

## Chapter 12

---

# Infrastructure Development and Heritage Conservation

*To maintain Hong Kong as a world-class city, the Government continues to invest in infrastructure and promote community development through conservation and revitalisation of historic built heritage.*

### **Organisational Framework**

The Development Bureau was established on July 1, 2007 following the reorganisation of the Government Secretariat's Policy Bureaux. It consists of two policy branches: Planning and Lands Branch, and Works Branch. The Development Opportunities Office was set up under the bureau in 2009.

The Planning and Lands Branch is responsible for policy governing planning, development, land use and supply, urban renewal, building safety and land registration. Its policy objectives are to facilitate Hong Kong's continual development through effective planning and use of land, a steady and sufficient supply of land, efficient registration of land, promoting and ensuring building safety and timely maintenance, and expediting urban renewal.

The Works Branch is responsible for formulating public works policies and co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of public works projects. It also takes charge of policy matters concerning greening, water supply, slope safety, lift safety, flood prevention, construction manpower resources, as well as heritage conservation.

The Development Bureau oversees the Planning Department, Lands Department, Buildings Department, Land Registry, Architectural Services Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department, Drainage Services Department, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, and Water Supplies Department. The reorganisation of these nine government departments under one roof ensures more efficient co-ordination and resolution of inter-departmental issues relating to infrastructure development at an early stage.

The Development Bureau is also responsible for enhancing the Government's heritage conservation work and striking a balance between development and conservation. The Government's heritage conservation policy and initiatives, drawn up in response to public aspirations, aim to facilitate active public involvement in protecting Hong Kong's heritage.

The Development Opportunities Office (DOO) was established on July 1, 2009 for an initial period of three years to provide one-stop advisory and co-ordinating services to project proponents in the private sector and non-governmental organisations. The DOO does not approve land development projects, but facilitates the implementation of those that have broader social values or that strengthen Hong Kong's economic competitiveness.

The Land and Development Advisory Committee advises the Government on major policies and procedures on land development matters. Its terms of reference and membership were broadened after it was re-organised in July 2009, enabling it to advise the Government on the merits of individual project proposals handled by the DOO.

The DOO has also assisted in developing and co-ordinating implementation of the package of policy measures announced by the Chief Executive in his 2009 Policy Address which called for the redevelopment and wholesale conversion of Hong Kong's old industrial buildings. The package of new measures came into operation on April 1, 2010 and will be effective for three years.

## **Planning for Hong Kong**

Strategic town planning provides an important framework for Hong Kong's future development. The 'Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy' provides a framework for planning the city's long-term development. It focuses on providing Hong Kong with a quality living environment, enhancing its economic competitiveness and strengthening its links with the Mainland to help it become Asia's world city.

### *Harbourfront Enhancement*

Hong Kong's image as a vibrant and colourful city owes much to its attractive Victoria Harbourfront which the Government is committed to protecting and beautifying. In July 2010, a new Harbourfront Commission was established as a non-statutory body to advise the Government on harbourfront planning, design, management and other related matters to foster and facilitate the harbourfront's development. The Government is drawing up plans for developing the different key sites along the harbourfront to increase its vibrancy and to complement the Tamar Development Project due to be completed in 2011. Work has started on building an advance promenade to link Central Pier No. 10 with the northern part of the Tamar project for the public's early enjoyment.

### *Town Planning Board*

The Town Planning Board (TPB) is the principal body responsible for statutory planning in Hong Kong. Its members are appointed by the Chief Executive under the Town Planning Ordinance (TPO). Comprising mostly non-Government members, the TPB oversees the preparation and review of statutory plans, considers public representations to them and examines applications for amending them. In 2010, 28 statutory plans were amended and 10 new Development Permission Area (DPA) Plans were published.

Under the TPO, any person may submit to the TPB his or her views on draft statutory plans. In 2010, the TPB examined about 1 303 such submissions. During the year, 19 statutory plans were submitted to the Chief Executive in Council for approval. In 2010, the TPB also considered 29 applications for amendments to statutory plans.

A set of notes is attached to each statutory plan, listing the uses permitted in particular zones and those that require TPB permission. In 2010, the TPB considered about 744 applications for planning permission and about 360 applications for amendments to approved schemes. The TPB also reviewed its decisions on 79 applications.

Applicants aggrieved by the TPB decisions may lodge appeals with the independent Town Planning Appeal Boards. In 2010, the boards heard five cases, of which one was allowed, three were dismissed and one is awaiting a decision.

The TPB also promulgates guidelines for statutory planning. In 2010, one set of new guidelines was promulgated and one set of existing guidelines was revised. At the end of 2010, there were 31 sets of guidelines.

### *Planning Enforcement*

The TPO provides the Planning Authority with enforcement powers to tackle 'unauthorised developments' (UDs) in Development Permission Areas. The Planning Authority may serve statutory notices on the respective landowners, occupiers and/or responsible persons, requiring them to stop or discontinue a UD within a specified time. Subsequently, a further statutory notice may be served to require the site to be reinstated. Non-compliance is a statutory offence.

In 2010, a total of 372 new UD, including open storage, container-related uses, vehicle parks and land/pond fillings were discovered. A total of 3 625 warning letters or reminders (involving 602 cases), 2 071 enforcement notices (involving 307 cases), 299 reinstatement notices (involving 46 cases) and 1 617 compliance notices (involving 224 cases) were issued. A total of 152 defendants in 59 cases were convicted. The enforcement and prosecution actions resulted in the discontinuation of 236 UD on 52 hectares of land. Another 75 UD occupying 49 hectares of land were regularised through the planning application system.

