

# ULI Calls for a City Champion

## Realising ULI 10 Principles for Sustainable Development for a more Livable Hong Kong

ULI SAND STAGE II  
Draft Recommendations  
June 2012





# ULI Calls for a City Champion for Hong Kong

## ULI SAND Study Stage 2 – Realising ULI 10 Principles for Sustainable Development for a more Livable Hong Kong

### Executive Summary

In June 2011, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) published the *Ten Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development*. The ULI 10 Principles (please see link below) to ensure large scale integrated developments to make Hong Kong more Livable are: 1) Build on Your Strengths: Rethink the strategic vision and policy framework; 2) Create Great Places: Adopt a place-making approach; 3) Extend the Urban Grid; Develop to an appropriate scale and density; 4) Open Up Public Space: Provide accessible public open space; 5) Integrate Infrastructure: Ensure transport and infrastructure integration; 6) Activate the Streets: Enhance street level interface and continuity; 7) Keep It Flexible: Facilitate good urban design and flexible zoning; 8) Promote Sustainability: Go beyond sustainable building design; 9) Engage People Early On: Enable upfront public engagement; and 10) Manage, Control and Coordinate; Implement coordinated management control. Stage II of the Study was recently initiated, and a ULI multi stakeholder workshop was organized where various professionals, development, industry, academic, government and community representatives met to discuss how to apply these 10 Principles for sustainable development of Hong Kong. Five major recommendations were identified.

- **Strong Leadership, Commitment and Strategic Vision.** Hong Kong needs a ‘City Champion’, like a mayor, in the form of a senior Government Official, at the Deputy Chief Secretary (DCS) level or higher. This City Champion should develop an overall strategic vision for Hong Kong and would also be responsible for coordinating, Government policies, resources and funding in order to achieve this vision. We urge for the establishment of an independent Institute for Sustainable Urban Development (ISUD), preferably through private sector funding, in place of the Council for Sustainable Development to promote high-density livability. ISUD should undertake the urban research with a focus on quality and innovation in urban development, for sustainable high-density cities like Hong Kong. The ISUD will provide input to the City Champion to ensure Hong Kong’s development is sustainable making Hong Kong a model for other cities and having outreach events and activities as well. The City Champion would oversee the formulation of Hong Kong’s Strategic City Vision through public engagement, which would include Heads of each Office of the newly established District Planning Forums (DPFs). Another consideration is to refine the Government structure so that the existing Government resources are more effective in delivering the city vision without adding too many layers of Government.
- **Refined Planning, Policy and Administrative Framework.** The refined Government structure will include three planning bodies namely: a broadened remit of the existing Strategic Development Commission, possibly transformed as the Strategic Planning Commission (SPC). The review of existing development strategies will be undertaken by the SPC, such as Hong Kong’s 2030 study, and develop the strategic vision

and district master plans that can fit within the framework of the National 5-year plans. SPC will also be tasked to review the current plan making process to ensure that planning in Hong Kong is more urban design led with an independent Town Planning Board and an overall master plan for Hong Kong which takes into account 3D district level urban design plans developed together with the community.

- **Updated Development Control and Building Regulations.** In order to genuinely promote long-term sustainable urban development for a high-density city like Hong Kong, a review and update of the existing development controls and building regulations is imperative. A review of the current Joint Practice Notes, building codes and land sale policy is needed as well as extending the use of the planning application system for large sites including CDAs and Special Development Areas (SDAs). The existing Development Opportunities Office will become the Development Department/Office to streamline development related matters, to avoid duplication, and to handle internal coordination with relevant departments to be more effective.
- **Enhanced City Image, Character and District Identity.** A new focus is needed on urban design excellence, and high quality public realm enhancing the pedestrian experience with great attention being paid to the quality and management of streets, public spaces and transport. To achieve this, the City Champion, should undertake pilot SDAs in different districts similar to the recent initiative for Kowloon East, to retain and strengthen Hong Kong's unique urban character and identity. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) should be established with management agreements to ensure that larger areas function efficiently and are maintained well.
- **More Transparency, Inclusiveness and Participation.** Success of the Strategic Vision, ISUD, DPFs and SDAs depend on the involvement of the public in defining Hong Kong's city vision, including providing input at the District level. A better partnership between the government and the public, by promoting transparency and inclusiveness, will promote more proactive public/private sector collaboration. It is important for people to recognize personal and community benefits of a more vibrant economy in a better living environment with greater social mobility. The City Champion should set up an *Engagement Centre* for educating the public and creating awareness among the people of Hong Kong. The Engagement Centre should also facilitate stakeholder participation, public/private partnership and monitor the public engagement process in promoting and shaping a better city.

ULI believes that the recommendations above will help to realize the '*ULI 10 Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development*' and make Hong Kong more livable and sustainable. The above recommendations are set out in more detail in this report. Some can be achieved immediately and others will need to be implemented in phases. Together they are designed to improve Hong Kong's collective ability to plan and deliver a world-class city.

