

Chapter 15

Planning, Land and Development

The government invests in developing land and new infrastructure to meet the wide-ranging needs of the community, amid fast-changing global competition and regional development, and is committed to enhancing the living environment of Hong Kong through effective land use planning, urban renewal, urban design and heritage conservation.

The Development Bureau consists of two policy branches: the Planning and Lands Branch and the Works Branch.

The Planning and Lands Branch draws up policies on spatial planning, land development and supply, urban renewal, building quality and safety, and land administration. Its policy objectives are to facilitate Hong Kong's development through effective planning and use of land; a steady and sufficient supply of land; a facilitative building plan approval system; efficient land administration; promotion and regulation of building safety and timely maintenance; expediting urban renewal; harbourfront enhancement; and revitalising existing built-up areas.

The Works Branch formulates public works policies and coordinates and monitors public works projects. It also oversees policies on water supply; slope safety; lift and escalator safety; flood prevention; promotion of professional services and good practices in the construction industry; the transformation of Kowloon East into a second core business district; greening and tree management; and conservation of historical buildings.

The bureau oversees the Land Registry and the departments of Architectural Services, Buildings, Civil Engineering and Development, Drainage Services, Electrical and Mechanical Services, Lands, Planning, and Water Supplies.

Spatial Planning and Land Development

Supply Forecast of Developable Land

To plan for land creation work and to keep the society informed of the land supply situation, the government has been updating and releasing the annual 10-year supply forecast of developable land – that is spade-ready sites – since 2022. According to the latest forecast, if all procedures involved in land creation could be smoothly taken forward, it is estimated that around 2,600 hectares of spade-ready sites could be ready in the next decade, among which around 70 per cent (around 1,800 hectares) would come from the Northern Metropolis. The government is determined to sustain efforts in land creation and will take forward various land creation projects in a progressive and prudent manner, taking into account policy objectives, market conditions and fiscal considerations among different factors. The goal is to provide a stable and sustained land supply for Hong Kong to meet its overall demand, and to build up a land reserve in the long run to meet its future economic and social development needs.

Land Development Initiatives

The government is taking forward large-scale land development projects including developments in the Northern Metropolis, Tung Chung New Town Extension, Tseung Kwan O Area 137 and near-shore reclamation at Lung Kwu Tan. These projects involve releasing large plots of brownfield sites and deserted agricultural land as well as reclamation in environmentally less sensitive waters.

Northern Metropolis

The Northern Metropolis covers a vast expanse of land in northern Hong Kong, accounting for around one-third of the city's total. The metropolis is divided into four major zones – the

High-end Professional Services and Logistics Hub; Innovation and Technology Zone; Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone; and Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle – each with a distinctive strategic positioning and development theme. Major projects include:

Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area

The Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area (NDA) is estimated to provide about 66,700 new flats for an additional population of 184,000, along with 150,000 new jobs. The first phase development works began in 2020 with population intake for the first dedicated rehousing estate in November 2024. The second phase development works commenced in mid-2024 with targeted population intake starting from 2030, in conjunction with the anticipated commissioning of the Tuen Ma Line Hung Shui Kiu station.

An open tender was launched in December 2025 for the pilot area under large-scale land disposal in the NDA. The pilot area has a total area of about 11 hectares and comprises three residential sites and three enterprise and technology park sites. The tender is industry-oriented, and a series of facilitation measures was provided, to attract high-quality enterprises to establish their presence in the NDA, promoting growth of the industry chains.

The NDA is also one of three NDAs where land has been reserved for the development of the Northern Metropolis University Town. The planning for certain sites in the remaining phase of the NDA is under review as part of a study on the Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai areas, which aims to examine whether these sites can generate greater planning synergies with the adjoining areas.

Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai

In 2024, the government conducted a public engagement exercise on the development proposal for Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai. It focused primarily on establishing a digital technology hub and promoting eco-tourism, with a view to providing about 48,000 to 53,000 new flats for accommodating a total population of about 141,000 to 146,000, along with about 50,000 new jobs. Subsequently, the government invited the market to submit expressions of interest for two proposed eco-tourism nodes located at Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai, and received 19 responses. The government is now consolidating and analysing the views collected, while also considering other relevant factors, to formulate the final recommendations.

Yuen Long South New Development Area

The Yuen Long South NDA is estimated to provide about 32,900 new flats for an additional population of about 98,700 and produce about 13,700 new jobs. Site formation and infrastructure works for the first phase development commenced in 2022, with target first population intake to start by 2029-30. Construction of the second phase development began in September, with population intake expected progressively from 2032. The government is undertaking a review to expand the scale of the third phase development.

Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park

The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park occupies 87 hectares. As laid down in the Development Outline for the Park, the first phase of the park will provide a gross floor area of about 1 million square metres. The first batch of land parcels was provided at end-2021 for superstructure development and the first batch of three buildings completed progressively from end-2024. The park officially opened in December.

San Tin Technopole

San Tin Technopole will provide about 50,000 to 54,000 new flats and accommodate a new population of about 147,000 to 159,000, along with about 165,000 new jobs. The phase 1 stage 1 development of San Tin Technopole commenced from end-2024, with a view to completing the formation of the first batch of innovation and technology (I&T) sites in 2026-27 and enabling the first population intake in 2031.

Ngau Tam Mei

The government announced the final development proposal of Ngau Tam Mei in October, involving about 130 hectares of land, among which about 52 hectares are proposed for the development of the Northern Metropolis University Town (including the campus of the third medical school) and about 10 hectares are proposed for an integrated medical teaching and research hospital. The remaining area will be largely for a comprehensive residential community providing about 12,600 to 13,800 new residential units with a population of about 35,400 to 38,500. The entire development project is estimated to create 26,000 new jobs. Statutory procedures for town plan amendments and land resumption commenced in late October and mid-December respectively.

