

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

2025 Policy Address

**Transport-related Policy Initiatives of
the Transport and Logistics Bureau**

Introduction

The 2025 Policy Address and Policy Address Supplement set out the policy initiatives that the Government plans to implement in the coming year. This paper provides an overview of the transport-related initiatives and indicators for specified tasks.

Specific Measures

(a) Transport Infrastructure

2. Transport infrastructure is a vital engine driving social and economic development. Adhering to the principles of “infrastructure-led” and “capacity-creating”, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is fully committed to promoting and implementing a series of railway, major road, and smart and green mass transit system projects in an orderly manner. This will further enhance Hong Kong’s transport infrastructure network, support Hong Kong’s sustainable development needs, and promote cross-border integration with the Mainland, especially with other cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Transport Infrastructure Projects

(i) Smart and Green Mass Transit System

3. We will continue to advance with full vigour the Smart and Green Mass Transit System projects in East Kowloon, Kai Tak, Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen and Yuen Long South New Development Areas with innovative thinking.

To expedite project delivery, enhance cost effectiveness, and leverage the expertise and financial capability of the private sector, the Government will implement a number of innovative measures, including -

- (i) encourage entry of new investors and operators through an open tender and transit-oriented development approach, so as to bring in innovative thinking for the construction and operation of the projects;
- (ii) introduce through legislation a new regulatory framework that is technology-neutral, universal and standardised so as to provide the statutory backing for granting and regulating franchises of these systems, which is expected to shorten the lead time for introducing new systems and allow flexibility for the Government to swiftly capitalise on the opportunities arising from technological breakthroughs. We aim to introduce the relevant bill into the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) next year; and
- (iii) streamline building control procedures and establish a one-stop platform to expedite relevant review and approval processes. Moreover, the Highways Department (“HyD”) will establish a Railway Checking Unit, with relevant power delegated by the Building Authority under the Buildings Ordinance, to directly handle technical submissions pertaining to highway structures in Smart and Green Mass Transit System projects.

4. We will soon invite tenders for the smart and green mass transit system project in Kai Tak, and will invite tenders for the two projects in East Kowloon and the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area next year.

(ii) Railway Projects

5. The Government will continue to take forward various local railway projects in an orderly manner, including the Tung Chung Line Extension, Oyster Bay Station, Tuen Mun South Extension, Kwu Tung Station and Hung Shui Kiu Station. These projects will be completed progressively from 2027 onwards. Meanwhile, we have executed the Project Agreement for Part 1 of the Northern Link (“NOL”) Project with the MTR Corporation Limited, under which the NOL Spur Line would be taken

forward simultaneously in combination with the NOL Main Line as one project through a holistic planning and phased implementation strategy, such that the more ready works could commence as soon as possible, enabling more expeditious and effective delivery of the whole project and achieving simultaneous commissioning by 2034 or earlier.

6. We have continued to take forward the two cross-boundary railway projects jointly with the Shenzhen authorities through the Task Force for Hong Kong-Shenzhen Co-operation on Cross-Boundary Railway Infrastructure, with a view to fully integrating the metro networks of Hong Kong and Shenzhen. In addition to the NOL Spur Line, we are proceeding resolutely with the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Rail Link (Hung Shui Kiu-Qianhai) (“HSWRL”). We are conducting investigation and design for the Hong Kong section of the HSWRL project, and have also invited expressions of interest from contractors and operators. Our target is to have the Hong Kong section of the HSWRL ready for tendering in 2027, so as to commence the detailed design and construction works promptly and strive for completion of construction works in 2034, which would be followed immediately by integrated testing and commissioning to realise the common goal of the governments of Hong Kong and Shenzhen to commission the HSWRL in 2035.