ULI 10 Principles: <http://bit.ly/ULI10P-SANDHK>

# ULI Calls for a City Champion for Hong Kong

## ULI SAND Study Stage 2 – Realising ULI 10 Principles for Sustainable Approach to New Development for a more Livable Hong Kong

### Introduction

In June 2011, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) published the *Ten Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development Towards Sustainable and Integrated Large-Scale Developments for a More Livable Hong Kong*. The ULI 10P full report can be downloaded at the following link: <http://bit.ly/ULI10P-SANDHK>. The ULI 10 Principles to ensure large scale integrated developments to make Hong Kong more Livable are: 1) Build on Your Strengths: Rethink the strategic vision and policy framework; 2) Create Great Places: Adopt a place-making approach; 3) Extend the Urban Grid; Develop to an appropriate scale and density; 4) Open Up Public Space: Provide accessible public open space; 5) Integrate Infrastructure: Ensure transport and infrastructure integration; 6) Activate the Streets: Enhance street level interface and continuity; 7) Keep It Flexible: Facilitate good urban design and flexible zoning; 8) Promote Sustainability: Go beyond sustainable building design; 9) Engage People Early On: Enable upfront public engagement; and 10) Manage, Control and Coordinate: Implement coordinated management control.

Stage II of the ULI Sustainable Approach to New Development was recently initiated to explore how these 10 principles can influence future large-scale developments to be more integrated. As part of this process, a multi-stakeholder workshop was organized to bring together various professionals, development, industry experts, academic, and government and community representatives to discuss how to realize the 10 principles to make Hong Kong more sustainable and livable. The ULI Workshop was held on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 in Hong Kong, followed by discussions with the Steering Committee, resulting in the draft recommendations highlighted below. ULI urges the Chief Executive elect C.Y. Leung to consider these draft recommendations within the proposed restructured Government to be in place after July 1, 2012. As such it is an opportune time for some of the key recommendations to be implemented in a phased manner in the immediate, short, medium and long-term as shown in the table below.



## Recommendations and Phases for Action

Phasing Key Factors	Immediate Term Actions	Short Term Actions	Medium Term Actions	Long Term Actions
<b>1. Strong Leadership, Commitment and Strategic Vision</b>	<b>Goals</b> - Create a strategic vision that truly makes Hong Kong Asia's World City - Improve overall efficiency by streamlining the planning, approval and review process - Foster urban design excellence and create a more livable and sustainable Hong Kong			
	- Make CS/DCS as a City Champion - Review existing government structure	- Revise government structure - Incorporate key proposals	- Establish an independent Institute for Sustainable Urban Development - Conduct urban research to shape better high density livable cities	- Hold Sustainable City Forum - Sustainable City Award
<b>2. Refined Planning, Policy and Administrative Framework</b>	<b>Goals</b> - Highlight city's strength and areas that need to improve - Ensure an urban design led plan making process - Build a more sustainable territorial development - Reposition Hong Kong within the Pearl River Delta Region			
	- Undertake Urban Development Strategy review - Establish District Planning Forums (DPFs)	- Review current plan-making process - Establish an independent TPB with Urban Design Review Panel	- Formulate the Strategic City Vision and 3D-District Master Plans - Develop a Five Year City Plan	- Review and update the Strategic City Vision and the District Plans - Review and update the Five year city plan
<b>3. Updated Development Control and Building Regulations</b>	<b>Goals</b> - Improve the built environment and enhance the quality of public space - Streamline the development processing - Improve inter-departmental coordination			
	- Review current Joint Practice Notes and Building Codes - Review Land Sale and Development Control	- Revised Joint Practice Notes and key Building Codes - Set up a Development Department/Office	- Revised land sale and development control - Streamline the Development Process	- Redraft Building Regulations - Monitor the Development Process and quality of Urban Development
<b>4. Enhanced City Image, character and District Identity</b>	<b>Goals</b> - Develop well designed high quality public spaces and streets - Ensure integrated developments in large land parcels with linkages to the surrounding areas - Improve the management of public space in private developments - Improve pedestrian experience and the use of sustainable transport			
	- Review of urban design and public realm quality - Improve design and management of public space including management agreements	- Retain the unique district character and identity - Enhance pedestrian experience with high quality and promote more sustainable transport	- Use planning application system for large sites, and SDAs including CDAs - Encourage more integrated developments with high quality space at grade and upper levels	- Evaluate and monitor the quality of urban design and public realm of the city - Establish workable BIDs/CIDs to ensure the effective management of larger areas
<b>5. More Transparency, Inclusiveness and Participation</b>	<b>Goals</b> - Encourage effective public engagement and private sector participation in the urban development process - Facilitate the exchange of information and views on development proposals among the public and private sector including community and NGOs - Promote affordable housing, social integration and mobility			
	- Review the current public engagement process - Review public and private sector collaboration	- Enhanced public engagement - Transparent private sector involvement	- Set up an Engagement Centre - Formulate Policy for more affordable housing	- Operate and monitor the Engagement Centre - Evaluate and monitor housing and social mix