### *Cross-boundary Planning and Development*

The Government maintains close liaison with the Guangdong authorities on planning matters under the Hong Kong-Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference.

Cross-boundary surveys are commissioned regularly to collect statistical information on various aspects of cross-boundary activities, such as travel patterns and behaviour, and Hong Kong people's experience of, and aspirations to, taking up residence in the Mainland. The findings provide valuable input for planning cross-boundary infrastructure and formulating development strategies.

A planning study, 'Action Plan for the Bay Area of the Pearl River Estuary', was commissioned jointly by the Hong Kong, Macao and Guangdong governments to identify measures that will enhance quality living in the Bay Area. The study is expected to be completed in 2011.

Plans are being made for setting up a boundary control point at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai to strengthen the physical connection between Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

A study, 'Land Use Planning for the Closed Area', to provide guidance for developing and conserving the area, was completed in July 2010. Based on the Recommended Development Plan for the Closed Area, prepared under the study, DPA Plans were drawn up for Ma Tso Lung and Hoo Hok Wai, Man Kam To, Ta Kwu Ling North, Lin Ma Hang and Sha Tau Kok. These plans were displayed for public inspection on July 30, 2010.

## **Major Planning Studies/Planning Reviews**

### *Lantau Development*

A 'Revised Concept Plan for Lantau' has been released taking into account public views and environmental needs. It provides an overall framework for planning a balanced and co-ordinated development of Lantau.

### *Environmental and Area Improvement*

The Planning Department is continuing its feasibility study on an urban climatic map and standards for wind environment. It is also carrying out air ventilation assessments for various planning and development schemes. Studies on improving Hong Kong Island's east harbourfront and the Lau Fau Shan (scheduled for completion in 2011) and Sha Tau Kok townships are continuing.

### *Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines*

The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines is a government manual of criteria for determining the scale, location and site requirements of various land uses and facilities applicable to planning studies, town plans and development control. It is reviewed from time to time to take account of changes in government policies, demographic characteristics, and social and economic trends. During the year, the planning standards and guidelines for conservation were revised.

## **Land Supply**

The Government's policy is to ensure sufficient land supply and provide quality infrastructure to maintain a fair and stable environment for the healthy and sustainable development of the property market. To increase residential land supply in response to market demand, the Government has fine-tuned its land supply

arrangement by designating nine residential sites in a 2010-11 'List of Sites for Sale by Application' for government-initiated sale. The Government will, depending on market conditions, put these sites up for sale by auction or tender if they are not triggered for sale.

In the light of the average annual take-up rate of 18 500 first-hand private residential flats in the past 10 years, the Government feels that on average, land is needed for some 20 000 private residential flats annually over the next 10 years to ensure a healthy and stable property market. This is not a fixed target for private residential flat production. The aim is to build up a sufficiently large land reserve over a period of time to ensure a stable land supply for the residential property market. The Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply, chaired by the Financial Secretary, is co-ordinating the work of the departments concerned to ensure the plan is given priority.

To increase the supply of small and medium sized flats, the Government has tendered the ex-Yuen Long Estate site for such flats with restrictions on their size and number.

### *Land Acquisition*

Acquisition of private land for public use may be achieved through negotiation or resumption under the relevant ordinances which provide for compensation for the property's value at the date of acquisition and for the loss of business. If agreement on the amount of money to be paid cannot be reached, either party may go to the Lands Tribunal for adjudication. There are simplified assessment procedures for achieving early release of payment to facilitate land clearance. Some 48 944 square metres of private land, comprising about 129 square metres of building land and 48 815 square metres of agricultural land, were acquired in 2010. Compensation amounting to \$315 million was paid during the year.

The Lands Department was also involved in the resumption of land for urban renewal projects. During the year, compensation totalling \$56.7 million was paid to owners of 79 resumed properties and occupiers affected by 20 urban renewal projects. Some 47 hectares of land, including underground strata for the West Island Line and the Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, were resumed and compensation amounting to \$1.15 billion was paid in 2010.

### *Land Disposal*

Disposal of Government land is usually done through public auction or tender. In 2010, 11 residential sites, six petrol filling stations, one business site and one logistics development site covering an area of about 15.25 hectares were sold for about \$45.245 billion.

For leased land, lessees (normally referred to as 'private landowners') who wish to change the terms of their existing leases say, for carrying out a redevelopment in accordance with the prevailing plan, may apply to the Lands Department for a lease modification or land exchange. Such applications will be considered by the department acting as private landlord. Approvals are subject to terms and conditions,

which may include the payment of premiums and administrative fees. During the year, 134 lease modification and land exchange transactions were concluded, involving an area of about 80.66 hectares of land and land premiums amounting to \$26.196 billion.

#### *Land Management and Lease Enforcement*

The Lands Department manages properties which have reverted to government ownership through surrender, lease expiry, resumption, re-entry, and other similar actions. During the year, 32 properties were taken over for management by the department and 10 were disposed. The department currently manages 478 properties.

The department keeps a register of man-made slopes and is responsible for the maintenance and safety of 18 700 of them. The department inspects these slopes regularly with the help of private consultants. Information about the maintenance responsibility of slopes is in the department's website for public viewing. During the year, routine maintenance works were carried out on 6 345 slopes and stabilisation work on 315 slopes.