7. Meanwhile, we are actively pursuing continuous innovation in both technology and policy to enhance the speed and efficiency of delivery of transport infrastructure projects. Making reference to world-class railway specifications including those of our nation, and extensively incorporate the best national and overseas practices, HyD is collaborating with relevant departments as well as Mainland and overseas railway experts to formulate the “Hong Kong Railway Standards”. The new “Hong Kong Railway Standards” is expected to establish a basis for effectively leveraging Mainland’s resources in Hong Kong’s construction of cross-boundary railway projects, with the aim to effectively reduce construction costs and time. Moreover, HyD will set up a dedicated team to handle approvals for cross-boundary railway projects in a centralised and efficient manner, and will introduce a digitalised approval platform in collaboration with relevant departments, so as to streamline procedures and expedite processes.

(iii) Road Projects

8. In terms of road infrastructure, we continue to take forward a series of road projects in an orderly manner to further expand the capacity and coverage of major roads, enhance the robustness of the road network and improve transport efficiency, thereby facilitating the commute of citizens and meeting the transport and logistics demands of new development areas. We commenced the investigation study for the Northern Metropolis Highway project in March this year and have completed the optimisation of its alignment as planned, laying a solid foundation for subsequent work. In addition, the investigation study for Route 11 has been largely completed, and the road scheme has been authorised. The Tsing Lung Bridge is prioritised to be taken forward first, aiming to be technically ready for tender invitation in 2026 and for commissioning by 2033. As for road projects under construction, the Central Kowloon Route project will be completed by the end of this year, while the entire Route 6 will be fully commissioned as scheduled next year upon completion of the Trunk Road T2 and Cha Kwo Ling Tunnel project.

(b) Traffic and Transport Strategy Study

9. To support Hong Kong's economic and social development and enhance its overall competitiveness, the Government launched the Traffic and Transport Strategy Study ("TTSS") in late 2021. The aim is to formulate a long-term Transport Strategy Blueprint ("the Blueprint") for Hong Kong to ensure that its overall transport system remains reliable, safe, smart, environmentally friendly and highly efficient. The TTSS is closely aligned with broader government objectives, including the development of the Northern Metropolis and striving for Hong Kong to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. We consulted the LegCo Panel on Transport on our preliminary recommendations of the TTSS in December 2023, and took the lead in launching various pilot projects (including the autonomous vehicles ("AV") trial projects outlined in paragraph 11 and several technology-driven initiatives outlined in paragraphs 15-16 below such as the Smart Motorway Pilot Scheme), advancing research and supporting the development of long-term implementation strategies for the various recommendations.

10. The Government will release the Blueprint in October this year and report its contents to the LegCo Panel on Transport. The Blueprint establishes three main themes, namely “Enjoyable Journeys”, “Well-connected City” and “Healthy Mobility”, and sets out six key strategies. It recommends that Hong Kong’s transport development should pursue the vision of “Implementing a People-centric Approach, Strengthening Connectivity with both the Mainland and the World, Promoting Efficient Travel, and Embracing a Green Lifestyle”. The Government plans to progressively implement 23 recommendations which cover enhancing public transport services, developing a new generation of transport interchange hubs, continuously optimising the connectivity with other cities in the Greater Bay Area, strengthening the use of artificial intelligence (“AI”) in traffic management, promoting the development of AV, implementing smart motorways on major roads, utilising parking spaces more effectively, and creating a bicycle-friendly environment, etc.

(c) Promoting Autonomous Vehicles

11. The Government implemented a new regulatory framework for AV in March 2024. By integrating policy support, regulatory backing and financial subsidies, this framework accelerates and enhances the introduction and promotion of AV trials and applications across various communities. Under the new regulatory framework, the Transport Department (“TD”) has issued three pilot licences, including the trial project for autonomous private cars in North Lantau, the trial project for autonomous light buses linking the Hong Kong Palace Museum, M+ and West Kowloon Cultural District West Gate, as well as the trial project for autonomous private cars in Cyberport. Among these, the North Lantau trial project has made significant progress since its launch at the end of last year and achieved four notable technical advancements, including the simultaneous operation of multiple vehicles, passenger-carrying trials, expanded routes and increased vehicle speeds¹.