Kwu Tung North/Fanling North New Development Area

The Kwu Tung North/Fanling North NDA will provide about 86,200 new flats for accommodating an additional population of about 226,700. Nearly 70 per cent of the new flats will be public housing. It will also generate about 53,100 new jobs. Development works started in 2019 for phased completion by 2031. The intake for the first batch of private housing started at the end of 2022 and the first intake for public housing is expected in 2026.

Ma Tso Lung New Development Area

Following a 2022 study on land use in the Ma Tso Lung area, including parts of Kwu Tung North NDA, the government conducted a public engagement exercise on the development proposal between January and March. The Ma Tso Lung area is proposed to provide about 9,800 to 10,700 new private residential flats with open spaces and ancillary facilities providing support to meet the housing and daily needs of the I&T talents in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park.

New Territories North New Town

New Territories North New Town covers an area of over 1,400 hectares. Given its locational advantage with three boundary control points – namely Lo Wu, Man Kam To and Heung Yuen Wai – the area can be developed into a boundary control point business district and a base for emerging industries. In December 2024, the preliminary development proposal of New

Territories North New Town was released and a two-month public engagement exercise was conducted between January and March.

Apart from providing land to drive the development of different industries, about 40 hectares of land has been reserved initially for post-secondary education use, forming an important part of the Northern Metropolis University Town. Land has also been reserved for the development of a cultural node and a sports hub.

As an initial estimate, the entire new development area will provide about 163,000 to 176,000 flats, accommodate a population of about 449,000 to 484,000 and create about 165,000 jobs. Given the area's size, it is proposed to first proceed with a priority development area of about 206 hectares to boost the gateway economy, foster emerging industries and nurture highcalibre talents.

Au Tau

To capitalise on the development potential brought by the Northern Link, the Chief Executive announced in the 2025 Policy Address to engage the MTR Corporation to commence a land use review for Au Tau, with a view to considering a larger proportion of private housing in the area around Sha Po at Au Tau station and developing the area into a new development area. The target is to announce the review results in 2026.

Tung Chung New Town Extension

The Tung Chung New Town Extension, comprising Tung Chung East and Tung Chung West, will provide about 64,800 flats and a commercial node for office, retail and hotel use. The site formation and infrastructure works are being implemented in phases. More than half of the first phase works have been completed, with substantial completion of the first phase anticipated in 2028. The first population intake started in 2025. The second phase works commenced in April 2025 with target completion in phases from 2026 to 2030. The detailed design for the Tung Chung New Town Extension remaining phase is under way.

Tseung Kwan O Area 137

Tseung Kwan O Area 137 will be developed into a new community primarily for housing purposes, providing around 103 hectares of land for accommodating about 50,000 housing units and associated ancillary facilities to meet the daily needs of future residents. After considering the views collected from the local community, several enhancements were made to the proposal. These included measures to improve liveability and connectivity of the area. Statutory procedures were completed in 2025. Advance preparatory works commenced at the end of 2025. It will be served by the Tseung Kwan O Line southern extension and Tseung Kwan O-Yau Tong tunnel recommended under the Hong Kong Major Transport Infrastructure Development Blueprint.

Lung Kwu Tan Reclamation and Replanning of Tuen Mun West Area

Lung Kwu Tan/Tuen Mun West has extensive sea frontage and is in proximity to the Northern Metropolis, Hong Kong International Airport and the Pearl River Delta region, with excellent land and marine transport connectivity. In mid-2025, the preliminary development proposals for Lung Kwu Tan reclamation and the replanning of Tuen Mun West was announced. It is

proposed to leverage both places' strategic location to promote a Smart and Green Industrial Port focusing on four core industries with growth potential: green/new energy; advanced construction; circular economy; and modern logistics/River Trade Terminal.

Taking into account views received during a two-month public engagement exercise, the broad land use proposal is being further refined and detailed engineering/technical assessments are being conducted to formulate a recommended outline development plan.

Cavern Development

The government is taking forward projects to relocate government facilities to caverns so as to release land for housing and other beneficial uses. The construction works for the relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works and Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service reservoirs; Joint Cavern Development at Anderson Road Quarry Site for the Public Works Central Laboratory and Government Records Service's archives centre; and Reprovisioning of Victoria Public Mortuary are under way.

Underground quarrying is also a source of rock materials and can earn revenue. The pilot site is at Lam Tei, and its revenue contract commenced in 2025. The government is also undertaking studies of underground quarrying and cavern development at Tsing Yi North and Sham Shui Kok in Lantau.

Kowloon East

Kowloon East, comprising the Kai Tak Development and the Kwun Tong, Kowloon Bay and San Po Kong business areas, has a total area of about 514 hectares. Under the Energizing Kowloon East initiative, the area has been transformed into the second core business district to sustain Hong Kong's economic development.

By facilitating conversion or redevelopment of existing industrial buildings, as well as taking forward new development projects, commercial floor space in Kowloon East has increased from 1.7 million sq m in 2012 to 3.8 million sq m in 2025, and will progressively increase to over 4 million sq m, comparable to the size of the Central core business district.

The government is also providing essential infrastructure to serve the phased implementation of the Kai Tak Development, which covers the former airport precinct and the adjoining areas, and has a footprint of about 320 hectares.

