

LCQ8: Taking forward harbourfront development

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Priscilla Leung and a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (May 4):

In the 2017 Policy Address and the Budget for the 2019-2020 financial year, the Government has earmarked a total of \$6.5 billion for taking forward harbourfront development. It has also stated in the 2021 Policy Address that it will continue to implement the open management mode of "Harbourfront Shared Space" in more harbourfront sites for the public to freely enjoy the harbourfront space in an inclusive environment. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the following information in respect of the development projects of the harbourfront along the coast of Victoria Harbour which are completed, under construction and pending funding approval by this Council (set out by project name): the area of land involved, length of harbourfront promenade, year of completion/estimated year of completion, cost/estimated cost, as well as the design adopted (such as removable fences, low kerbs with sloping seawalls, fence-free breakwaters, and stepped-down water edges);

(2) whether the \$6.5 billion earmarked by the Government will be used, among others, to take forward improvement works for existing harbourfronts in such a way that those sites with traditional management mode/non-water-friendly design will be changed into open management mode/water-friendly design; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether the "Consultancy Study on Enhancing Visitors' Experience and Connectivity from the Hinterland to and within Harbourfront Areas" and the "Consultancy Study on Design Guidelines for Promenades and Measures for Better Water-land Interface" have been completed; if so, of the outcomes and implementation timetables; if not, their latest progress and whether preliminary recommendations have been made?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Priscilla Leung is as follows:

With the support of the Harbourfront Commission (HC), the Government has been actively taking forward various projects with the \$6.5 billion harbourfront enhancement dedicated funding. Details of the relevant projects are as follows:

- (a) Open Space at Eastern Street North, Sai Ying Pun (area: 1.32 hectare): the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council (LegCo) has approved the funding of \$207.6 million for this project. Construction works are expected to be completed by phases starting from 2024;
- (b) Promenade from Central and Western District Promenade (Central Section) to the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (area: 1.4 ha; new promenade added through recent project: 560 metres): project concluded and site opened in full in April 2021;
- (c) Celebration Precinct in Wan Chai North (area: 1.85 ha): the site is already opened. We will continue to invite professional inputs from local creative talent in further enhancing the attractiveness of the Precinct as necessary;
- (d) Pierside Precinct in Wan Chai North (area: 4.04 ha; new promenade added through recent projects: 412 m): the site has been opened by phases under the incremental approach – promenade between Expo Drive East and Marsh Road was connected in December 2020 and opened; promenade on both sides of the Wan Chai Ferry Pier and the "HarbourChill" behind the Pier were opened in March 2021;
- (e) Water Sports and Recreation Precinct in Wan Chai North (area: 1.39 ha; new promenade added through recent projects: 550 m; new promenade to be added: 220 m): promenade between Wan Chai North Temporary Public Transport Interchange and Hung Hing Road Flyover, which adopts a removable fence design, was connected in December 2020 and opened, with new sections (including a set of harbour steps, i.e. a fence-free stepped-down water edge design) opened in December 2021. In future, more parts will be released from major infrastructural works and beautified for opening by phases between late 2022 and early 2023. The water sports sector has started organising water sports events at the Precinct since the latter half of 2020;
- (f) Revitalised Typhoon Shelter Precinct in Causeway Bay (area: 2.53 ha; new promenade to be added: 317 m): the promenade near Victoria Park Road is being enhanced. A new set of harbour steps will also be introduced for bringing people closer to the water. These are expected to be opened by the latter half of 2022;
- (g) East Coast Park Precinct in Fortress Hill (area: 4.7 ha; new promenade added through recent project: 360 m; new promenade to be added: 412 m): area to the west of Watson Road (including a fence-free breakwater) was opened in September 2021. Area to the west of Hing Fat Street will be released from major infrastructural works and beautified by the latter half of 2022;
- (h) Boardwalk underneath the Island Eastern Corridor (new promenade to be added: 1 800 m): the LegCo FC approved a funding of \$1.68 billion in October 2021. Construction works commenced in December 2021 and are expected to be completed by phases from 2024 to end 2025;
- (i) Tsuen Wan Waterfront Enhancement (area: 2.05 ha): under the incremental

approach, the promenade along Hoi On Road (Phase 1 project, which included the introduction of a low kerb design to the sloping sea wall) was completed and opened by phases in September 2019 and April 2021 respectively. As regards the portion from Hoi On Road to Hoi Hing Road (Phase 2 Project), tender assessment for appointment of consultant is underway;

