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Mr. CHAN Mo Po, Paul, *GBM, GBS, MH, JP*
Financial Secretary
Financial Secretary's Private Office
25/F, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue,
Tamar, Hong Kong

By Post & Email
fso@fso.gov.hk

Dear Mr. CHAN,

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects' Response and Suggestions to the 2025-26 Budget

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) is pleased to present our response and recommendations regarding the 2025-2026 Budget. As a professional body dedicated to advancing architectural excellence and supporting Hong Kong's development, we draw upon our expertise to offer insights that align with the Government's vision for economic resilience and urban progress. Our submission aims to provide constructive input across key areas of relevance to the architectural profession, contributing to Hong Kong's continued growth as a global metropolis.

Northern Metropolis: A Strategic Vision for the Future

The Northern Metropolis constitutes a significant initiative in Hong Kong's long-term planning, with profound implications for the city, the Greater Bay Area, and beyond. We commend the Budget's allocation of HKD 3.7 billion to accelerate the initial phase of infrastructure and public facilities in the Lok Ma Chau Loop, reflecting a clear commitment to this transformative project. To ensure its success, we recommend early and comprehensive consultation with professional institutions, including the HKIA, to refine the planning framework and objectives. Such collaboration would enhance the project's coherence and effectiveness, drawing on diverse professional perspectives. We also advocate for greater transparency in disseminating planning details to generate interest among stakeholders and attract investment. Additionally, a review of the regulatory framework is advised to accommodate emerging industries, streamlining policies to facilitate their integration through efficient planning, design, and construction processes.



Land and Housing Supply: Maintaining Flexibility

The HKIA supports the Government's adaptable approach to land supply, exemplified by the conversion of commercial sites to residential use and the ongoing advancement of railway property developments, Urban Renewal Authority projects, and private redevelopment initiatives. These measures strengthen the real estate and construction sectors while sustaining opportunities for professional service providers. To further enhance this strategy, we suggest intensifying market monitoring and expanding consultation with professional bodies. This would enable timely adjustments to land supply policies, activating the market efficiently and creating additional avenues for professional engagement.

Professional Development in the Construction Industry

We welcome the Budget's allocation of HKD 150 million to subsidize on-the-job training for 2,500 graduates in Architecture, Engineering, Surveying, Planning, and Landscape Architecture. This initiative marks a significant step forward in revitalizing the construction industry in the post-pandemic era. By alleviating financial pressures on professional service providers, promoting youth employment, and supporting long-term growth, it provides a valuable foundation for the sector's future. Clear career pathways established through this policy will also attract and retain talent, fostering innovation and reinforcing Hong Kong's competitiveness in the global architectural landscape.

Enhancing Public Service Efficiency

The HKIA strongly endorses the Budget's focus on digitalization and artificial intelligence in public works projects, recognizing its potential to enhance operational efficiency. To optimize these measures, we recommend prior consultation with professional institutions, including the HKIA, before finalizing implementation strategies. This would ensure that digital tools are effectively utilized to improve both efficiency and safety management within the construction industry. Specifically, we propose providing Authorized Persons/ Architects with adequate support to fulfill their responsibilities safely and effectively within the legal framework, thereby elevating construction site safety standards.

Prudent Fiscal Management

We applaud the Government's commitment to "practical but not flashy" design, which prioritizes impactful outcomes while maintaining fiscal discipline. To achieve this balance, we recommend increased engagement with architectural design professionals during the planning of public works projects. Such collaboration would ensure that functionality and quality are harmonized, enhancing the design standards of public infrastructure and reinforcing Hong Kong's reputation as a world-class city.



Measures to support “Tourism is Everywhere”

The “Tourism is Everywhere” initiative offers considerable potential to elevate Hong Kong's appeal as a global destination. We suggest to introduce homestay policy for proper regulation for health and safety reasons; and explore / pilot "self-certification" mechanism to encourage local tourism development. We propose to consider streamline land administrative process by adopting "flat rate waiver fee/ short term tenancy/ license fee or alike" for small business operations such as recreation and cultural facilities to simplify regulatory requirements and stimulate tourism-related development. We should also promote local design expertise who will come up with innovative design solutions and enhance the city's image; to attract both local and overseas tourists.

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects stands ready to collaborate with the Government to realize these shared goals, contributing our professional knowledge and experience to advance Hong Kong's position on the global stage. This submission reflects our perspective on the 2025-2026 Budget and offers recommendations to inform policy development for the benefit of the city and its people.

Yours Sincerely,

Ar. LAU Man Kwan Julia, *CHKIA, JP*
President
The Hong Kong Institute of Architects