## **1. Strong Leadership, Commitment and Strategic Vision**

### ***Need for a City Champion***

In order to create and establish a Vision for Hong Kong, there needs to be a City Champion that can act as a 'mayor' for the city. Hong Kong needs someone who can take charge of city related matters in order to reposition Hong Kong with a Strategic Vision; at least at the Deputy Chief Secretary (DCS) level or higher, who reports to the Chief Executive (CE). This Strategic Vision would take into consideration the city's global standing, regional role and local aspirations to truly make Hong Kong Asia's World City, a model for other cities in the region (Appendix 1). Hong Kong should value having a long-term Strategic Vision, and not let political stance override the reasons for changes in policy direction.

### ***Review of Existing Government Structure***

Within the current government structure, there is room to improve the overall efficiency and coordination of the various existing Government bodies; a review of the existing government structure is needed, the goal is to consolidate the existing Government resources to streamline the planning, approval and review processes, without adding more bureaucratic layers. (Appendix 2)

The City Champion should establish 3 planning-related bodies:

The existing Commission of Strategic Development, which is currently tasked with exploring the way forward for Hong Kong's long-term development strategies, should be given an expanded remit as the Strategic Planning Commission (SPC). The Commission would be responsible for reviewing Hong Kong 2030 and current urban development strategies in formulating a territory-wide Strategic City Vision; it would be underpinned by overviews of planning, economic, social and populations concerns. The Vision would serve as context to planning and policy-making for various Bureaus. The SPC would formulate Hong Kong's Strategic City Vision through public engagement, which would include working with the newly established District Planning Forums (DPFs) (see below). The SPC should comprise both official and unofficial members with an official member being the Chairman and a non-official member being the Deputy Chairman.

The new District Urban Renewal Forums (DURFs) formed as a result of the Urban Renewal Strategy Review, should transition into becoming the District Planning Forums (DPFs) with an expanded remit to cover not only urban renewal but also urban development, including heritage conservation. Each DPF Office should have approximately 15 non-official members and 5 official members including community representatives, professionals in urban planning and urban design and would be chaired by a non-official member, with the Deputy Chair being an official member. Each DPF would have its own secretariat and would be responsible for providing inputs to the District Vision, which forms the basis for the 3D District Master Plans.

In order to establish a stronger link between the District Councils and the SPC, we suggest a District Review Board (DRB) should also be established. The DRB would be responsible for reviewing the visions of various districts formulated by the DPF within each district to ensure that they are in line with the Strategic City Vision. DRB will provide the District Visions as inputs to the SPC, Town Planning Board, relevant Bureaux including the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau, so that the District Visions are also considered during the formulation of the overall Strategic City Vision. The DRB should be formed by the Deputy-Heads of each district Office of DPF, together with the Chairmen of the 18 District Councils. The Deputy Chair of the SPC should chair the DRB while the DRB's Deputy Chairman should be an official member. With the establishment of SPC, DPF and DRB, planning and development matters can be handled in a more systematic, accountable and organized manner with greater local input (Appendix 3).

### ***Institute for Sustainable Urban Development***

We recommend that the existing Council for Sustainable Development under the Environment Bureau be transformed as the new independent Institute for Sustainable Urban Development, funded preferably by the private sector. The ISUD should conduct independent research to monitor and evaluate urban development of Hong Kong. The ISUD should focus on sustainable urban development with studies necessary to foster urban design excellence, ultimately creating a more livable and sustainable Hong Kong. ISUD should place more emphasis on quality and innovation to promote high density and sustainability to shape the future development of the city so that Hong Kong can become an Asian model for other cities in the region. ISUD should host the Sustainable Cities Forum and also Sustainable Cities Award to commend cities with innovative and sustainable high-density urban development, recognizing their efforts.

## **2. Refined Planning, Policy and Administrative Framework**

### ***Urban Development Strategy Review***

While it is important to create a new urban development strategy, it is equally important to review and assess how Hong Kong has developed over time, as a city. The aim would be to highlight the city's strengths and areas in which it needs to improve. This urban development review could form the basis for the Strategic City Vision, undertaken by the SPC, leading to 3D district master plans and urban design area plans. The DPFs would be responsible for holding forums, on a regular basis, to understand the community's needs, local issues, aspirations and opportunities as inputs to the District Vision (Appendix 3). The information would be analyzed by the secretariats of DPF Offices of each District, as inputs to the vision, planning and urban design of the District to be considered by the District Council, DRB, and subsequently development agencies such as HA, URA and MTR, the private sector and NGOs. The Community Visions Program of Vancouver represents an appropriate example of envisioning exercise at the neighborhood level.