The Lands Department administers a 'Small House Policy' for indigenous villagers in the New Territories and is charged with approving the rebuilding of old village houses. During the year, 1 474 applications for building small houses and 231 applications for rebuilding old village houses were approved. The department is also responsible for processing rent exemption requisitions for indigenous villagers' rural properties in accordance with the exemption criteria in the Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance.

The Lands Department is delegated with the authority to approve the display of non-commercial publicity materials at 22 485 spots in public places.

It carries out the squatter control work, done previously by the Housing Department. At present, there are about 6 790 surveyed squatter structures in the urban areas and 386 800 in the New Territories. During the year, 319 illegal structures and extensions were demolished by the Squatter Control Unit.

In April 2010, a new Tree Unit was set up in the Lands Department to provide advice on matters concerning trees and landscape issues relating to leased land. The Tree Unit also gives advice on trees located on land not leased, or allocated, by the Government. The unit handled 3 032 applications and referrals concerning trees on private and Government land during its first nine months of operation.

#### *Land Conveyancing*

The Legal Advisory and Conveyancing Office provides legal advice and conveyancing services for government land transactions. These include the drafting of all government land disposal and lease modification documents and the checking of titles in land acquisitions. It processes applications for the sale of units under construction under the Lands Department Consent Scheme. In 2010, a total of 20 applications, involving 6 694 residential units, were approved. The office also approves Deeds of Mutual Covenant. In 2010, 49 such deeds were approved. It also

processes apportionments of premium and government rents, and recovers arrears of government rents by taking re-entry or vesting action.

### *Survey and Mapping*

The Survey and Mapping Office (SMO) of the Lands Department provides survey and mapping services in support of land administration and infrastructure development. It produces topographical maps, carries out land boundary surveys and maintains a geodetic survey network. A Satellite Positioning Reference Station Network and a computerised Land Information System were established as the main survey and mapping infrastructures for these survey and mapping activities to be carried out more efficiently. The SMO also provides support to the Land Survey Authority to administer the Land Survey Ordinance which governs the registration and conduct of Authorised Land Surveyors as well as land boundary survey standards.

The Satellite Positioning Reference Station's data service, previously available only to government users, is now also offered to the public free of charge. The service supports positioning applications for mapping, construction works, navigation, land-use planning and scientific research. Within the Government, the Data Dissemination System (DDS) is the major portal for geospatial data integration and sharing among bureaux and departments. Externally, the DDS serves the public through its website 'Hong Kong Map Service' operating as a channel for individuals and companies to purchase digital map products online.

In collaboration with other departments, the SMO developed the Geospatial Information Hub (GIH) as a government-wide web-based information integration and sharing platform. The GIH supports the operation of more than 50 bureaux and departments in delivering public services. Based on the GIH model, a new government web map portal called 'GeoInfo Map' was launched in May 2010 to facilitate the search of geographic information by the public and to support other departments' websites in providing community-related information. It helps the public find the locations of public facilities and obtain the relevant geospatial information provided by various departments.

The 3D Spatial Data Processing System operated by the SMO maintains territory-wide 3D photorealistic models of major ground features such as buildings, roads and terrain. 3D spatial data are useful for project planning and engineering construction.

### **Land Registration**

Land registration safeguards the rights of Hong Kong's social and economic development and underpins its importance. The Land Registry provides a comprehensive service for registering documents affecting land and keeping land records in electronic format for public search. Over 2.8 million land registers and 20 million documents can be accessed electronically.

## Land Registry Business Volume in 2010

### Registration Services

*(Distribution of Land Documents Lodged for Registration)*

<i>Nature</i>	<i>Number</i>
Agreements for sale and purchase of building units	162 739
Agreements for sale and purchase of land	2 788
Assignments of building units	186 936
Assignments of land	6 974
Building mortgages/building legal charges	118
Other mortgages/legal charges	174 395
Others	317 835
Total	851 785

### Search Services

*(Distribution by Search Mode)*

<i>Counter Searches</i>		<i>Online Searches*</i>	
<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
620 922	9.8%	5 729 401	90.2%

\*Online searches are conducted through an 'Integrated Registration Information System (IRIS)'. In August 2010, the Land Registry launched a new search system to enhance the stability in the delivery of search services to customers via the internet. The Registry also extended the online search service's operation hours.

Hong Kong currently adopts a deed registration system. To provide greater security of title and enhance ease of conveyancing, the Land Titles Ordinance was enacted in 2004. As agreed with the Legislative Council, the law will not come into effect until a comprehensive review is completed and further amended legislation is passed. During the year, the Registry continued preparatory work for the Land Titles (Amendment) Bill and consultation with the stakeholders.

### New Development Projects

The Government is committed to building new infrastructure and improving existing facilities to meet economic development needs, and continues to invest heavily in infrastructure development. Work on providing land and infrastructure for urban areas and the new towns progressed on schedule in 2010. The major development projects include:



### *The Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point*

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government are implementing jointly the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point (BCP) project to enhance the overall cross-boundary transport infrastructure for long-term economic growth and further regional co-operation.

An international design ideas competition for the BCP passenger terminal building, jointly organised by the Hong Kong and Shenzhen governments, was launched in December 2010 to obtain creative and people-oriented design ideas.

### *Development of the Lok Ma Chau Loop*

The development of the Lok Ma Chau Loop (the Loop) is among the 10 major infrastructure projects for economic growth announced by the Chief Executive in his 2007-08 Policy Address. Based on the public views collected, the Hong Kong and Shenzhen authorities felt that a major portion of the land in the Loop should be used for higher education facilities, complemented by facilities for hi-tech research and development as well as cultural and creative industries. A 'Planning and Engineering Study on Development of the Loop' which commenced in 2009 is going on and is expected to be completed in 2012. Stage One of a 'Public Engagement Exercise' to solicit views on the development proposals for the Loop was launched by Hong Kong and Shenzhen simultaneously in November 2010.

