&T establishments;
- (b) Chung Ying Street in Sha Tau Kok, Dameisha and Xiaomeisha Seashore Parks, and Yantian Harbour Night Market in Shenzhen on 9 May 2024 to understand the development of eco-tourism in Shenzhen; and

- (c) Shenzhen Bay Super Headquarters Base in Nanshan District, Houhai Smart Operations Centre, Qianhai Bonded Zone and Mawan Smart Port on 16 May 2024 to understand Shenzhen's experience of applying the district-wide coordinated approach for development, and the development and operation of modern logistics.

## **Recommendations**

64. In the course of deliberations, the Subcommittee has made the following recommendations with respect to the future development of the Northern Metropolis for the Administration to consider:

### Implementation mode of land development projects

- (a) monitor future changes in market demand and development trend of Hong Kong and other GBA cities, and suitably adjust or expand the types of industries worthy of promotion (see paragraph 13 above);
- (b) explore the mode of "large-scale land disposal" adopted in the Mainland (see paragraph 13 above);

### Transport infrastructure

- (c) enhance the infrastructure of the Northern Metropolis to promote its internal and external transport connectivity (see paragraph 16 above);
- (d) implement major infrastructure projects in an orderly way (see paragraph 16 above);

### Land use for logistics industry

- (e) carefully plan the land use for high-end logistics industry and actively accommodate existing operators in logistics industry displaced by resumption of land (see paragraph 20 above);
- (f) plan the use of land such that logistics industry and residential developments could complement each other (see paragraph 20 above);

Innovation and technology, and San Tin Technopole

- (g) enhance cooperation of I&T industry in San Tin Technopole with that in the Shenzhen I&T Zone and facilitate cross-boundary flow of people and skills (see paragraph 23 above);
- (h) develop San Tin Technopole into an integrated community suitable for work and residence (see paragraph 23 above);
- (i) support I&T start-ups, digital infrastructure and data sharing facilities, and develop the Northern Metropolis into a cyber security hub (see paragraph 26 above);

Post-secondary education development and Northern Metropolis University Town

- (j) develop NMUT into a base for R&D and technology transfer, and create synergy by encouraging post-secondary institutions in the area to strengthen cooperation with Mainland and overseas institutions (see paragraph 32 above).

Smart, green and resilient strategies

- (k) expedite the infrastructure for implementing “Sponge City” in NDAs (see paragraph 38 above);
- (l) deploy new technologies in infrastructure, and promote low-altitude economy and adoption of new and renewable energy (see paragraphs 40 and 42 above);

Environment and ecological conservation

- (m) develop other WCPs in parallel with the development of Sam Po Shue WCP, and explore collaboration with private land owners for developing WCPs (see paragraph 45 above);
- (n) implement measures and provide facilities to support development of aquaculture and eco-tourism in WCPs (see paragraph 51 above);

Tourism development

- (o) lift the FCA restriction of Sha Tau Kok and Chung Ying Street (see paragraph 54 above);
- (p) explore development of a cultural tourism zone with Shenzhen (see paragraph 54 above); and