### ***Five-Year Plan - Strategic City Vision and District Master Plans***

As detailed above, a Strategic City Vision for the city, with related 3D District Master Plans and implementable urban design area plans, should be developed. More importantly, the strategic planning of Hong Kong should be better integrated with the 5-year plan of Mainland China and strive for a more balanced and sustainable territorial development of Hong Kong and reposition itself within the Pearl River Delta Region. The inclusion of planning and urban design professionals within the SPC can further enhance its capacity in strategic planning and policy-making at local and territorial level. The five-year plan, strategic vision and district plans should be reviewed on a regular basis, ensuring the sustainable development of Hong Kong.

### ***Review the Current Plan Making Process***

In order to improve the current plan making process, it is important to first review the current plan making process to see how it can be more comprehensive.; ensuring an urban design led approach to planning (Appendix 3). In order to incorporate a more urban design emphasis, The Planning Department should transition into becoming the Planning and Urban Design Department, housing a strong urban design section. For a high-density city like Hong Kong, the current OZPs are simplistic and are two-dimensional; many find it difficult to visualize the physical settings and surrounding development context. More three-dimensional district master plans should be developed with community input in line with the Strategic City Vision, that are subject to review on a regular basis. Planning and urban design tools to better support the City Vision and 3D district master plans should be used.



### ***An Independent TPB with Urban Design Review Panel***

The members of TPB should be appointed on a full-time basis with an independent secretariat. The TPB should have a Chairman who should be a non-official member, and a Deputy Chairman who should be an official member; its membership should comprise a comprehensive cross section of society (Appendix 3).

The TPB should adopt the 10 Principles to aid The Board in examining planning applications and proposals relating to large-scale developments, with priority given to specific principles as appropriate dependent on different situations. In addition to the Metro Planning Committee and Rural and New Territories Planning Committee, an Urban Design Review Panel should be set up with expert panels as needed under the independent TPB. the Zoning and Urban Design Panel of Vancouver is a good example of how this works elsewhere.

Each of the Committees should consist of 15-20 members. The Committees should include urban designers and planners, as well as others experienced with the regulatory and economic development environment in the city. The Committees would be responsible for providing planning advice based on the District Visions and the Strategic City Vision. In order to incorporate more urban design and place making criteria in considering planning applications, a new Urban Design Review Panel is recommended to promote great places. With a size of about 15-20 members, the Panel would mainly be composed of urban designers and planners. It will be responsible for providing design review advice to the TPB based on the planning advice from the Metro and Rural and New Territories Planning Committees, and also the District Visions and the Strategic City Vision.

The Urban Design Review Panel would assume the current role of the Planning Department in connection with the assessment of planning applications, independently, to ensure that approved projects are sensitive to existing development context, promote good urban design and create great places in existing communities and new development areas.

### **3. Updated Development Control and Building Regulations**

#### ***Review Current Joint Practice Note and Building Code***

In order to ensure that Hong Kong's building code and regulations are up to world standard, it is essential to review the current Joint Practice Note for sustainable development and the existing building code. This would include reviewing provisions for setback of a site as well as maintaining a lower overall site coverage instead of allowing 100% site coverage podium developments.

In order to encourage the pursuit of quality design, incentives and bonuses can be used for the public good to encourage provision of open space at grade and upper levels with higher green cover ratios to ensure a better quality of life for the people of Hong Kong. It is suggested to formulate more flexible development-related guidelines including incentives for public gain, such as provision of bonus GFA for basement parking, ground-level open space and also contribution for the development of improved streetscapes and great places. The Urban Design Review Panel under the TPB can be tasked to review and evaluate development plans based on the integration of the development with surrounding areas, quality urban design and improved pedestrian experience.

#### ***Review Land Sale and Development Control***

In view of the Strategic City Vision, district master plans, urban design and public management, which have been previously proposed in this report, the current land sale and development control system also needs to be revisited. There is a need for coordinating land parcels for sale and refining the general restrictions such as building height, bulk and site coverage, which are incorporated within each land lease; so that we can ensure

that proposed developments add long-term value. This will ensure that the new developments are in line with the Strategic City Vision and District Master Plans.

The land parcel at the road junction of Robinson Road and Boon Tat Street, Singapore (Appendix 4) represents an example where delineation of New Extension Zone and height restriction can be included in the lease terms, so that the heritage significance of a Conservation Building on the land parcel can be protected.

Land sales should be made in accordance with an overall district urban design plan and citywide master plan and Strategic Vision, and should not be in conflict with them. Fewer requirements would allow for more flexibility, but important controls such as site coverage and layout of internal roads should be included within the land lease to ensure more integrated developments in the future, without being too prescriptive.

The integration of Housing, Planning, Lands and Buildings Departments under one Bureau represents an opportunity for better coordination among these Departments to promote sustainable urban design. The Planning and Urban Design Department can give comments to the Lands Department on the drafting of lease conditions in line with the Strategic City Vision and District Visions. Regarding the discussion over the design of large-scale development, it is encouraged to invite developers, District Councils and the Government to all DPF events for consensus building and earlier dialogue so that the public interests can be taken into account while considering development/regeneration/redevelopment proposals for any particular area.