Invigorating Island South

In accordance with the Invigorating Island South Conceptual Master Plan 3.0 for Wong Chuk Hang, Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau, and the findings of the study on pedestrian environment and traffic improvements to bring vibrancy to these areas, the Development Bureau has completed 40 immediate-impact measures to improve connectivity, walkability, public spaces and the typhoon shelter waterfronts.

Regarding major projects, the tender for the expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter was invited in November. A marina is proposed and an expression of interest exercise was launched from January to April, with a total of eight submissions received from enterprises/organisations,

including local and overseas developers, hotel/entertainment groups and marina developers/operators. The relevant technical assessment study for the integrated marina and residential development was commenced in November, with a call for tender targeted in the first half of 2027.

Under the Round-the-Island Trail project, the footbridge connecting Waterfall Bay Park and Cyberport Road and the new trail between South Bay Beach and Chung Hom Kok Road were completed.

Harbourfront Enhancement

The government continued to connect sections of the promenades and provide public space along both sides of Victoria Harbour in 2025. Through collaboration with the Harbourfront Commission, a total of 64 harbourfront sites have been opened between 2020 and end-2025, extending the promenade along the harbour to about 32 kilometres. With the opening of the East Coast Boardwalk, the approximately 13km-long harbourfront on Hong Kong Island from Kennedy Town to Shau Kei Wan is now connected.

Commercial facilities, such as food and beverages, retail and entertainment, are being introduced on a pilot basis at selected harbourfront locations. Smart specialty vending facilities operate at the promenades of Wan Chai, Kwun Tong, and Cha Kwo Ling, offering snacks, drinks and pop-up products. Refreshment stalls are being set up at sections in Central, Wan Chai, North Point and Tsim Sha Tsui.

The government amended the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance in May to provide a clearer mechanism for regulating reclamation in Victoria Harbour, while streamlining the mechanisms for small-scale reclamations involved in harbour enhancement projects and harbour non-permanent reclamations.

Hung Hom Harbourfront

A two-month public consultation on the preliminary development proposal of sites around Hung Hom station and its waterfront areas was launched in April. The government is working with the MTR Corporation to conduct detailed technical assessments for the proposed development and finalising the development proposal and detailed development parameters. The target is to commence relevant statutory procedures in the second half of 2026.

South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor

Following the principle of 'development in the north; conservation for the south' for Lantau Island, the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor will be built to enhance the eco-recreation potential of the South Lantau coastline, including Cheung Sha, Shui Hau, Shek Pik and Pui O. By leveraging the rich natural ecological and cultural heritage resources of South Lantau, eco-recreation tourism will be developed to promote the local economy. The government is reviewing and analysing views and suggestions collected between April and July to refine and enhance the development proposal for the corridor.

Cycle Track Network in New Territories

The cycle track network in the New Territories is being implemented in phases to connect New Territories East with New Territories West. The total length of the cycle track already opened, which includes the Tuen Mun to Ma On Shan section, the Tsuen Wan waterfront section, and Sam Mun Tsai waterfront section in Tai Po, is about 63km. The implementation schedule of the remaining section between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun is under review.

Revitalisation of Industrial Buildings

As at end-2025, the Town Planning Board approved 71 applications for the redevelopment of industrial buildings. It allowed the plot ratios of most of these applications to increase by up to 20 per cent to optimise the use of land resources, with applicants' confirmation about the technical feasibility of the proposed increases in development density.

Streamlining Administrative Procedures

The Development Bureau continued to streamline administrative procedures to expedite the development cycle and reduce construction costs. It will also streamline approval processes to expedite large-scale development projects. The Project Strategy and Governance Office will be responsible for government projects; the newly established Northern Metropolis Projects Supervision Office will be responsible for private projects in the Northern Metropolis, while the Development Projects Facilitation Office will be responsible for private projects outside the Northern Metropolis.

Assistance to Brownfield Operators Displaced by Government Projects

Of around 1,600 hectares of brownfield sites in the New Territories, about 60 per cent will gradually be developed into high-density housing and other uses. While redevelopment of these sites can help make better use of precious land resources and enhance land use efficiency, the government will continue to facilitate displaced brownfield operators to relocate their businesses under the policy directive of 'providing monetary compensation in parallel with facilitation service'.

Land Disposal

Land Sale Programme

Government land is usually disposed of through public sale for private residential, commercial and other developments. The annual Land Sale List includes sites with potential for sale in that financial year. The government announces sites every quarter to be tendered to provide transparency and certainty for the market.

In 2025, four residential sites, one logistics service and public vehicle park site, and one electric vehicle charging station site, were sold for about \$8.47 billion. The four residential sites were expected to provide about 2,410 private residential flats. In light of the market situation in 2025, the government did not put up any commercial sites for public sale.

Land Exchange

Private landowners may apply to the Lands Department for a lease modification or land exchange so as to, for instance, redevelop the site based on the town plan. The department acts as a private landlord in considering such applications. Approvals are subject to terms and conditions that may include the payment of premiums and administrative fees.

In 2025, the department concluded 77 such transactions, involving about 1,260 hectares and about \$6.4 billion in land premiums. These transactions are expected to provide about 8,815 residential flats and up to 92,870 sq m of gross floor area for commercial or other economic uses.

Urban Renewal

Urban renewal improves living conditions in old urban areas, primarily through redevelopment and rehabilitation of dilapidated buildings. The Development Bureau formulates policy on urban renewal and oversees the work of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA). The URA also provides financial assistance and technical support to building owners for building rehabilitation and repair.