Clearance arrangement and services at boundary control points

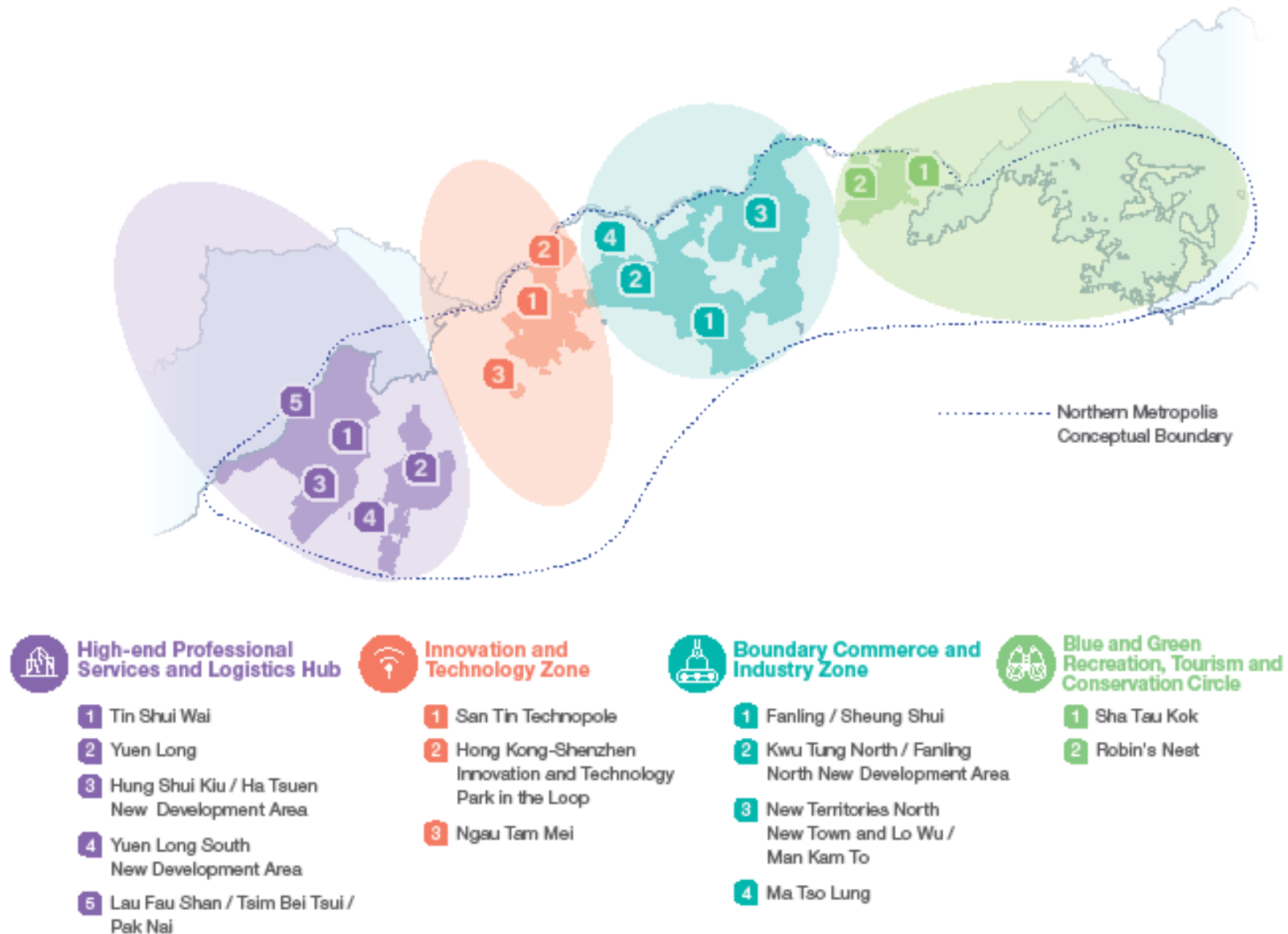
- (q) review the services at individual BCPs and the need for more multi-functional BCPs, and enhance passenger clearance capacity and efficiency (see paragraph 59 above).

**Advice sought**

65. Members of the House Committee are invited to note the work of the Subcommittee.

Council Business Divisions  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
11 July 2024

## Four Major Zones



Source: [Northern Metropolis Action Agenda 2023](#)

**Subcommittee on Matters Relating to the Development of  
the Northern Metropolis**

**Terms of reference**

To review the implementation of the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy, monitor the progress of related works or programmes, and make recommendations on the future development of the Northern Metropolis.

**Subcommittee on Matters Relating to the Development of  
the Northern Metropolis**

**Membership List**

<b>Chairman</b>	Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH, JP
<b>Deputy Chairman</b>	Hon Andrew LAM Siu-lo, SBS, JP
<b>Members</b>	Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBM, GBS, JP Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBM, GBS, JP Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS, JP Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, GBS, JP Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP Hon Elizabeth QUAT, SBS, JP Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, GBS, MH, JP Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP Hon CHU Kwok-keung Dr Hon Hoey Simon LEE, MH, JP Ir Hon LEE Chun-keung, JP Hon YIU Pak-leung, MH, JP Hon Dennis LEUNG Tsz-wing, MH Hon CHAN Pui-leung Ir Hon Gary ZHANG Xinyu Prof Hon LAU Chi-pang, BBS, JP Hon YIM Kong Prof Hon William WONG Kam-fai, MH  (Total: 20 members)

<b>Clerk</b>	Mr Derek LO
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<b>Legal Adviser</b>	Ms Vanessa CHENG
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**Subcommittee on Matters Relating to the Development of  
the Northern Metropolis**

**List of organizations which have given views to the Subcommittee**

1. Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation
2. The Conservancy Association
3. Tung Wah College
4. World Wide Fund For Nature Hong Kong