### *Kai Tak Development*

The Kai Tak Development is a large-scale project covering an area of over 320 hectares at the former airport site and its adjoining land. The aim is to create a vibrant, attractive, people gathering place to be called 'Kai Tak by the Harbour'. Construction has started, and will be completed in stages. Stage One comprises public housing, a cruise terminal and associated supporting infrastructure. The cruise terminal's first berth, together with the cruise terminal building, is expected to be in operation in mid-2013 and the second berth in 2014.

### *Central Reclamation Phase III and Wan Chai Development Phase II*

The Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII) and Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) projects are the last two phases of the Central and Wan Chai Reclamation project. Their main purpose is to provide land for essential transport infrastructures, including the Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB). The reclaimed land is also used for developing a vibrant and accessible harbourfront promenade to extend from Central to North Point. Reclamation work carried out under CRIII is largely completed and construction of the CWB tunnel in the same area is progressing. Construction of WDII started at the end of 2009 to enable the CWB to be commissioned in 2017.

### *New Development Areas in New Territories*

A report entitled 'North East New Territories New Development Areas (NDAs) Planning and Engineering Study' is being carried out to create a framework for the planning and development of the proposed Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping

Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDAs to address Hong Kong's long-term housing and land-use needs.

Meanwhile, Stage Two of the exercise to solicit public views on the preliminary outline development plans for the NDAs was completed in early 2010. Based on the views collected and the results of various technical assessments, a third round of consultation will be carried out on the recommended plans.

Preparations are under way for the development of Hung Shui Kiu NDA in the New Territories. The public is being consulted on the strategic role and vision for the NDA, and their views will be taken into account in a planning and engineering study to be carried out in 2011.

### *Cycle Track Network in the New Territories*

The Government is developing a network of bicycle tracks in the New Territories to give local residents and visitors an opportunity to better enjoy cycling and to explore Hong Kong's interesting and scenic sites at the same time. The track is about 110 kilometres long, and stretches from Sai Kung in the east through Ma On Shan, Sha Tin, Tai Po, Fanling, Sheung Shui, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan in the west.

There will be facilities along the route for bicycle rental, repair, parking as well as rest. Work on the first phase of the network started in May 2010 for completion in 2013.

### *Transport Infrastructure*

The Government is pushing ahead with the 10 large-scale infrastructure projects announced by the Chief Executive in his 2007 Policy Address. The aim of those projects is to help Hong Kong develop further, to improve its transportation infrastructure, and to foster cross-boundary integration with close neighbours Shenzhen and the Pearl River Delta region. Details are in Chapter 13.

## **Building Development**

### *Private Sector*

Quality and sustainable buildings are essential features of a prosperous and modern metropolis. The Buildings Department promotes and facilitates the construction and maintenance of such buildings to provide a safe and healthy living environment. The Government announced in October 2010 a package of new measures for creating sustainable building designs, controlling gross floor area concessions and requiring new buildings to use energy efficiently.

In 2010, work started on so-called superstructures at 130 building sites, covering a gross floor area of 1.52 million square metres. A total of 278 such buildings, with a combined gross floor area of 1.98 million square metres, was completed at a total cost of \$31.5 billion compared with 668 buildings, with a gross floor area of 1.49 million square metres, built at a total cost of \$26.1 billion, in 2009.

New major construction works in progress at the end of 2010 included three new themed areas at the Hong Kong Disneyland and phase II of Ocean Park's redevelopment, part of which is expected to be completed by early 2011.

### *Public Sector*

The Government develops and maintains most government buildings and public facilities, other than public housing, through the Architectural Services Department. 43 projects were completed by the department in 2010 including an extension block at the Prince of Wales Hospital, the redevelopment of Lo Wu Correctional Institute, the customs headquarters building, schools and recreational facilities. Another key project, the Hong Kong Pavilion for the World Exposition 2010 Shanghai China was officially opened on May 1, 2010.

Work started on 31 projects in 2010. The projects included the Phase 1 of North Lantau Hospital, the Town Park and indoor velodrome-cum-sports centre in Area 45 of Tseung Kwan O, the Cruise Terminal Building and ancillary facilities for the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal Development and the reprovisioning of the Cape Collinson Crematorium.

The Government will continue to implement environmentally friendly initiatives in its projects for sustainable development as far as practicable. Four projects received awards from the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects and the Hong Kong Green Building Council in 2010 in recognition of their quality and contribution to conserving the environment. They are: the Reprovisioning of Diamond Hill Crematorium, the Tseung Kwan O Sports Ground, the Hong Kong Pavilion for the World Exposition 2010 Shanghai China and the Redevelopment of Lo Wu Correctional Institute.

### **Building Safety and Maintenance**

Encouraging owners to maintain their buildings properly, to carry out timely repairs and to ensure building safety continued to be the Development Bureau's key areas of work in 2010. The Buildings Department launched a special operation in February 2010 to inspect the structural safety of all private buildings aged 50 years or above in the territory. The Development Bureau announced a new, multi-pronged package of measures to enhance building safety. The package covers four major areas, namely legislation, enforcement, support and assistance to building owners as well as publicity and public education.

