

**Secretariat**

**Harbourfront Committee**

**22th December 2014**

**Dear Sirs,**

**RE: Response on the proposed framework of the Harbourfront Authority**

At present the planning, management, maintenance and operation of the harbourfront areas is undertaken by the Government and there is widely held agreement that given resource constraints and cross-department challenges that there is a need for major reform in order to achieve the common vision of the public which is the enjoyment of an attractive, vibrant accessible and sustainable community asset.

- 1. Therefore, I fully support the setting up of the Harbourfront Authority** to ensure that Hong Kong can truly become a world-class harbour city.
  
- 2.** The work of the Authority should ensure that Victoria Harbour could continue with its functions as a working harbour by maintaining essential cargo working areas, public landing facilities, piers for ferries and public vessels whilst these could be logically grouped together and reorganized as needed to avoid conflicts with the recreational land and other marine uses.
  
- 3.** The Authority must develop different development plans for each district along Victoria Harbour, identifying different but unique activities and facilities which the local communities want. Such district planning processes are not new. The District Urban Renewal Forum (DURF) successfully brought together professionals, the Government, district councilors and community to envisage what was required to improve the livability of Kowloon City.
  
- 4.** The proposed authority should be independent and able to coordinate various government departments on harbour planning and development. The Authority will also need to work with various stakeholders including the private sector, NGOs and the

public to tap into their abilities to transform the harborfront as per the strategic vision and the aspirations of the community.

- 5.** While the present fragmented control, it is envisaged that the Authority would function as a "one-stop shop" to reflect public demand for interaction with the harbor. The membership of the Authority should be well represented with various stakeholders including the public, private, professional, academia, community and chaired by a Non-government person. Similar to the HC's current practice the meetings should continue to be open to the public as well.
- 6.** Government support for the authority does not ensure the public interest will be safeguarded. That depends on striking the right balance between government, commercial and public interests and emphasis on development of vibrant waterfronts that reflect community aspirations, not purely commercial opportunities. We need genuine public representation alongside people from the bureaucracy, the legislature, district councils and professions to make the vision a reality.
- 7.** Finally, the Authority needs to work closely with the private sectors with view to tapping its resources and expertise through market forces.

I hope you will find the above views useful.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ng ka-chui, Isaac, FCILT, MCIH

Lecturer

SCOPE, City University of Hong Kong