### ***Redraft Building Regulations***

As the current Building Regulations are outdated and do not respond to Hong Kong's current built environment, there is a need to redraft the Building Regulations as there are several inconsistencies; generally, they fail to promote place making and a city with high quality urban design. Many implementable changes such as bonus GFA for public good and reducing site coverage requirements should be considered to encourage the pursuit of urban design excellence. Again the integration of Housing, Planning, Lands and Buildings Departments under one Bureau represents an opportunity for better coordination among these Departments to promote sustainable urban design, where the Planning and Urban Design Department can give comments to the Buildings Department on the setting of Building Regulations in line with the Strategic City Vision and District Visions. In addition, it is imperative to improve policy for urban development in Hong Kong while maintaining a level playing field for developers, investors, the community and NGOs. There should be priorities over some targeted areas of change as well as time needed before implementation.

### ***Set up a Development Department/Office***

The existing Development Opportunities Office should be transformed as the Development Department/Office under the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau, for the convenience of the public in handling development related matters to remove duplication, and to ensure inter departmental coordination. The Development Department/Office would essentially take up the responsibilities of the existing Development Opportunities Office but extended to ensure a centralized processing system to bring clarity to the development process and make it easier for the private sector and NGOs.

Development matters raised by developers, NGOs and the public could be submitted to the Development Department/Office to be circulated to other relevant departments such as the Planning and Urban Design Department, Lands Department and the Buildings Department with the help of the centralized processing system. This will avoid conflicting and uncoordinated decision making by separate departments that go against the Strategic City and District Visions by allowing a cohesive review of projects before development permissions are given.

#### **4. Enhanced City Image, Character and District Identity**

##### ***Promote Urban Design Excellence and High Quality Public Realm***

In view of increasing public aspirations on promoting good urban design in Hong Kong, the existing Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) under Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) should be reviewed and suggestions put forward for a more flexible set of guidelines which would be subject to regular update.

At present, the landscaping of public space relies mainly on the owners' funding and discretion and usually that undertaken by LCSD is more utilitarian so as to ensure a lower maintenance cost. In view of the interest of the community for an enhanced city image and identity, the government should adopt high quality standards for the public realm to make Hong Kong a city of great streets, landscaped urban parks and tree lined boulevards.

Government should also consider subsidizing or providing GFA concession to the owners as an incentive in private developments to create more landscaped public open space at ground and upper levels with high quality pedestrian amenities.

##### ***Extend the Use of Planning Application System for Large Sites and SDAs***

For the purpose of better control on the development of large land parcels in Hong Kong, it is suggested to extend the use of the planning application system when the concerned development has a large site area of more than 2 to 5 hectares. Contribution to place making and integration with surrounding areas should be taken into consideration when evaluating planning applications for such sites.

It is also suggested to include these urban design considerations when evaluating planning applications under the current "Comprehensive Development Area" (CDA) zoning. Quality of urban design, for instance, development height, layout of development, block size with incorporation of internal streets, design of podium and site coverage, contribution to place-making and integration with surrounding areas, can thus be ensured. Special Development Area (SDA) zoning should be designated for areas with particular focus on the Strategic City Vision and district plans, such as older urban districts and New Development Areas (NDAs).

Development controls imposed on SDAs should be more stringent and detailed than those required in CDA zoning. The use of the planning application system can provide the public with the opportunity to inspect and comment on the development proposals, and in turn promote public participation in urban planning and design. Input from the TPB Secretariat (or Urban Design Review Panel) and the community can also be included through the addition of planning conditions.

##### ***Strengthen District Character and Identity***

Hong Kong has several older urban districts with a traditional character and unique identity, which is often threatened with development pressure from new development and urban redevelopment. These areas need a more sensitive approach and also new areas should be identified for future development, which also need special attention. SDAs should be considered in line with the Strategic City Vision and undertaken as pilot projects such as the harbourfront, older urban districts, NDAs etc.

Reference is made to the Preparatory Team of Kowloon East Development Office under the Development Bureau, which has been recently set up for a more comprehensive and streamlined process in handling large scale planning and development. It is envisaged that a similar approach can be adopted to facilitate future SDAs.

The concept of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) should be adapted to Hong Kong's context and also create Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) so that the district character and unique identity is retained

with high quality public realm and public spaces are well maintained. Public private and community partnership with management agreements can resolve some of the urban issues in the older urban districts to create a sense of place. This will ensure that these SDAs function well and benefit both the community and the people of Hong Kong and create a sense of community ownership.

### ***Design and Management of Public Space***

Many great cities are starting to learn the value of having good quality public spaces and what it can do for a city, and its people, especially for a city like Hong Kong. It should be in the Government's best interest to pay special attention to the quality, design, implementation and management of the public realm and public space in Hong Kong. There should be a network of public spaces created within the city that are usable and not just left over spaces after developing the roads.

