

**The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address:
Major initiatives under DEVB**

1. Enhancing Quantity

1.1 10-year supply forecast of developable land

To keep track of our land production, we have updated our 10-year land supply forecast (i.e. from 2024-25 to 2033-34). It is estimated that there will be about 3 370 hectares (ha) of developable land supply, with an increase of 90 ha as compared to the 10-year supply forecast made last year.

1.2 Private housing supply

According to the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS), the supply target for private housing in the next 10 years is projected to be 132 000 units. The Government will make available sufficient land in the next five years to provide about 80 000 units through land sale or railway property development.

1.3 Northern Metropolis

Adopting an “industry-driven and infrastructure-led” approach as its key planning axle, the Northern Metropolis will forge a major hub for Hong Kong to integrate into the overall development of our country. The Government will shortly publish the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda¹. From the west to the east, the Northern Metropolis will be divided into four major zones, namely (i) high-end professional services and logistics hub covering Hung Shui Kiu and the surrounding area; (ii) I&T zone covering San Tin Technopole including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop; (iii) boundary commerce and industry zone covering the New Territories North New Town and the vicinity; and (iv) blue and green recreation, tourism and conservation circle comprising areas such as Robin’s Nest, Sha Tau Kok and Yan Tong Chau.

Having reviewed the plan to build a public columbarium at Sandy Ridge in the North District, the Government will change the use of the two-hectares site for I&T and related purposes to tie in with the development of the Northern Metropolis, given the sufficient supply of public niches in the future.

¹ Following the 2023 Policy Address, the Government already published the Action Agenda on 30 October 2023.

The Government will further leverage market forces to expedite the development of the Northern Metropolis. We will extend the “Enhanced Conventional New Town Approach” to all new development areas and improve its operational arrangements to designated sites for industries and private community/welfare facilities, and facilitating landowners owning 90% or above of private land within a development site to carry out consolidated development.

1.4 Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands

The Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands will provide 1 000 ha of land, creating a new central district with liveable, smart, green and resilient development strategies. The Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands will also connect the Hong Kong Island, Lantau Island, the airport, New Territories West and even Qianhai of Shenzhen. The Government will commence the environmental impact assessment process this year. The newly established Committee on the Financing of Major Development Projects will put forward proposals on the financing arrangements for the reclamation of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, associated infrastructure and strategic transport infrastructure development. We also plan to set up a gallery to showcase our major construction projects including the Northern Metropolis and the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands.

1.5 Revitalise Hung Hom Station and nearby sites

We will invite the MTRCL² to conduct a preliminary study and submit proposals next year to re-plan and develop a total land area of about 10 ha covering the Hung Hom Station and the railway facility sites in the vicinity, as well as the waterfront and pier facility sites to the south of the Hong Kong Coliseum so as to upgrade the facilities of the Hung Hom Station, release commercial and residential floor area, and create a vibrant harbourfront. The Government will also explore ways to enhance pedestrian connectivity between Hung Hom and Tsim Sha Tsui East, and improve the waiting areas of the bus stops near the Cross Harbour Tunnel.

1.6 Develop the ex-Lamma Quarry site

The Government will complete the study to map out the development direction of the 20-hectare site in 2024, and will optimise the use of the quarry site and shoreline to provide leisure and recreational facilities for island tourism.

² Following the 2023 Policy Address, we have sent our invitation to the MTRCL.

1.7 Optimise the use of “Green Belt” area

The Government has in recent years, identified some 1 500 hectares of land in “Green Belt” zone for high density development. The projects are either being implemented or under technical studies. While the Government has no plan for the time being to further identify additional “Green Belt” areas for large-scale development, we will consider using some of the sites for recreational and tourism purposes. For example, South Lantau offers rich eco-recreational resources, and could be developed for eco-tourism or recreational uses, including eco-recreational facilities at Cheung Sha, Shui Hau, Shek Pik and Pui O. The DEVB will gauge public views for the initiative in South Lantau in the first half of 2024.

1.8 Single site, Multiple use (SSMU)

We will continue to take forward the six pilot projects under the SSMU model on government sites, and will continue to adhere to this development concept in providing sports, recreational, cultural and social welfare facilities for the community.

2. Enhancing Speed and Efficiency

2.1 Streamline development procedures

The Development (Town Planning, Lands and Works) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2023, which streamlined statutory procedures including town planning, land resumption, reclamation, roads and railway works etc, took effect on 1 September 2023. Under the streamlined process, the time required for turning “primitive land” into “spade-ready sites” (i.e. site with formation works completed and ready for construction) will be reduced from at least 6 years at present to around 4 years for an average project; as for new development area projects which are larger in scale and relatively complex, the time required for producing “spade-ready sites” will be reduced from 13 years in the past to around 7 years.

We will introduce a bill into the Legislative Council (LegCo) by the end of 2023 to streamline the procedures for extension of land leases expiring from 2025, viz. to extend a land lease by operation of law upon publication of gazette notices and not by executing a land lease document with the owner(s).