(j) Kai Tak Metro Park (area: 12.8 ha; new promenade to be added: 583 m): although a majority of the site is still needed as works area until 2024-2025, efforts have been made to minimise the works area and shorten the occupation period so that individual land parcels could be released for beautification and subsequent opening to the public as soon as possible. With such efforts, it is expected that certain parts of the project area designated as Dining Cove and the promenade-cum-open space near the Kai Tak Approach Channel could complete construction and be opened by phases starting 2023. Additional efforts have also been made to reinstate the promenade fronting the To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter to be released by the Central Kowloon Route project. It is expected to open by phases starting late 2023;

(k) Cha Kwo Ling Waterfront (area: 4.5 ha; new promenade to be added: 1 043 m): this promenade project will be taken forward together with the adjacent campus project of the Vocational Training Council. A consultant is being engaged for devising a detailed design for the promenade. On the other hand, the waterfront area to be released from the original Kwun Tong Sewage Pumping Station nearby will be beautified under the incremental approach for its opening in 2023;

(l) Hung Hom Urban Park (area: 2.2 ha): the site has been opened for public use upon relocation of the public transport interchange thereon in January 2019. Design options are being explored for further enhancing public experience on the site, which will take into account comments received during the Market Sounding Exercise conducted earlier, operational experience upon the opening of the site, as well as the progress of projects being pursued in the vicinity (including the "Open Space Development at Hung Hom Waterfront" project by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the beautification of the Hung Hom (South) Ferry Pier); and

(m) Consultancy studies on Enhancing Visitors' Experience and Connectivity from the Hinterland to and within Harbourfront Areas, and Design Guidelines for Promenades and Measures for Better Water-land Interface: upon completion of two inception reports and literature review on overseas projects, the consultants have begun the public engagement exercise and on-site survey. Findings are expected in 2022-2023.

The \$6.5 billion dedicated funding has already been earmarked for the relevant projects above, with about \$2.1 billion approved by the LegCo and/or relevant authorities. We will seek approval for deploying the remaining sum according to the established mechanism as appropriate, including seeking funding approval from the LegCo FC for individual works projects or through the block allocation mechanism under the Capital Works Reserve Fund.

Apart from developing new harbourfront promenades and open spaces, the dedicated funding of \$6.5 billion has also been used for improving existing harbourfront facilities. Taking the Tsuen Wan Waterfront Enhancement Project (see item (i) above) as an example, the first phase of the project is mainly improvement works for the existing waterfront. Planters previously separating the water's edge and the walkway have been removed, while a low kerb design has been introduced to the 370-metre section with a sloping sea wall. Such a design has not only brought visitors closer to the water, but also provided ample seating and greater lines of sight for appreciating the stunning scenery of the Rambler Channel and Tsing Yi Island.

While striving to extend the harbourfront promenades, we are also experimenting with the "vision-driven" management model at "Harbourfront Shared Space" (HSS), with a view to allowing the public to unleash their creativity and enjoy the harbourfront spaces in their own ways harmoniously with mutual respect. Among the abovementioned projects under the \$6.5 billion dedicated funding, the HSS is being tested out in (d), (e), (g) and (i). The Development Bureau and the HC will continue to extend the implementation of this open management mode to suitable harbourfront projects and introduce improvements with reference to such experience, thereby building a more attractive and vibrant harbourfront for the public.