The use and management of public space in private developments has aroused controversy in recent years; In addition to better policies, design should pay special attention to the physical and visual links from ground level to the upper levels and there should be a network of connections with proper way finding signage and good regulations for public open space management; recent guidelines for the design and management of public space in private developments is a good start.

Attention should be paid to the drafting of lease conditions to ensure that public right of access to the public spaces, for instance the opening hours of some privately owned public space, can be specified. Requirements of a clear way-finding system and the removal of barriers to the use of public space could be indicated in maintenance and management agreements. There should also be effective enforcement and monitoring to make sure that the lease conditions continue to be fulfilled.

For the public interest's sake, any benefit derived from the commercialization of public space should be done in a sensitive manner so that there is a balance of the provision of public space more catered for public needs.

### ***Enhanced Pedestrian Experience and Sustainable Transport***

Pedestrian experience and sustainable transport should become a priority in the citywide master plan and district urban design plans. Comprehensive traffic studies including both transit and pedestrians in the territory, district and local scale should be conducted. Sustainable transport should include the promotion of walking, trams, EFTS, biking and water transport where feasible.

There are 3 main objectives for the studies, which include:

- 1) Better planning, and integration of the public transport system with surrounding areas.
- 2) Promoting on-street pedestrian flow with landscaped street environment and a pleasant pedestrian experience.
- 3) Better multi-level linkages with the surrounding areas ensuring that the streets are not sterilized.

This will ensure that streets are designed for the people, not just vehicles, helping to reduce the traffic congestion, noise and air pollution that have been critical issues in the city over the years. This will create a pleasant atmosphere, enhance the street landscape, and cityscape, making the pedestrian experience more pleasant as Hong Kong's urban environment becomes more breathable and environmentally sustainable.

## **5. More Transparency, Inclusiveness and Participation**

### ***Review the Current Public, Private Participation and Community Engagement Process***

Although public engagement is not new in Hong Kong within the planning and development context, it is suggested to review the current public engagement process, to see how it can be further improved. Public engagement has become a matter of following procedures, but is it really engaging the people and ensuring a sense of ownership among the people of Hong Kong?

Regarding the discussion over the design of large-scale development, there should be more collaboration between developers, community, district council and the Govt. for consensus building and earlier dialogue so that the public interest can be taken into account early on, while considering regeneration, development/redevelopment of an area within a district.

Trust needs to be developed between the community, the Government and the private sector. This can be achieved by promoting more transparency and inclusiveness, by the Government and the private sector, working together with the District Councils, DPFs and the community, to shape a better city.

### ***Enhanced Public Engagement***

In order to achieve a more livable and sustainable Hong Kong, more importance should be placed on Persons, People and Place (3 Ps). Persons mean the individual initiators, such as the developer, land owner, authority and NGOs. People means the stakeholders who should be involved such as the general public, district councilors, environmentalists, various concerned groups, etc. Place is the quality of the development, redevelopment or revitalized areas created.

It should also be noted that while the public has the right to participate, weighting of public input is required in the public engagement process, as a single comment and a professional submission should not be considered the same. Public engagement should be conducted at an early stage, during the identification of vision, so that consensus can be built right at the beginning of the process and should be ongoing at later stages to ensure that developments are in line with Strategic City Vision and district master plans.

### ***Set up an Engagement Centre to Educate, Empower and Engage the Public***

In order to facilitate better input from the public, a concerted effort is needed to further inform the public of Hong Kong's current developments and the City's Vision for Hong Kong going forward. We suggest that a permanent Engagement Centre (EC) should be established to monitor the public engagement process to ensure that all information is made available prior to an engagement exercise to enable the public to make informed decisions. The full time staff of the EC should be independent, neutral, unbiased, fully briefed and be able to respond to public queries. Moreover, the EC should have access to adequate funds for handling technical responses to major proposals as needed. Electronic response facilities should also be made available for the public use.

The existing infrastructure gallery could be relocated and transformed to become the EC to house a comprehensive physical model of Hong Kong to show case the city's development over time and its future development. The EC can be viewed as an educational venue with interactive platforms to engage the city's population, similar to "Better City Better Life" in Shanghai and the URA gallery in Singapore. It could become a forum to discuss the City Vision but should also be able to facilitate the public sector in relation to the various district master plans. It should also become a platform for the private sector to undertake engagement with the community related to the TPB submissions and should also exhibit a physical model for every major government project.

### ***Affordable Housing and Social Mobility***

Affordable housing supply has long been the concern of many Hong Kong citizens. A new initiative regarding the provision of mixed income housing is suggested within private developments. An affordable housing policy to enhance social mobility and integration will take Hong Kong to the next level on par with leading international cities in the world.

This will typically include about 10-20% of affordable housing (with appropriate incentives) to be planned within large-scale private residential developments in addition to public housing developed by Government. With the recent surge in property prices in Hong Kong and the huge divergence between private and public housing in the market, the introduction of mixed income housing could be an appropriate solution to provide more affordable housing for middle and lower income groups. This would create social mobility allowing for more social integration and an opportunity for people to move up the housing/social ladder.