We will introduce more administrative measures to simplify procedures, for example, to complete straight-forward title-checking cases within 12 weeks to expedite disbursement of land resumption compensation; and to relax the gross

floor area (GFA) exemption for aboveground car parks to speed up the development process.

2.2 Extend the arrangement for charging land premium at standard rates

We will, within 2023, regularise the “standard rates” arrangement for redevelopment of industrial buildings (IBs) and extend the applicable scope to cover pre-1987 IBs for special uses. We will also introduce a pilot scheme to extend the arrangement in phases to agricultural land in the New Territories outside New Development Areas. The first phase targets private developments within the existing new towns of Yuen Long, North and Tuen Mun districts, as well as those that are in the vicinity of existing or proposed railway stations.

2.3 Expedite the approval of building plans

The Government will promulgate this year a roadmap for full adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM) in the preparation and approval of building plans for private development projects. We will ask the Hong Kong Housing Society, the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and the MTRCL to act as pioneers from the second quarter of next year by adopting BIM in preparing building plans of residential projects.

3. Enhancing Quality

3.1 Enhance the efficiency of urban renewal

In view of urban decay and ageing buildings, we will speed up redevelopment and step up the maintenance of aged buildings.

(a) “Planning-led” redevelopment approach

Comprehensive urban renewal master plans and restructuring proposals are expected to be ready by phases from the second half of 2024 for Tsuen Wan and Sham Shui Po.

In the next five years, the URA will commence two redevelopment projects proposed by the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok, namely the “Nullah Road Urban Waterway” in Mong Kok East and the “Street Consolidation Areas” in Yau Ma Tei South.

(b) Enhance URA’s financial capability

To enable URA to cope with future financing demand for undertaking

sizeable redevelopment projects ahead, the Government granted approval in mid-2023 for raising its borrowing limit from \$6 billion to \$25 billion. We will also provide suitable land for the URA at nominal land premium to enhance the viability of the concerned redevelopment projects and increase the usable resourced available to URA.

(c) More target-oriented approach in lowering the compulsory sale application threshold

We will adjust the proposal to lower the compulsory sale application threshold in a more targeted manner as suggested by stakeholders during consultation. The general principle is that lower thresholds will be adopted for older buildings in districts with more pressing need for redevelopment. The DEVB will introduce an amendment bill on the above adjusted proposal, together with other proposals to update and streamline the compulsory sale regime which are supported by stakeholders, into the Legislative Council by end of this year, and set up within 2024 a dedicated office to provide one-stop support services to minority owners affected by compulsory sale. Please refer to **Annex E** for more details.

(d) A new mechanism for large-scale redevelopment projects

We will embark on a study within this year to explore feasible policy measures to use part of the reclaimed land outside the Kau Yi Chau central business district to facilitate implementation of urban redevelopment projects by the public and private sectors. We will, using the data collated from the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok, conduct case study to explore various options which may include allowing transfer of plot ratio from old districts to Kau Yi Chau.

3.2 Enhance Building Safety

The Government will continue to collaborate with the URA to provide owners with technical and financial support for building repairs. Starting from this quarter, we will initiate prosecution against owners or owners' corporations (OCs) who have not complied with notices served under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and where there is a lack of progress without a reasonable explanation. Moreover, we will comprehensively review the MBIS policy and will put forth specific recommendations in the first quarter of next year.

3.3 Review the Buildings Ordinance

To empower the Buildings Department (BD) to take enforcement actions more

effectively, we will review the Buildings Ordinance and put forth amendment proposals next year, including raising the maximum penalties, streamlining prosecution procedures, lowering the prosecution threshold, and reviewing the registration and disciplinary systems for registered contractors.

3.4 Promote Elderly-Friendly Building Design

The Deputy Financial Secretary will co-ordinate with the relevant bureaux to put forward proposals next year for incorporating universal design concepts (i.e. enabling use by the widest range of persons as far as possible) and accessibility (i.e. facilitating mobility) into the BD's building design manual.

3.5 Scale up Capability in Coping with Extreme Weather

To strengthen Hong Kong's capability in coping with extreme weather conditions, the Government will adopt a more pre-emptive and strategic approach, as follows:

- (i) exploring ways to use big data, AI and other technology to improve our risk assessment capabilities on aspects of more uncertainties, such as flooding and landslide hazards;
- (ii) conducting systematic investigations and studies on major landslide incidents triggered by extreme rainstorms and devising focused measures of landslide mitigation for more natural slopes; and
- (iii) taking forward expeditiously the \$8 billion drainage improvement works projects, covering Wong Tai Sin, Hong Kong Island East and other areas hit by severe floods in the past. The Drainage Services Department will complete its "Strategic Planning Study on Flood Management against Sea Level Rise and Extreme Rainfall" next year and develop a forward-looking strategy.

Development Bureau
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