The 2025 Policy Address proposed three innovative measures to make use of newly developed land to enhance the market incentives for redevelopment and expedite urban renewal. These include reserving sites in the Northern Metropolis for the URA to consider constructing replacement flats under the 'Flat-for-Flat' Scheme in future; allowing cross-district transfer of plot ratio to other districts including NDAs; and suitably increasing the plot ratio for private redevelopment projects meeting certain criteria in seven designated areas with an encashment option provided to allow the increased plot ratio to be translated into land premium for offsetting the land premium payable for in-situ redevelopment or other land transactions.

The bureau conducted a consultation from October to December to finalise the measures concerning transfer of or increase in plot ratio, with the aim of implementing in the third quarter of 2026. The URA submitted master renewal plans for Tsuen Wan and Sham Shui Po district planning studies by end-2025 as scheduled. Relevant bureaus and departments are examining the proposals and will provide feedback to the URA so as to facilitate the URA in refining the proposals and preparing the final study report.

Building Development

Private Sector

In 2025, superstructural works started at 89 sites, covering a gross floor area of 1.01 million sq m. A total of 476 buildings, with a gross floor area of 2.26 million sq m, were completed at a cost of \$112.1 billion.

Public Sector

The Architectural Services Department provides architectural and associated professional and project management services for the design, construction and upkeep of government

buildings and public facilities. It explores the latest construction technologies with academics, local and Chinese Mainland research and construction institutes and the private sector and applies innovative building solutions, as well as inclusive and green building design to provide a more sustainable, resilient and human-centric built environment. The department was recognised for its excellence in design of public architecture and won 63 regional and international awards in 2025.

In 2025, the department completed 32 projects and commenced 27 projects. Among those, Light Public Housing projects provided around 9,500 units in 2025, and will provide the remaining 20,500 units, bringing the total to 30,000 units, in the three years from 2025-26 to 2027-28.

Framework for Land Use Planning, Building Control and Land Administration

Town Planning Board

The Town Planning Board is a statutory body that oversees the preparation and review of statutory plans and considers planning applications. In 2025, it amended 24 statutory Outline Zoning Plans. It also updated documents related to statutory planning, including Definitions of Terms Used in Statutory Plans, Guidance Notes for Application for Permission under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance and Town Planning Board Guidelines on Submission of Visual Impact Assessment for Planning Applications to streamline the planning application process.

Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines

The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines provide criteria for determining the scale, location and site requirements of various land uses and facilities applicable to planning studies, town plans and development control. These are regularly reviewed by relevant bureaus and departments to take account of changes in government policies, demographic characteristics, and social and economic trends. In December, the guidelines relating to residential densities, open space, walkability strategies and coach/bus parking spaces, urban design and rock cavern development were updated.

Planning Control and Enforcement

The Planning Authority tackles unauthorised developments in the development permission areas and regulated areas. It may serve statutory notices on landowners, occupiers or responsible persons requiring them to stop or discontinue an unauthorised development within a specified period. A further notice may be served to require reinstatement of the land. Noncompliance is an offence.

In 2025, the authority handled 440 new cases of unauthorised development, and issued 2,399 warning letters or reminders involving 492 cases, 61 stop notices involving three cases, 2,232 enforcement notices involving 396 cases, 700 reinstatement notices involving 137 cases and 2,267 compliance notices involving 439 cases. A total of 170 defendants in 87 cases were convicted. The enforcement and prosecution actions resulted in the discontinuation of 383 unauthorised developments on 73 hectares of land, while another 42 occupying 12 hectares of land later obtained planning permission.

Land Control and Lease Enforcement

The Lands Department carries out squatter control work. There are about 373,300 surveyed squatter structures, and they are tolerated until they cease to exist or are to be cleared for development, environmental improvement or safety reasons.

In 2025, the department demolished or vacated 229 unauthorised squatter structures that were in breach of the squatter control policy, in addition to unauthorised structures cleared in the context of land control and lease enforcement. It also handled about 18,000 cases of reported unlawful occupation of government land and about 1,728 cases involving breaches of lease conditions.

The department keeps a register of man-made slopes which records their maintenance responsibility. It inspects and maintains about 17,500 registered man-made slopes under its purview regularly, and carried out maintenance works on 7,208 of them in 2025.

During the year, the department provided advice for about 1,155 development control submissions relating to trees and landscape on leased land and about 1,900 cases of tree issues on unallocated government land. It also conducted ad hoc vegetation maintenance work for about 22,400 cases.

Lease Extension

The Extension of Government Leases Ordinance, which came into operation in 2024, establishes a standing statutory mechanism for handling in batches and in a streamlined manner lease extension matters for general purpose leases (general residential, commercial, industrial leases) which do not contain a right of renewal. Applicable leases are extended for 50 years without payment of an additional premium but subject to payment of 3 per cent rateable value as government rent. In 2025, the government extended leases expiring in 2032, involving land leases of 28 lots.

Small House Policy Administration

The Lands Department administers the small house policy for indigenous villagers in the New Territories and the rebuilding of old village houses. In 2025, the department approved 773 applications to build small houses and 297 applications to rebuild old village houses. The department also processes rent exemption requisitions for indigenous villagers' rural properties.

Land Conveyancing

The department provides legal advice and conveyancing services for government land transactions. It drafts all government land disposal and lease modification documents, checks titles in land acquisitions, administers the Lands Department Consent Scheme, approves Deeds of Mutual Covenant, processes apportionments of premiums and government rents, and recovers arrears of government rents by taking re-entry or vesting action. In 2025, it approved 23 applications for the sale of about 10,800 residential flats under construction and approved 28 Deeds of Mutual Covenant in respect of residential developments.