¹ (1) The scale of trial has expanded from a single private vehicle to simultaneous operation of 10 vehicles to collect data on multi-vehicle interactions; (2) After safety assessments, passenger-carrying trials have been conducted on specific routes; (3) Testing has been extended to more complex roads, currently including routes on Airport Island and Tung Chung for testing and operating simultaneously; (4) Based on the maximum speed limits of the trial road sections, the approved AV driving speed has been increased to 50 kilometres per hour.

12. Through the Smart Traffic Fund, we have supported a range of AV and vehicle-to-everything (“V2X”) projects, harnessing the collective expertise of the Government, industry, academia and research sectors. These efforts aim to advance the long-term technological development of autonomous driving and smart mobility in Hong Kong. As of August this year, funding has been provided for five projects related to AV trials and nine projects on V2X and related technology initiatives, with a total funding amount of approximately \$170 million. The trial routes include public roads and diverse application environments such as the West Kowloon Cultural District and private housing estates.

13. The Government will announce future directions and priorities for deepening autonomous driving development in the Blueprint. We will press ahead at full momentum to introduce and drive industry efforts to conduct AV trials and applications across various communities, aiming to accelerate progress toward fully driverless and large-scale deployment. We are also aspire to achieve commercial operation, encouraging the industry to leverage Hong Kong as a platform to explore overseas markets, particularly those with right-hand-drive systems. Driving and road safety will remain our top priority. We will draw on practical experience to refine technical standards, share research findings with the industry in a timely manner, and implement these initiatives prudently and orderly. In respect of cross-district application, three pilot projects will commence within this year, including (i) the Airportcity Link between the Hong Kong Port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (“HZMB”) and the Airport; (ii) a project spanning Kowloon City and Kwun Tong districts, encompassing the Kai Tak Development Area; and (iii) a route connecting the Airport Island and Tung Chung, being an extension of the existing project in North Lantau to link up with Tung Chung Town Centre. The Government will also explore the use of AV to connect with other transport modes, such as enhancing the convenience for air and rail passengers. One such initiative is to trial transporting luggage by AV between the West Kowloon High Speed Rail Station and the Airport Express Kowloon Station, with a prospect of carrying passengers in the future. Concurrently, we will also endeavour to launch trial projects for “remotely-operated AV” (i.e. AV without in-vehicle backup operators but only remote backup operators) by 2026.

(d) “Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles”, “Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles”

14. Since its launch in July 2023, “Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles” (“the Northbound Travel Scheme”) has been well-received by Hong Kong citizens, with an ever-increasing flow of people and vehicles using the HZMB to travel between Guangdong and Hong Kong. As at August this year, over 100 000 Hong Kong private cars have participated in the Northbound Travel Scheme. The Guangdong and Hong Kong governments have been monitoring the implementation, and providing enhancement arrangements for applicants in various aspects such as application renewal, travel booking, vehicle inspection, etc., including more recently from 1 September 2025 onwards, cancelling the booking requirement on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, except specified dates²; as well as from 13 October 2025 onwards, exempting vehicles under the Northbound Travel Scheme from closed road permit application. As a reciprocal arrangement to the Northbound Travel Scheme, the policy of “Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles” (“the Southbound Travel Scheme”) was announced in early July this year, under which eligible private cars of Guangdong can apply to travel to Hong Kong via the HZMB, thereby facilitating mutual visits between residents of the two places and meeting the expectations of mutual engagement. Not only will the Southbound Travel Scheme attract different types of travellers, but also facilitate visits by relatives, friends and business partners in Guangdong, which in turn promote social exchanges, benefit many trades and sectors in Hong Kong, as well as promote the integration of the Greater Bay Area. The Guangdong and Hong Kong Governments are actively preparing for the relevant work, and striving to implement it in November this year and announcing the details as soon as possible.