A new minor works control system was launched in December 2010. The system provides simplified statutory procedures for building owners to carry out small-scale building works such as the installation of drying racks and supporting frames for air conditioners. The Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2010 for the implementation of the mandatory building inspection scheme and mandatory window inspection scheme was introduced into the Legislative Council in early 2010. The schemes require building owners to regularly inspect and repair their buildings and windows. A Bills Committee is scrutinising the bill.

In May 2009, the Government joined hands with the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority to launch a one-off drive, called Operation Building Bright to alleviate the unemployment situation in the building repair and maintenance industry caused by the financial tsunami and to improve building safety. Owners of old and dilapidated buildings are given financial help and technical advice to carry out repair and maintenance works on their buildings.

A total of \$2.5 billion was allotted by the Government and the two organisations to the drive to help repair and maintain about 2 500 buildings and create around 50 000 job opportunities in the construction, repair and maintenance industries.

Owners of buildings that qualify for financial support under the Operation may receive up to 80 per cent of the cost of repairs which must not exceed \$16,000. Owner-occupiers aged 60 or above may receive grants to cover the full cost of repairs, subject to a maximum of \$40,000.

The Hong Kong Housing Society assisted the Government in administering the \$1 billion Building Maintenance Grant Scheme for Elderly Owners. Recipients may also use the money they receive from the scheme to repair their premises or repay their outstanding loans with the Buildings Department, the Urban Renewal Authority or the Hong Kong Housing Society which was spent on building maintenance. The scheme was launched in May 2008. From that date until end-December 2010, a total of 9 212 applications was received, among them 6 844 applications amounting to \$181 million were approved.

The Buildings Department continues to serve statutory orders on owners and occupiers of dilapidated buildings requiring them to repair defects in their buildings. In 2010, some 2 246 such statutory orders were served and repairs to 839 buildings were carried out. The department continued removing unauthorised building works (UBWs) during the year using different measures to eliminate them. These included serving statutory notices and statutory removal orders on the owners and occupiers of such structures, preventing the erection of new UBWs and educating the public on the dangers and nuisances caused by such illegal structures.

### *Major Actions Against UBWs*

During the year, 28 613 cases of UBWs were dealt with; 22 903 statutory orders requiring their removal were served and 25 751 UBWs were removed. Some 2 091 cases were adjudicated, resulting in 1 544 convictions and fines totalling \$5.08 million. A total of 2 609 offenders were prosecuted for failing to comply with the statutory removal orders.

The Buildings Department continued clearing UBWs in 2010. It also removed unauthorised large signboards and UBWs on cantilevered slab balconies from some 166 buildings in 2010. A one-off special operation was launched in August 2010 to remove 2 000 abandoned signboards across the territory to improve the cityscape as well as create new jobs. Over 3 370 abandoned/dangerous signboards were removed or repaired in 2010.

## **Urban Renewal**

Urban renewal aims to tackle the problem of urban decay and improve the living conditions in old urban areas, while preserving their local characters and social networks as far as practicable.

The Development Bureau formulates policy on urban renewal and oversees the work of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), a statutory body established in May 2001 with a mandate to conduct urban renewal.

The Urban Renewal Strategy (URS) provides guidelines for the URA's work. In 2008, the Development Bureau launched a comprehensive review of the URS to respond to changing public aspirations. After extensive public engagement over two years and on the basis of broad consensus, a revised draft text of the URS was issued for public consultation which ended in December 2010. The new URS emphasises a people-centred, district-based and participatory approach. Under the new URS, the URA will adopt 'Redevelopment' and 'Rehabilitation' as its core businesses. It will also assist property owners to explore more diverse models of redevelopment.

To implement the new URS, three new measures were announced. A new advisory platform, the District Urban Renewal Forum (DURF), will be set up to collect views from professionals, residents and other stakeholders to formulate a blueprint for sustainable urban renewal. The first pilot DURF will be established in Kowloon City. An independent Urban Renewal Trust Fund, to be endowed with \$500 million from the URA, will be set up to support the DURFs, to fund the social service teams and to subsidise preservation or revitalisation projects selected in the context of the urban renewal. Furthermore, to enable early implementation of a new 'flat for flat' arrangement as an alternative option to cash compensation for affected domestic owner-occupiers in URA projects, the Government will reserve one to two sites in the Kai Tak Development Area for the URA to build an early stock of flats for this option.

In 2010, the URA and its strategic partner were carrying out 40 redevelopment projects and four preservation projects.

## **Heritage Conservation**

### *Heritage Conservation Policy and New Initiatives*

The Government's heritage conservation policy, as announced in October 2007, is to protect, conserve and revitalise as appropriate historical and heritage sites and buildings through relevant and sustainable approaches for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. In implementing this policy, due regard is given to development needs in the public interest, respect for private property rights, budgetary considerations, cross-sector collaboration and active engagement of stakeholders and the general public. The Commissioner for Heritage's Office (CHO) in Development Bureau has made good progress on its heritage conservation initiatives in 2010.