Land Resumption

Private land may be resumed for public purposes under relevant ordinances which provide compensation for the property's value and business losses. If the amount of compensation cannot be agreed, either party may seek determination by the Lands Tribunal. The department is involved in resuming land for public works, urban renewal and railway development projects. In 2025, more than 1.6 million sq m of private land was resumed and about \$18.5 billion of compensation was paid for resumptions supporting public works projects, including public housing development; \$138.4 million compensation was paid to owners of 26 resumed properties affected by 11 urban renewal projects; and \$41.5 million compensation was paid in resumptions supporting railway projects.

Optimising Use of Vacant Government Sites under Short-term Tenancy

The Development Bureau runs a funding scheme for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to carry out one-off, basic and essential restoration works on vacant government sites and school premises fit for community, institutional or other non-profit-making use. In 2024, the funding commitment of the scheme was increased from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion, with enhancement measures to facilitate NGOs to make gainful use of vacant government sites for worthy projects for the community. As at end-2025, funding had been approved to take forward community projects at 31 vacant sites or premises.

Land Registration

The Land Registry registers land-related documents and keeps land records for public search. Major types of documents include sale and purchase agreements, assignments and mortgages. More than 3 million land registers and 27 million documents can be retrieved electronically. During the year, 418,055 land documents were lodged for registration. The registry also provides an email notification service, Property Alert, to help property owners monitor any documents delivered for registration against their properties.

The current deeds registration system will be gradually replaced by the title registration system. With the passage of amendments to the Land Titles Ordinance in September, the Development Bureau will introduce proposed subsidiary legislation to the Legislative Council for negative vetting to prescribe operational details for the new system. It is expected that the new system will be implemented on newly granted land first in the first half of 2027, enhancing title certainty and simplifying conveyancing procedures.

Development of Common Spatial Data Infrastructure

The Common Spatial Data Infrastructure (CSDI) Portal provides more than 1,000 spatial datasets for use by the government, trade and public, and attracted more than 2.05 million dataset downloads and over 9.5 billion application programming interface service calls in 2025. The Development Bureau continues to promote the use of CSDI, operate the Geospatial Lab, organise various activities, such as competitions, workshops and talks, to drive creation, analysis and applications of spatial data, and maintain close connections with stakeholders in the I&T sectors to build up a spatial data ecosystem in promoting more innovative use of spatial data and technology.

Use of Building Information Modelling

The government continues to promote the adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM). The tools for automated compliance checking on sanitary fitments, fire safety, building separation and structural requirements were launched by the Buildings Department in 2025.

The findings of a 2024 consultancy study, to formulate a technical framework for the full adoption of BIM by the private sector for preparation and submission of plans for approval under the Buildings Ordinance, were submitted to the government at the end of 2025.

To further uplift the quality of BIM models and effectiveness in adopting BIM, the Development Bureau mandated the inclusion of BIM models as part of tender information and made them contractually binding for tenders invited from April 2025.

To achieve seamless collaboration across software and geographical boundaries, enabling data interconnection and integration, and aligning with international standards, the government is promoting an open and standardised data platform, adopting openBIM as the universal collaborative language in different stages of the projects.

The government is also directing a more diversified development of BIM on software, technologies and standards to harness the strengths of high-quality software integrating artificial intelligence (AI), aiming at a resilient, innovative digital ecosystem to drive industry advancement.

Survey, Mapping and Geospatial Information Service for Smart City Development

The Lands Department provides geospatial information and services to support Hong Kong's smart city development and advocate the wider use of spatial data and locational information. It formulates and implements survey, mapping and geospatial data policies and standards; maintains a territory-wide positioning infrastructure; manages a comprehensive data bank of geospatial and cadastral data of Hong Kong; carries out geodetic, mapping and land boundary surveys; and provides cartographic and reprographic services. The department also develops and maintains applications such as GeoInfo Map and mobile apps MyMapHK.

In 2025, it released the territory-wide 3D Digital Map for free public viewing and download via the CSDI Portal and the Open3Dhk platform. It also launched the Underground Utilities Information System and Government Building Information Modelling Data Repository, which together with the 3D Digital Map contribute core components of Hong Kong's digital infrastructure and support the development of various applications related to land administration, city management, livelihood services and economic development.

Promoting Elderly-friendly Building Design

To encourage ageing in place and promote elderly-friendly building design, the government has formulated proposals on elderly-friendly building design comprising encouraged features and mandatory requirements for implementation in a two-level arrangement. For the encouraged features, the Buildings Department updated the practice notes and the Design Manual: Barrier Free Access in mid-2025 for implementation. As for the mandatory

requirements, the government will implement them through amendments to the Building (Planning) Regulations in the first half of 2026.

In addition, the bureau, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Green Building Council Limited and the BEAM Society Limited, launched a voluntary 'Elderly-friendly Building' accreditation scheme to encourage and facilitate the industry to adopt the recommended best practices for elderly-friendly building design.

Building Safety and Maintenance

The Development Bureau works with the Architectural Services Department, Buildings Department and partner organisations to enhance building safety and efficiency.

Building inspections and maintenance of government buildings and public facilities (except public housing) are mainly the responsibilities of the Architectural Services Department. In 2025, the department maintained an aggregate building floor area of 34.6 million sq m and continues to apply innovative technology to enhance safety and efficiency in building maintenance works.

The Buildings Department enforces the Mandatory Building Inspection and Mandatory Window Inspection schemes to tackle building decay at its root by requiring owners of targeted buildings to inspect and repair their buildings and windows. In 2025, the department issued statutory notices to 613 buildings for building inspections and 609 buildings for window inspections under these schemes.

The bureau has put in place measures to step up enforcement and strengthen support for owners or owners' corporations of buildings to comply with notices. It also set up a standing communication mechanism to strengthen the collaboration among the Buildings Department, Home Affairs Department and URA to follow up on compliance with these notices.