(e) Technology Application

15. We are committed to applying new technologies such as AI in licensing services and traffic management to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our work, and to support the Government’s “Be the Smart Regulator” initiative and address the public’s growing demand for licensing

² Specified dates include Hong Kong or Mainland public holidays and the day before, toll-free days of the HZMB and other dates specified by the authority.

services. TD has introduced electronic licensing measures and streamlined application procedures, and currently offers over 20 online services, with several new electronic licensing initiatives introduced over the past year including simplifying the online applications for vehicle licence, the “E-Licensing Portal” one-stop platform, the International Driving Permit Self-service Kiosks, and the “E-Auction”. Among others, TD has applied AI technology to assist in processing online vehicle licence renewal applications, thereby progressively reducing the processing time for applications that do not require manual verification from 10 working days to within three working days. The electronic driving licence (“eDL”), launched recently on 15 September, allows licence holders to choose to display their eDL on smartphones, bringing convenience to 2.5 million licence holders. TD will continue to actively promote electronic licensing services and leverage AI to accelerate processing and approval. It will also extend the use of AI technology to more types of licensing services, reducing the need and time for members of the public to visit the Licensing Offices for services.

16. To enhance transport efficiency and promote road safety through smart infrastructure and data integration, TD has been conducting the Ting Kau Bridge Smart Motorway Pilot Scheme since December 2024 to optimise traffic control and monitoring systems. By utilising AI, the system has substantially reduced incident detection time by nearly 90%. The scheme also enables dynamic opening of the hard shoulder based on actual conditions to alleviate congestion caused by traffic accidents. The hard shoulder was activated on 1 September 2025 under these arrangements, resulting in a roughly 50% increase in traffic volume on the affected sections and a 20% improvement in average upstream vehicle speeds. These findings provide a scientific basis for advancing smart motorway management in Hong Kong. Regarding the Real-time Adaptive Traffic Signal System, TD has utilised AI to optimise the operational efficiency of signal-controlled junctions, thereby reducing the average waiting time for vehicles passing through the junctions by approximately 5-10%. In addition, TD is also studying the integration of big data analytics and AI technology in developing an integrated traffic management platform. This will enable more comprehensive monitoring and management of real-time traffic, paving the way for more flexible and intelligent traffic control arrangements in future.

(f) Continuous Improvement of Public Transport Services

17. The Government remains committed a transport policy that is public transport-oriented. At present, an average of over 11 million passenger trips are made daily on public transport services in Hong Kong. Public transport services are operated by private entities according to commercial principles to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness. The Government will continue to encourage and assist public transport operators to adopt multi-pronged approach to increase revenue and reduce costs. This includes exploring new sources of non-farebox revenue and enhancing operational efficiency through service rationalisation and other means, enabling the operators to continue to provide passengers with quality, reliable and stable public transport services and facilities.

18. Regarding franchised bus services, through established mechanisms including the annual bus planning programmes, TD would, having regard to infrastructure and development projects across different districts as well as the latest travel patterns, enhance existing services with high demand or introduce new services as well as rationalise bus routes to improve efficiency in resource utilisation and alleviate congestion on trunk roads. Additionally, TD has added the “Tourists Services” route group to the three bus franchises³, allowing the operators to provide services that cover multiple tourist attractions and hop-on/hop-off feature, attracting tourists and increasing revenue. The Government will also encourage the operators to continue to improve their facilities and equipment as well as attract talents in order to maintain their professional and high quality workforce.

19. On public light buses (“PLBs”), TD will continue to provide appropriate support to the trade to improve its operating environment and enhance service reliability. For example, when planning transport services for new development areas, TD will introduce new green minibus routes as appropriate. TD will also improve the operational efficiency of green minibus through adjustment of service schedule and routing. Where

³ The three bus franchises include the Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited, Citybus Limited (Franchise for the Urban and New Territories bus network), and New Lantau Bus Company (1973) Limited.

appropriate, TD permits PLBs to park at PLB stands⁴ during non-operating hours to better accommodate the operational needs of the trade. In addition, to leverage the flexibility of red minibuses services, the Smart Traffic Fund has approved a funding project to develop and pilot “mobility-on-demand” minibus services in order to assess the feasibility of this transport model.