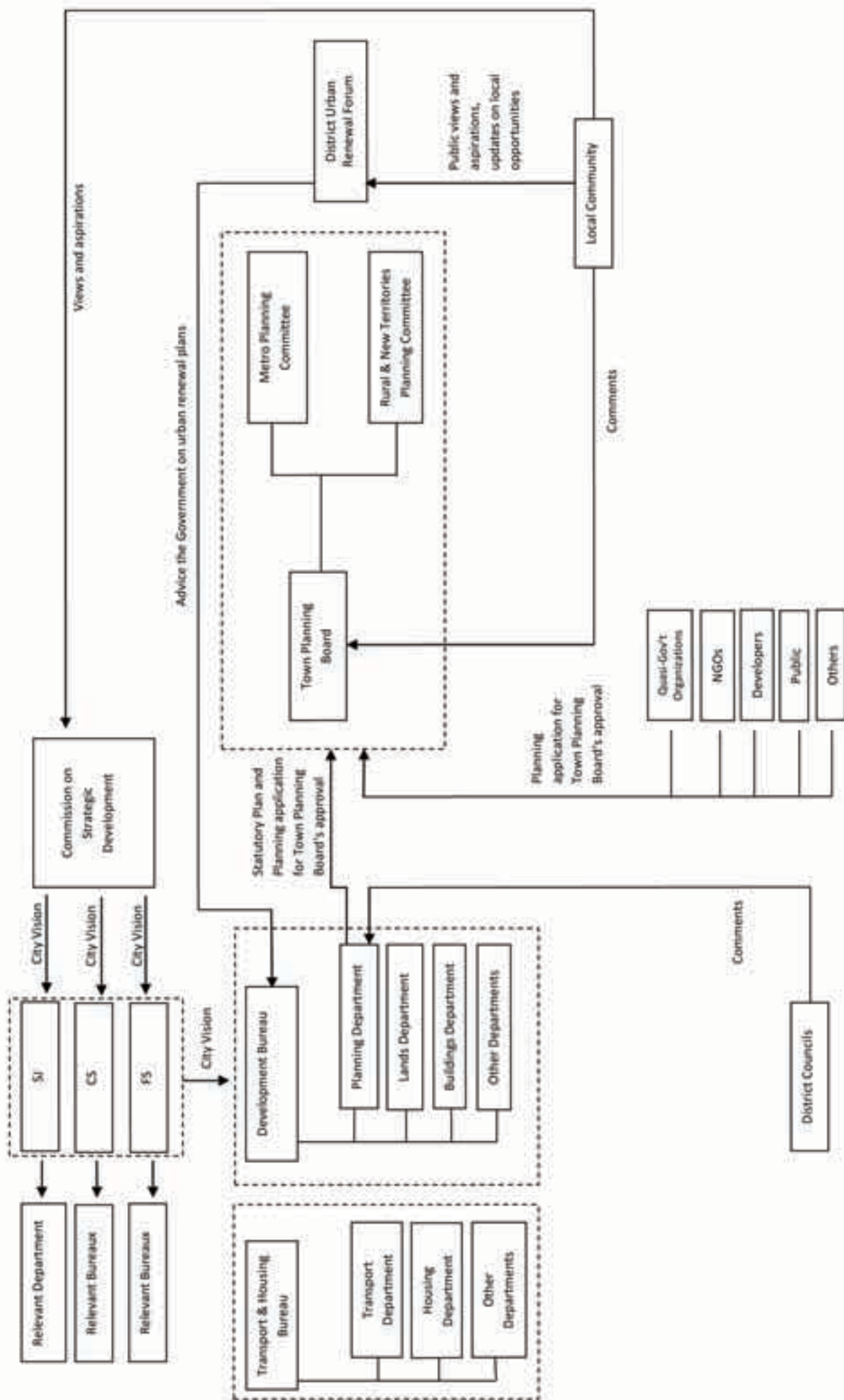
### ***Way Forward***

We understand that there is a proposal for restructuring the existing government structure and reorganizing the various Bureaux and Departments including the addition of a DCS and DFS. In relation to the proposed restructure of the government, it would be timely to consider the draft recommendations laid out above which can be implemented in a phased manner over an immediate, short, medium and long term timeframe to ensure that Hong Kong is more livable and sustainable. This will not only ensure a better quality of life for the people, but make Hong Kong an attractive destination that can truly become Asia's World City, and also a model for other cities.