The government, in partnership with the URA, supports building owners in need to carry out repairs and maintenance. In 2025, subsidies approaching \$1.4 billion were granted to eligible property owners through assistance schemes, including Operation Building Bright 2.0, the Building Maintenance Grant Scheme for Needy Owners, the Building Drainage System Repair Subsidy Scheme and the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme. As at the end of 2025, around 4,400 applications to join the Smart Tender Building Rehabilitation Facilitating Services scheme at a concessionary rate had been approved since its launch in 2017 to provide technical support to building owners in procuring services for repair works.

To tackle unauthorised building works, the Buildings Department accords priority to enforcement actions against such works that are new or under construction, and those which constitute an obvious hazard or imminent danger to life and property. The department also removes unauthorised building works that have been erected on building exteriors, including rooftops, podiums and yards; are basements; are associated with subdivided units; are found in New Territories exempted houses; or are unauthorised signboards. In 2025, the department served 7,112 statutory removal orders and removed 29,109 unauthorised building works.

In 2025, the Buildings Department issued 3,540 prosecution summonses and secured 2,486 convictions in court for failure to comply with the removal orders, resulting in fines totalling \$28.89 million. The department launched various publicity campaigns to promote a culture of building safety.

Review on Buildings Ordinance

A two-month public consultation to amend the Buildings Ordinance was completed in February and the government is reviewing the proposals and drafting the amendment bill with the target of introducing it into the Legislative Council in 2026.

Lifts and Escalators

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department carries out regular inspections and updates codes of practice relating to the design, construction and maintenance of lifts and escalators. In 2025, the department continued its \$4.5 billion Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme with the URA to enhance the safety of aged lifts. Since the scheme began, 2,263 modernised lifts have been put into use, and 3,707 aged lifts are under planning, tendering or construction stages.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure Investment

The government builds new infrastructure and improves existing facilities to meet economic development needs and enhance the living environment.

Pier Improvement Programme

Among the 10 public piers covered by the first phase of the Pier Improvement Programme, seven, including Pak Kok Pier on Lamma Island, Kau Sai Village Pier, Yi O Pier, Leung Shuen Wan Pier, Lai Chi Chong Pier, Sham Chung Pier and Shek Tsai Wan Pier at Ma Wan, have been opened for public use; construction works for one are under way and expected for completion in 2026; and the detailed design of the improvement works for the remaining two piers are largely completed.

Of the 13 public piers covered by the second phase, three, including Ma Liu Shui New Ferry Pier, Sam Mun Tsai Village Pier and Ma Wan Chung Pier, have been opened for public use; construction works for four are ongoing and are expected for completion from 2026 to 2027 progressively; and the remaining six piers are under planning or design stage.

Drainage Services

The Drainage Services Department manages about 2,800km of storm water drains and watercourses, about 21km of drainage tunnels, five stormwater storage tanks with total capacity of about 250,000 cubic metres and 27 village flood protection schemes. It carries out drainage improvement works to cater for local developments and address probable effects of climate change.

In response to extreme weather, the government has formulated the Integrated Flood Management Strategy which includes advanced emergency preparedness, enhanced early warning, decisive emergency response and speedy recovery. The Drainage Services

Department will complete 14 stormwater drainage system improvement works between 2026 and 2030, in areas including Tsim Sha Tsui, Kwun Tong, Mong Kok, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon City, southern Hong Kong Island, Eastern District, North District, Yuen Long, Sha Tin, and Tai Po.

The department inspects, clears and repairs drainage systems regularly. In 2025, it inspected about 2,300km and cleared about 800km of drains and watercourses.

Slope Safety

The Civil Engineering and Development Department improves slope safety by adopting high standards and advanced technology, ensuring all new man-made slopes meet safety standards, improving the safety of existing man-made slopes and mitigating natural terrain landslide risks. The department also operates a landslip warning system to alert the public to landslide danger during periods of heavy rainfall.

The department upgraded 151 government man-made slopes and mitigated the landslide risk of 46 natural hillside catchments in 2025. It also conducted safety screening studies for 102 private man-made slopes.

Water Supplies

Water from Guangdong

Since 1965, Hong Kong has been importing raw water from the Dongjiang River. The Dongjiang water supply agreement maintains flexibility in the daily supply rate, ensuring a reliable source of supply and avoiding wastage of precious water resources. In 2025, the city imported about 820 million cubic metres of Dongjiang water, accounting for 70 to 80 per cent of the fresh water consumption in Hong Kong.

Water Storage and Consumption

Full water supply was maintained throughout the year, during which 2,559mm of rainfall was recorded. Impounding reservoirs held about 410 million cubic metres of water at the end of 2025.

There were about 3.3 million water customer accounts as at the year end. About 1.1 billion cubic metres of fresh water was consumed in 2025, with an average daily supply of about 2.95 million cubic metres. About 300 million cubic metres of salt water was supplied in 2025 for toilet flushing.

Total Water Management

The government's Total Water Management Strategy focuses on containing the growth of fresh water demand and building resilience in fresh water supply with diversified water resources to cater for the extreme effects of climate change. The first stage of the Tseung Kwan O Desalination Plant has a water production capacity of 135,000 cubic metres per day while the Shek Wu Hui Water Reclamation Plant supplies reclaimed water to certain areas of Sheung Shui and Fanling for flushing toilets. The Water Supplies Department is exploring the expansion of reclaimed water supplies to other suitable new development areas in the Northern Metropolis

for non-potable uses. The centralised grey water recycling system at Anderson Road Quarry Site has progressively supplied treated grey water to the area for non-potable uses.

