

TAC briefed on road maintenance and streetscape enhancement works and update on car parking initiatives

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) was briefed today (September 13) on road maintenance and streetscape enhancement works and given an update on car parking initiatives.

The road network of Hong Kong has expanded rapidly, with the total length of public carriageways having increased from about 3,400 kilometres in 1986 to about 6,000km in mid-2021. With the existing roads beginning to age, the relevant maintenance works are becoming more onerous. In this connection, the Highways Department (HyD) has been researching, developing and putting into application new technologies to enhance the efficiency and safety of road maintenance works, including the research and trial use of more durable bituminous paving materials to minimise the frequency of maintenance works of an extensive scale or prolonged duration and the development of an intelligent robotic system to automatically place and collect traffic cones and lanterns to help enhance the safety of workers. Tying in with the relevant maintenance and renovation programmes, the HyD has also carried out beautification works at selected bridges or subways with high pedestrian flow at prominent locations every year since 2017 by drawing up thematic designs and adding some featured patterns on to the structures to echo the character of the surrounding environment.

The TAC Chairman, Professor Stephen Cheung, said, "Members support the HyD to research and develop, as well as apply, new technologies in road maintenance works, including using more durable road paving materials and the intelligent robotic system, and look forward to more new technologies being put into application, which will further enhance the inspection and maintenance of road facilities. At the same time, Members are pleased to note the HyD's beautification works for highway structures and lamp posts which, in addition to enhancing the streetscape, create temporary jobs to help alleviate the unemployment situation under the pandemic."

The Government's policy in the provision of parking spaces is to accord priority to meeting the parking demand for commercial vehicles, and to provide an appropriate number of private car parking spaces if overall development permits, but at the same time not to attract passengers to opt for private cars in lieu of public transport, so as to avoid aggravating road traffic. The Government is pursuing a host of measures to suitably increase the supply of parking spaces, including the revision of the parking standards stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) to increase the type and number of parking spaces in future private and subsidised housing developments, and the use of automated parking systems. The Government has meanwhile been enhancing the efficiency of car parks in

government facilities, including dissemination of real-time parking vacancy information and enhancement of roadside parking facilities. The Transport Department (TD) will also continue to conduct regular reviews on the parking standards under the HKPSG and make timely amendments to cope with the latest changes in the social and economic environment.

Professor Cheung said, "Members welcome the Transport and Housing Bureau's and the TD's ongoing endeavours under the current policy on parking spaces to pursue a host of measures to increase the provision of parking spaces and enhance the existing parking spaces, including the revision on the standards of parking provision to increase car parking provision, and agree that the TD should review the standards of parking provision at regular intervals to match the social and economic changes. Members appeal to the stakeholders to continue to support the TD in taking forward measures to increase the provision of parking spaces and enhance the existing parking spaces."