In the public domain:

- (a) The six non-profit-making organisations selected under Batch I of the 'Revitalising Historic Buildings through Partnership Scheme' (Revitalisation Scheme) to revitalise six government-owned historic buildings, namely the Old Tai O Police Station, the Fong Yuen Study Hall, the former Lai Chi Kok Hospital, Lui Seng Chun, Mei Ho House and the former North Kowloon Magistracy, pressed ahead with their respective revitalisation projects. Renovation works at the former North Kowloon Magistracy to transform it into the Savannah College of Art and Design Hong Kong Campus were completed and the school term started in September 2010. The revitalisation work of the other five projects will be completed in 2011 and 2012;
- (b) Three non-profit-making organisations were selected in September 2010 to revitalise three historic buildings under Batch II of the Revitalisation Scheme. The buildings are the Old Tai Po Police Station, the Blue House Cluster and Stone Houses;
- (c) Starting in September 2009, a new requirement is in place, where all new capital works projects are subject to the Heritage Impact Assessment requirement to avoid damage to heritage sites or if damage is unavoidable, to explore ways of reducing impairment;
- (d) Gradings of 1 086 historic buildings in the territory were confirmed by the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) under a comprehensive grading exercise to provide an objective basis to guide future conservation efforts;
- (e) Three privately-owned historic buildings, namely Tung Wah Museum, Man Mo Temple Compound and Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall and one government-owned historic building namely Kom Tong Hall, which currently houses the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, were declared monuments in November 2010 for permanent protection under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance; and
- (f) Government and the Hong Kong Jockey Club are taking forward the conservation and revitalisation of the Central Police Station Compound into a centre for heritage, art and leisure in partnership. A revised design of the project was announced in October 2010. The project's construction works are expected to be completed by end of 2014.

In the private domain:

- (a) In collaboration with Buildings Department, Lands Department, Planning Department and District Offices, CHO and the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) continued to closely monitor any works or development proposed by the private owners of declared monuments and graded buildings under an internal alert mechanism. To encourage preservation of graded buildings, CHO and AMO proactively engaged the owners to discuss possible preservation options commensurate with the heritage value

of the historic sites/buildings and the appropriate forms of economic incentives where necessary;

- (b) CHO approved nine applications from private owners of graded historic buildings for financial assistance to maintain their buildings; and
- (c) CHO reached agreement with the owner on a preservation-cum-redevelopment proposal where the front portion of a Grade 3 historic building at 179 Prince Edward Road West would be preserved and the rear portion demolished for commercial redevelopment as originally planned by the owner. The Town Planning Board approved a minor relaxation of the plot ratio taking into account the loss of the floor area for preservation while the owner undertook to revitalise part of the preserved area to display the history of the building at his own initiative.

### *Public Engagement and Publicity*

The bureau ran a series of programmes to reach out to the community through listening to public views and working with stakeholders to enhance interaction between the Government and the community.

In 2010, the bureau organised a series of publicity and public education activities, including:

- (a) Free guided heritage tours in Central and Tsim Sha Tsui for 500 low-income families from April to November 2010, with a total attendance of over 2 000;
- (b) Barrier-free guided heritage tours for the disabled from November 2010 to March 2011;
- (c) Tai Tam Waterworks heritage tours (Part II) for schools from December 2010 to April 2011;
- (d) A teaching kit on heritage conservation targeting secondary school teachers of Liberal Studies was produced and distributed for free to all secondary schools in Hong Kong in November 2010;
- (e) A heritage tourism expo from December 2010 to mid-2011 featuring six heritage tour routes in Hong Kong. A booklet was also published for distribution at the event; and
- (f) A symposium on the heritage tourism organised in collaboration with the University of Hong Kong in December 2010 to coincide with the heritage tourism expo.

The dedicated government website on heritage conservation ([www.heritage.gov.hk](http://www.heritage.gov.hk)) launched in January 2008 has received more than 900 000 visits. Since June 2008, the bureau also published a bimonthly newsletter '活化@Heritage' featuring topics of public concern and explaining the work of the Commissioner for Heritage's Office. Over 150 000 printed copies had been distributed by the end of 2010.

### *Antiquities and Monuments Office*

The AMO continued with its task of preserving Hong Kong's built heritage and promoting public awareness of heritage conservation by means of various educational and promotional projects in 2010. The AMO provides secretariat support to the AAB, which advises the Government on sites and structures that merit protection as monuments and on matters relating to antiquities and monuments.

In 2010, restoration and repair works on a number of historic buildings were carried out, including Kun Lung Wai and Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall in Lung Yeuk Tau, Man Mo Temple in Tai Po, Morrison Building in Tuen Mun, Maryknoll Convent School and St John's Cathedral. Restoration of the Tang Ancestral Hall in Ha Tsuen was in progress and will be completed in 2011.

Following the archaeological investigations in Kai Tak Area to ascertain the extent of the Lung Tsun Stone Bridge's remnants, a conservation management plan was formulated to guide the preservation of the remnants. Archaeological investigations were also carried out in Tai Po, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Sai Kung and Lantau Island to prevent underground archaeological deposits from damage during the building of village houses at those sites.

The AMO organised a wide variety of educational and publicity programmes such as displays, lectures, guided tours and workshops to promote heritage conservation. Starting from December 2010, a long-term exhibition is staged at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre to enhance public awareness of our rich archaeological and built heritage.

### **Greening, Landscape and Tree Management**

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Task Force on Tree Management led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Development Bureau co-ordinates government efforts on greening, landscape and tree management through a holistic approach, and ensures better integration of the upstream process of landscape planning and design with tree care in the downstream. The Greening, Landscape and Tree Management (GLTM) Section was established under the Works Branch of Development Bureau in March 2010 to champion a new, strategic policy on greening, landscape and tree management, with a view to achieving the sustainable development of a greener environment for Hong Kong.

The GLTM Section is underpinned by the Greening and Landscape Office (GLO) and the Tree Management Office (TMO). The GLO is responsible for central co-ordination of policy matters and departmental efforts on greening and landscape planning and design, while the TMO advocates a quality-led approach to tree management among tree management departments and in the community at large.