Digital Water Office

The Digital Water Office drives digital transformation initiatives and formulates smart water development strategies. Key development strategies include reducing water main bursts and leaks due to high water supply pressure, building a platform to collect and analyse water supply and consumption data in real time, and comprehensively and continuously monitoring the operation of the entire water supply network.

The Water Supplies Department also plans to develop a smart water pressure management system to implement smart dynamic pressure reduction measures. Without affecting the water use of the public, this will optimise the operational performance of the network, achieve predictive asset maintenance and strengthen emergency response capabilities.

Waterworks

The main works for the in-situ reprovisioning of Sha Tin Water Treatment Works (South Works) and Siu Ho Wan Water Treatment Works extension are being carried out for commissioning in 2027 and 2028 respectively.

Drinking Water Safety

The Water Supplies Department ensures the quality of drinking water by testing samples from source to consumers' taps and, in 2025, it updated the Hong Kong Drinking Water Standards.

To further safeguard drinking water quality, the department encourages building owners to implement the Water Safety Plan for Buildings, supported by the Water Safety Plan Subsidy Scheme which had received applications from more than 2,200 eligible buildings by end-2025. About 42 per cent of households were living in buildings with the plan implemented as of the end of the year.

Project Strategy and Governance

The Development Bureau has been devising and implementing initiatives to strengthen the gateway process for cost management, enhance project delivery capability, lead strategic developments to improve cost-effectiveness, and enhance collaboration with international counterparts and local industry stakeholders.

The government encourages and drives the construction industry to reform and upgrade by advocating innovation, professionalisation and revitalisation. It also promotes the application of I&T, including high productivity construction; digitalisation of the construction industry; wider adoption of AI technology and construction robots; BIM; and the Smart Site Safety System. It coordinates works departments' efforts for promoting applied research and development in public works projects to raise productivity, strengthen works supervision and quality assurance, and improve site safety.

Modular Integrated Construction

The Development Bureau is fostering the development of the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) industry in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), leveraging the Chinese Mainland's strengths as a major production base and fully implementing measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain. Hong Kong focuses on research and development, quality accreditation, and international market promotion, thereby building an industrial chain and promoting the development of MiC as a competitive industry that expands from the GBA to international markets.

Construction Digitalisation and Robotics

The bureau is driving construction digitalisation throughout the whole project life cycle and has introduced several initiatives, including the Digital Works Supervision System, Digital Project Delivery System and Integrated Capital Works Platform.

The bureau also prioritised the wider adoption of AI technology and construction robots in public works projects, which includes applying AI to the Integrated Capital Works Platform for big data analysis, launching the AI assistant platform for construction industry knowledge and various applications of construction robots.

Relevant policies have been progressively introduced requiring new public works projects to adopt high-impact AI applications and construction robots so that the overall work efficiency and project performance can be fully enhanced.

Building Technology Research Institute

The Building Technology Research Institute, established by the Development Bureau in 2024, leads the construction industry in fostering innovative applications, so as to enhance productivity, cost-effectiveness and site safety performance.

In promoting applied research and development, the institute introduced advanced construction technologies and innovative construction materials by piloting public works projects to improve construction efficiency and safety performance within the industry.

In standards formulation, the institute is reviewing and optimising long-standing construction standards and requirements that have a significant impact on costs, and collaborating with its counterpart in Guangdong province to carry out works related to the formulation of GBA construction standards.

In accreditation, certification and testing, the institute launched the Construction Product Accreditation Scheme in September to ensure the quality of construction products and expand the product supply market, introducing high-quality and cost-effective construction products to the construction industry. It also launched the MiC Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme in 2024.

Construction Industry

Construction Industry Council

The Construction Industry Council supports the development of the construction industry, in particular by training construction workers. The council was allocated \$1 billion in 2022 to increase the number of training places and the amount of allowance of its training programmes, to attract new blood to the industry and to upskill and retain in-service workers. The council has increased its training quota from 6,000 places in the 2021-22 academic year to at least 12,000 places in each academic year from 2022-23 to 2027-28.

To assist construction workers in transition, the council launched the enhanced training support measures for the construction industry in 2025. These measures included increasing the number of training places of the Multi-skilled Training Course and the Skills Enhancement Course. The Multi-skilled Training Course helps already skilled construction workers master additional crafts, particularly those in demand, while the Skills Enhancement Course trains general workers to become skilled workers, including becoming 'intermediate tradesmen' and 'tradesmen'. The council has also fully waived the course fees and increased training allowances, and collaborated with trade unions and trade associations to optimise employment and training matching services.

Among about 609,000 registered construction workers, 244,000 were semi-skilled or skilled workers. The government works with the council to monitor the industry's manpower supply and demand, and support training for local workers. To attach priority to the employment of local workers, the government launched the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector in 2023 as a supplementary measure to alleviate the manpower shortage. The number of quotas is capped at 12,000. As of end-2025, there were 7,052 approved and valid quotas under the scheme.

The government also works with the council to operate the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund. As at December, about \$2.2 billion had been approved since the fund's launch in 2018, subsidising about 1,500 enterprises to adopt technologies and supporting about 20,000 technology training places.

The Smart Site Safety System improves site safety performance. To promote a wider adoption of the system, the bureau and the council launched a scheme that issues labels to construction sites that have adequately and effectively implemented the system. As at December, around 660 labels had been granted to public and private construction sites involving different works types and scales (representing around 60 per cent of the construction sites). In addition, the bureau and Shenzhen Qianhai Authority selected pilot projects in Qianhai to adopt the Smart Site Safety System during their respective construction stage, laying a foundation for the system to be used across the GBA.