Dr. Sujata S. Govada

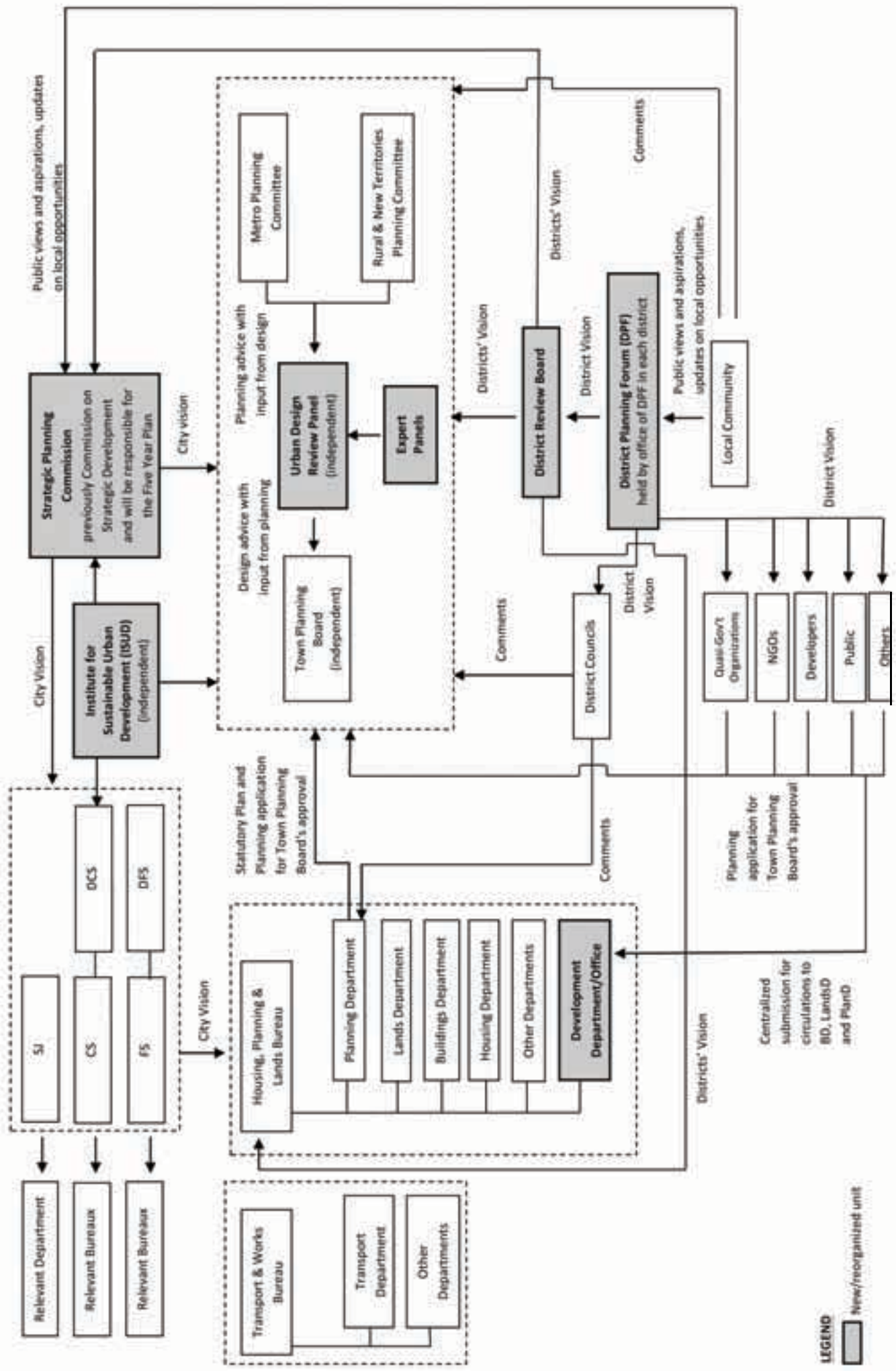
Project Director, ULI SAND Stage II  
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June 12, 2012







Appendix 3: Proposed Institutional Reform for Urban Planning in Hong Kong



Appendix 4

Land Parcel at Robinson Road/Boon Tat Street as an Example where Development Control For Heritage Conservation Being Included in Lease Terms

(Image Source: [http://www.ura.gov.sg/sales/RobinsonBT/Launch/RBT-main\(L\).htm](http://www.ura.gov.sg/sales/RobinsonBT/Launch/RBT-main(L).htm))

**URA Sale of Sites**

# LAND PARCEL AT ROBINSON ROAD / BOON TAT STREET

Site Introduction | Tender Brief | Choice of Lease Terms | Tender Documents | Questions and Answers | Sale Site Brochure (PDF format) | Sale of Developer's Packet

Launched by URA 5 Dec 15

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✦ Prime Site With Excellent Location   ✦ A Unique Development   ✦ An Illustrious History

## Prime Site With Excellent Location

The Land Parcel is located in the heart of Singapore's Central Business District, fronting onto a prominent road junction at Robinson Road / Boon Tat Street. It is within walking distance to Raffles Place and Marina Bay.

The site is easily accessed via the Central Expressway (CTE) and the nearby Raffles Place MRT Station.