The GLTM Section seeks to raise the level of professionalism among practitioners and build up the capacity of the industry by formulating standards and guidelines on relevant issues (such as adequate space allocation for new planting, proper selection of planting species, pruning, vegetation maintenance, etc.), commissioning research, promoting knowledge-sharing both locally and with overseas counterparts,



manpower development through enhanced training, enhancing qualification requirements for contractors and contractor management. To better protect public safety, the GLTM Section introduced a new set of tree risk assessment arrangements for government departments in 2010. A new tree register containing information on trees under close monitoring by departments was launched at [www.trees.gov.hk](http://www.trees.gov.hk) in July 2010 to facilitate community surveillance of trees that may pose a risk to public safety. In collaboration with relevant departments, District Councils, schools and other interested organisations, the GLTM Section will continue to foster a tree care culture and promote public awareness of greening issues through community involvement and public education activities.

### *Better living environment through quality greening*

The GLTM Section oversees the implementation of greening measures across departments to provide a quality living environment. About 50 million plants, including trees, shrubs and annuals, were planted during the past five years with 10 million planted in 2010-11.

The GLO under the GLTM Section advocates a co-ordinated approach to urban greening and open-space planning, and promotes best practices in landscape design to optimise the greening effect. In view of the congested urban environment in Hong Kong, the GLO encourages the adoption of new greening techniques, such as vertical greening and roof greening, by sharing technical knowledge among practitioners.

The Government is developing and implementing Greening Master Plans (GMPs) for various districts. The GMPs define the overall greening frameworks and themes for individual districts. The Government has developed the GMPs for all urban districts. The greening works proposed in the GMPs for Central, Sheung Wan, Wan Chai, Causeway Bay, Tsim Sha Tsui, Mong Kok and Yau Ma Tei were completed. The greening work for the remaining urban areas commenced in the second half of 2009 for completion in 2011. Meanwhile, the Government is preparing for the formulation of GMPs for the New Territories.

## **Drainage Services**

### *Flood Prevention Programme*

To address flooding risks, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) has completed flood protection works at a total cost of about \$11.2 billion throughout the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon peninsula and the New Territories. The department has also embarked on the planning, design and construction of further flood protection works at a total cost of about \$10.4 billion.

The majority of major flood protection works in the New Territories have been completed. These include about 82 kilometres of trained rivers and 27 village floodwater pumping schemes. The risk of regional flooding in the New Territories has been substantially reduced as a result. Works to improve about 32 kilometres of drainage works in Sha Tin, Tai Po, Fanling and Sheung Shui and other areas are due for completion in 2013. Design work for another eight kilometres of drainage

channels in the upstream portions of the Ping Yuen River, Sheung Yue River and Ng Tung River in the Northern New Territories is in progress.

Completed major flood protection works in the urban areas include the Tai Hang Tung Flood-water Tank and Kai Tak Transfer Tunnel in West Kowloon and the Sheung Wan storm-water pumping station which was commissioned in 2009. Construction of another nine kilometres of storm-water drains in East Kowloon will be completed by 2011.

To reduce further the flooding risk in urban areas, the department is working in full swing on the construction of the Hong Kong West, Tsuen Wan and Lai Chi Kok drainage tunnels, totalling 20 kilometres with 43 intake structures. Construction of the former two tunnels commenced in late 2007, while works on the Lai Chi Kok tunnel started in late 2008. These projects, when completed in 2012, will intercept and channel storm-water from hillsides to the sea through the intakes and drainage tunnels, thereby reducing the risk of flooding in urban areas including Happy Valley, Causeway Bay, Wan Chai, Central and Western District, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung, Cheung Sha Wan and Lai Chi Kok. This arrangement of interception at mid-stream will minimise the need to build additional drains in these highly congested urban areas.

Under a preventive maintenance programme, the department continues to carry out inspection, de-silting and repair works for drainage systems. In 2010, over 2 000 kilometres of drains and watercourses were inspected and about \$111 million was spent on such maintenance work.

To promote flood prevention concepts, the department arranged regular visits to the San Tin Flood Prevention Information Centre for district councillors and school students, and also distributed pamphlets to property management offices and the general public.

### *Nullah Improvement Works*

In 2005, the Government announced a plan to provide decking to 16 sections of nullahs in urban areas to improve their surrounding environment. Deck and improvements works for 12 sections of nullahs have been completed, and that for another two sections are on schedule for completion by the end of 2012. Improvement works for the remaining two nullahs are in the design stage.

Besides, the DSD commenced in August 2010 an investigation study cum preliminary design of the improvement works to the Yuen Long Town Centre Nullah.

### **Slope Safety**

The Civil Engineering and Development Department's comprehensive Slope Safety System has brought about a substantial improvement in the safety of slopes by improving standards and technology, ensuring the safety of new slopes, improving the safety of existing slopes, and providing public warnings, information, education and community advisory services on slope safety.

Under the Landslip Preventive Measures (LPM) Programme, about \$1.2 billion was spent in 2010 to improve the safety of slopes. Upgrading works were completed on 375 sub-standard government man-made slopes, all of which were landscaped to blend in with their surroundings. Safety screening studies were completed on 155 private man-made slopes.

A long-term Landslip Prevention and Mitigation Programme (LPMitP) has been launched. It will deal with the landslide risk remaining after completion of the LPM in 2010, by upgrading man-made slopes and systematic mitigation of risk from natural hillside catchments with a known history of landslides where they are close to existing buildings and important transport corridors.