20. In addition, the Government is committed to enhancing the quality of ferry services, and is subsidising the operators of the outlying island ferry routes to adopt more environmentally friendly ferries through the Vessel Subsidy Scheme. The operators of the six major outlying island routes⁵ have already procured 22 new vessels under phase 1, 18 of which have gradually come into service or trial since March 2024. The remaining vessels will be delivered successively in 2025.

(g) Enhancing Personalised Point-to-point Transport Services

21. The Government has endeavoured to enhance the quality of personalised point-to-point transport services. With regard to taxi services, the Government has actively introduced a number of measures to enhance the overall quality of taxi services and promote the sustainable development of the trade in the past few years. Such measures include introducing taxi fleets under systematic management, implementing the Taxi-Driver-Offence Points System and the two-tier penalty system, as well as enhancing the taxi written test starting from November this year. In addition, we have amended the legislation to mandate the installation of Journey Recording Systems (“JRSs”) in all taxi compartments to better safeguard the rights and interests of both passengers and drivers. Taxis are expected to be installed with JRSs progressively starting from 2026. We have also mandated that all taxi drivers must allow passengers to pay taxi fares by electronic payment means with effect from 1 April 2026 to facilitate public travel.

22. Meanwhile, to provide more options of safe and legally compliant personalised point-to-point public transport services for passengers, the

⁴ As at end-July 2025, about 80% of PLB stands (i.e. 615 stands) across Hong Kong were either installed or scheduled for installation of the PLB parking signs.

⁵ The six major routes include the (1) “Central - Cheung Chau”, (2) “Inter-islands” between Peng Chau, Mui Wo, Chi Ma Wan and Cheung Chau, (3) “Central - Mui Wo”, (4) “Central - Peng Chau”, (5) “Central - Yung Shue Wan” and (6) “Central - Sok Kwo Wan” routes.

Government submitted the Road Traffic (Amendment) (Ride-hailing Service) Bill 2025 (“the Bill”) to the LegCo in September this year to introduce the regulatory framework for ride-hailing services. Under the proposed regulatory regime, platforms, vehicles and drivers providing ride-hailing services will be required to obtain appropriate licences or permits. The Bills Committee of the LegCo has completed its scrutiny of the Bill. The Government intends to resume Second Reading debate on the Bill at the LegCo meeting on 15 October this year, striving for the passage of the Bill before end of the current LegCo term. As for other technical details concerning the regulation of ride-hailing services, we will continue to discuss and negotiate in a focused manner with various stakeholders with a view to finalising the relevant details. We plan to submit the relevant subsidiary legislation to the LegCo for scrutiny in the first half of 2026.

(h) Indicators for Specified Tasks

23. For monitoring the progress and effectiveness of specific tasks, the Transport and Logistics Bureau has formulated relevant indicators as set out in **Annex**.

Views Sought

24. We welcome Members’ views on the initiatives outlined above.

Transport and Logistics Bureau
September 2025

**Indicators on Transport-related Initiatives
in 2025 Policy Address**

- (a) Press ahead with the tendering of the smart and green mass transit system project in Kai Tak with a view to awarding the contract; and invite tenders for the projects in East Kowloon and the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Areas within 2026;
- (b) Introduce a bill into the Legislative Council to set up a regulatory framework applicable to different mass transit system technologies and operators within 2026;
- (c) Launch trials of “remotely operated autonomous vehicles” (i.e. without an onboard backup operator, only with a remote backup operator), and facilitate the connection of autonomous vehicles to other modes of transport; and extend trials to cross-district applications within 2026; and
- (d) Starting from 2024, the automated car parks constructed by the Airport Authority Hong Kong on the artificial island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port will be completed in phases for use by transit passengers or inbound visitors from Guangdong and Macao. Together with the newly completed government car parks and short-term tenancy car parks to be built by 2026, a total of no less than 3 000 automated parking spaces will be provided.