The STEAM Up project, launched in 2024, produces construction-themed science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) learning and teaching materials for classroom use in primary and secondary schools. The STEAM learning resource centre organises thematic exhibitions and workshops, as well as a wide range of activities, to inspire students' interest in and understanding of various professions of the construction industry.

At the Learning and Teaching Expo in July, the bureau, together with the Construction Industry Council, launched the inaugural collaboration with the education sector – the ‘Infrastructure x Education’ Exhibition and the launching ceremony for phase 1 of the STEAM Up initiative, attracting about 20,000 education professionals.

The council continues to administer and promote the Registered Specialist Trade Contractors Scheme with a view to building up the capability of contractors. Contractors from 21 specialist trades have been registered as specialist trade contractors. The scheme imposes registration requirements on safety, management, job experience, execution, finance and integrity management to uplift the professionalism of the industry.

GBA Standards and ‘One Examination, Multiple Certification’

The Development Bureau has been collaborating with counterparts in Guangdong province and the Macao Special Administrative Region to formulate GBA Standards on the skill levels of skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector, and taking forward the ‘One Examination, Multiple Certification’ arrangement. The arrangement for the first two pilot trades of skilled workers (painter and bricklayer) and the first pilot position of technicians (civil engineering work supervisor) was implemented in March and June respectively.

Promotion of Professional Services

‘Professional Title’ is a unique evaluation system for professional qualifications adopted by the Chinese Mainland. It is an important benchmark for evaluating the skills and qualification levels of professionals and provides a basis for construction enterprises to recruit and promote talents. With the joint efforts of the Guangdong and Hong Kong governments, a new evaluation mechanism applicable to Hong Kong construction professionals was established in 2023. The pilot evaluation for Hong Kong professionals was first completed in five engineering disciplines in 2024.

In 2025, the mechanism was expanded to include three more engineering disciplines (mechanical engineering, telecommunications engineering and cyber security) as well as two construction-related professions (architecture and engineering costing). Since the implementation of the mechanism, 578 Hong Kong construction professionals have obtained Chinese Mainland ‘Professional Title’ qualifications.

Project Cost Management Forum

The Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders, under the Development Bureau, held the Project Cost Management Forum 2025 on 7 November. With the theme of ‘Construction New Normal: Co-defining Cost-effectiveness’, the forum explored how to enhance the cost management and cost-effectiveness of construction projects through optimised procurement strategies and the application of innovative technologies. It brought together expert speakers from different places to share practical experiences in reform and innovation. More than 400 representatives from government departments, engineering consultancies, contractors and professional bodies from Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland, Singapore, Qatar, the United Kingdom and more participated, with more than 300 attending in person and 100 joining online.

Built and Archaeological Heritage

The government's heritage conservation policy is to protect, conserve and revitalise as appropriate historical and heritage buildings and archaeological sites 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, respect for private property rights, budgetary considerations, and cross-sector collaboration, to facilitate active engagement among stakeholders and the public. On this basis, the Development Bureau monitors works on, or development of, declared monuments, proposed monuments, graded historic buildings or buildings proposed to be graded, and explores preservation options with the owners concerned.

The Built Heritage Conservation Fund provides financial support to schemes that promote conservation of historic buildings, including the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme, under which a set of historic buildings are run by non-profit-making organisations after revitalisation based on their proposals. Fourteen projects were in operation in 2025, attracting over 1.6 million visitors in the year, while public engagement activities supported by the fund attracted more than 20,000 participants. A new round of funding applications for thematic research was also invited from September to December.

The Antiquities Advisory Board advises the government on antiquities and monuments. As at end-2025, the board had completed the grading assessments of 1,638 buildings. This provides an objective basis for guiding conservation efforts. During the year, the board also supported the government's proposal to declare the Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital in Sai Ying Pun and Kwong Fook Tsz in Sheung Wan as monuments, and started the relevant statutory procedures.

The Antiquities and Monuments Office organised heritage-themed exhibitions covering built heritage, archaeology, the Maritime Silk Road and dinosaur fossils. Educational programmes and activities were launched to complement major exhibitions, dinosaur fossil exhibition, and the associated preparation work. Cross-sector Heritage Runs, school activities and community engagement programmes for teachers and students, as well as an International Symposium on Living Heritage and Urban Renewal Development were also held.

In 2025, the second heritage trail of the GBA was launched and, with a theme on the Dongjiang Column, aims to enhance public understanding of the region's wartime history by linking four graded historic buildings and three memorial/display facilities.

Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

The Development Bureau is responsible for formulating policies and coordinating landscape and tree management strategies and initiatives. It promotes a holistic approach to landscape and tree management, advocating adequate space allocation for new planting, proper selection of plant species, good landscape design and planting practices, and proper tree maintenance, with public safety as a paramount consideration.

The Study Sponsorship Scheme and the Trainee Programme under the Urban Forestry Support Fund encourage youngsters to join the arboriculture industry. Enhanced measures for both the scheme and programme have been implemented. By end-2025, around 1,800 sponsorship applications had been received and around 300 trainees had participated in the programme.

Since the launch of the Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel in 2020, around 1,150 applicants have registered as tree management personnel. The government has been employing registered personnel in new construction and maintenance contracts to enhance the quality of tree management.

During the year, the bureau continued to implement an array of enhancement measures on roadside tree planting and maintenance, including expanding the scope of tree risk assessment, and launching pilot schemes to improve the suitability and sustainability of roadside trees to mitigate potential risk in the long run.

Websites

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Civil Engineering and Development Department: www.cedd.gov.hk

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