To foster better public understanding of landslide hazards from man-made slopes and natural terrain, a LPMitP launching exhibition and a 'Safer Slopes Safer Living' Fiesta to enhance community resilience to landslide hazards were organised in April 2010 and November 2010 respectively.

## **Water Supplies**

### *Water from Guangdong*

Hong Kong has been receiving raw water from Dongjiang since 1965. Dongjiang is now the major and long term source of raw water for Hong Kong. To accommodate seasonal fluctuations in the local yield, the current agreement for Dongjiang water supply signed in December 2008 provides flexibility in the daily supply rate. This arrangement enables Hong Kong to have better control of the storage level in reservoirs, thereby minimising overflow and saving pumping costs.

### *Water Storage and Consumption*

Full supply was maintained throughout the year. At the end of 2010, some 380 million cubic metres of water was in storage, compared with 410 million cubic metres a year earlier. Hong Kong's two largest reservoirs, High Island and Plover Cove were holding a total of 330 million cubic metres. Rainfall of 2 372 millimetres, 0.5 per cent lower than the annual average of 2 383 millimetres, was recorded in 2010.

The average daily supply of fresh water in 2010 was 2.564 million cubic metres, compared with 2.608 million cubic metres in 2009. Some 936 million cubic metres of fresh water was consumed in 2010, compared with 952 million cubic metres in 2009. In addition, 270 million cubic metres of salt water was supplied for flushing, compared with 271 million cubic metres in 2009.

### *Total Water Management*

The Government is implementing the Total Water Management strategy that aims to manage the water demand and supply in an integrated, multi-sectoral and sustainable manner. The key initiatives on water demand management include implementation of active leakage control, pressure management, extension of the use of sea water for toilet flushing, stepping up public education on water conservation and promotion of the use of water saving devices. During the year, the

Government has extended the voluntary Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme to water taps.

On the management of water supply, an inter-departmental working group was set up to explore ways and means to cut down the cost of providing reclaimed water from the Shek Wu Hui Sewage Treatment Works to residents in Sheung Shui/Fanling for toilet flushing and other non-potable uses. The Government will promote the re-use of grey water and rainwater harvesting. The option of sea water desalination will be developed further.

### *Water Works*

The programme for the replacement and rehabilitation of aged water main comprises some 3 000 kilometres. The works of the first stage were completed in early 2010, while the second and third stages are in progress. The works of the last stage are scheduled to commence in 2011.

The works of the first contract for expanding the Tai Po Water Treatment Works and its ancillary water transfer facilities commenced in early 2010 for completion in end-2011. Design of the remaining two contracts is in progress. A design and construction consultancy for the in-situ reprovisioning of the South Works of the Sha Tin Water Treatment Works commenced in August 2010. Work is scheduled to start in mid-2012 for completion at the end of 2016.

### *Water Accounts and Customer Relations*

The number of water consumer accounts rises to approximately 2.77 million at the end of 2010. For the greater convenience to customers, online processing of water bill payment and other matters such as change of addresses was implemented. The Water Supplies Department also continues to act as an agent for collecting sewage charges and trade effluent surcharges on behalf of the Drainage Services Department.

A voluntary Quality Water Recognition Scheme for Buildings encouraging proper maintenance of internal plumbing systems continues to receive public support. Certificates of three grades (gold, silver and blue) are now awarded to successful applicants according to the number of years of their participation in the scheme.

## **Construction Industry**

### *Construction Industry Council*

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) continued to make steady progress in initiatives to raise standards in the industry, including construction site safety, subcontracting, environment and technology, procurement, and manpower training and development. The CIC keeps industry stakeholders informed of the latest developments through its website at [www.hkcic.org](http://www.hkcic.org).

The Construction Industry Council Training Academy under the CIC continued to provide training and trade testing services for the construction industry.

Up to the end of 2010, 5 786 applications for registration in the Voluntary Subcontractor Registration Scheme were received and 5 439 were approved.

### *Construction Workers Registration*

The Construction Workers Registration Authority (CWRA) continued to oversee the registration of construction workers and administration of the Construction Workers Registration Ordinance (CWRO). Up to end of December 2010, there were about 265 000 registered construction workers, among whom 162 000 renewed their registration for the first time. Under the CWRO's phase one prohibition, in place since September 2007, workers shall not carry out construction work on construction sites unless they are registered as construction workers. The construction industry can generally meet the requirements of the ordinance.

### *Developments under CEPA*

During the year, the Development Bureau continued discussions with stakeholders of the Hong Kong construction industry and the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on the eighth phase of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA). Under Supplement VII to CEPA signed between the Mainland and Hong Kong in May 2010, the Mainland side is committed to allowing Hong Kong professionals, who have obtained Mainland's class 1 registered architect qualification or Mainland's class 1 registered structural engineer qualification, to act as partners to set up construction and engineering design offices in the Mainland in accordance with the relevant qualification requirements. In addition, Hong Kong professionals, who have obtained Mainland's class 1 registered architect qualification or Mainland's class 1 registered structural engineer qualification by mutual recognition, are allowed to register and practise in Guangdong.

The bureau continued to second graduate trainees of its Graduate Training Scheme to Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Chongqing for training. In 2010, a total of 12 graduate trainees of architectural, civil engineering, structural engineering and quantity surveying disciplines completed their three-month secondment training in those cities.

### *Websites*

Development Bureau: [www.devb.gov.hk](http://www.devb.gov.hk)