



香港城市設計學會
Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design

Reference Number: PAC/22/002

11 January 2022

By email: imkchung@pland.gov.hk

Mr. Ivan Chung, JP, Director of Planning,
Planning Department, HKSAR Government

Dear Mr. Chung,

Re: Northern Metropolis

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for briefing our representatives, Mr. Donald Choi, our president, Mr. Joel Chan, our immediate past president, and myself, the concept of the Northern Metropolis at PlanD's office on 9 December 2021.

Planning Consultancies

At the meeting, we were told that there were two ongoing consultancies (being undertaken by AECOM) and they are undergoing studies of 3 key areas:

- 1) San Tin / Lok Ma Chau including Huanggang Portal (includes 120 hectare of San Tin IT Hub)
- 2) Man Kam To/Lo Wu (inclusive of the previous Man Kam To Logistic Corridor and Lo Wu; Station Vicinity); and
- 3) NTN New Town (from Queen's Hill to Heung Yuen Wai).

We understand from the CE's policy address 2021 that Northern Metropolis is to cover a larger area than those mentioned above, we would appreciate if PlanD and CEDD can update us any update on the planning process and arrangement of further consultancies such that we can share with you our views on the urban design and planning issues of the metropolis in a timely manner.

Our Initial Comments

HKIUD welcomes the government's proposal to establish a Northern Metropolis. It has always been HKIUD suggestion in the past that an urban area in the northern part of Hong Kong shall be established to provide more local job opportunities, better integration with GBA as well as more housing supplies. More job opportunities and housing supplies in proximity can also help to reduce intra-city transportation needs.

When planning the Northern Metropolis, HKIUD suggests the government to consider the following:

- 1) **Public Participation in Establishing Visions and Objectives** - There shall be early discussion amongst Hong Kong citizens (not just the stakeholders) for establishment of the vision and objectives for the Northern Metropolis. The Northern Metropolis should not be seen in strategic isolation from the rest of Hong Kong, in particular, how the East Lantau proposal (estimated population 700,000 plus CBD3) fits into this. We understand that there will be role differences between this Northern Metropolis and the Southern Metropolis also being planned concurrently; the government shall clearly identify their such differences by

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reviewing Hong Kong overall positioning as well as understanding the needs and listening to the voices of the citizens.

- 2) **Better Living Standards** - With the importance of this metropolis and availability of potential good amount of land supply stock, establishment of better living standards/metrics shall be considered. We hope the government will have the courage to increase the amount of open space as well as average living space per habitant. There shall be a higher percentage of land targeting for functional uses (i.e. actual business /industrial /residential uses). Lands that maybe sterilised by infrastructure shall be minimised. Attaining Net Zero or Super Low Energy developments should be an objective as well.
- 3) **Urban Design over Traditional 2-D Town Planning Approach** – In planning such an important new metropolis for Hong Kong, the government shall stop following the traditional approach in the planning and implementation of our city: 2-D planning approach spearheaded by the PlanD then implementation by the CEDD. This kind of disjointed design and implementation effort is not the right approach for a highly densified 3-D city like Hong Kong. Urban design is an interdisciplinary field that utilises the procedures and the elements of architecture and other related professions, including landscape design, urban planning, transport planning, civil engineering, and municipal engineering. It considers overall health, social, economic, environmental as well as aesthetic aspects of the planning of the city and requires widespread inputs from all related sources of expertise. A “liveable metropolis” shall be a product of all the above and it can never be satisfactorily shaped when we keep on with 2-D planning, data and engineering concerns.
- 4) **Integration of infrastructure and developments** - There shall be early planning of the integration of infrastructure and developments. TODs and TIDs shall be encouraged. We have to stress that developments above infrastructure can only be feasible if developments (i.e. structural and access provisions) are taken into account in the planning and design of the infrastructure (i.e. both highways and railways).
- 5) **Innovative and Future Ready Urban Design** – Beside TODs and TIDs, the Northern Metropolis can be planned with the latest upcoming smart city technologies in mind. We believe that most newly established communities shall primarily be served by mass transit and centralised carparking. To attain an ideal and liveable metropolis, we ought to make pedestrians, slow-moving autonomous vehicles, bicycles or similar personal transportation means as priority; our city shall no longer be dominated by cars or other vehicles for logistic means.
- 6) **Early Review the Village Housing Policy** – Village housing is a big problem within area and there are long ingrained vested interest issues. We encourage the government to conduct early study with innovative options for “integrative” village developments. Balancing development needs, public and indigenous rights will probably be a long process and the government should not procrastinate on the issue.
- 7) **Early Identification and Planning for Heritage and the Environment** – There shall be early study and identification existing heritage and environmentally sensitive areas, especially ancient Hakka villages, wetland and virgin forest.

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香港金鐘金鐘道89號力寶中心第二座5樓503室 Unit 503, 5/F, Tower Two Lippo Centre, 89 Queensway, Admiralty, Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2235 9057 Fax: (852) 3007 3607 Web: www.hkiud.org Email: inq@hkiud.org



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- 8) **Commissioner with Urban Design Experience to lead the Project** – There shall be a commissioner (a new post mentioned in PA2021 by CE) with urban design experience to lead the whole process. He or she shall take architectural, layout, economical, social, environmental as well as liveability aspects into consideration in the planning of this new metropolis.

In conclusion, HK needs as ever to start to focusing on quality lead development and stop thinking in numbers; harnessing its ever shrinking advantage in the region. When looking at the two urban centres together (SZ/HK), any border development in NNT will be at the heart of the twin cities and surrounded by extensive quality green assets. It needs to be of the most visionary and compact development quality and carefully considered to ensure the protection of this natural green lung of rivers, wetland and mountains.

We are also pleased to meet relevant officers to further explain the contents therein if necessary.

Should further information be required, please kindly contact me or Ms. Cherry Lau, our Senior Administrative Officer at 2235 9057.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Cheung', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

(Anthony CHEUNG)

Chairman, Public Affairs Committee, HKIUD

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香港金鐘金鐘道89號力寶中心第二座5樓503室 Unit 503, 5/F, Tower Two Lippo Centre, 89 Queensway, Admiralty, Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2235 9057 Fax: (852) 3007 3607 Web: www.hkiud.org Email: inquiry@hkiud.org