

BEC Submission on Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030

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Public Consultation

The HKSAR Government launched a 6 month public consultation on Hong Kong 2030+ in November 2016. The consultation ended on 30 April 2017. BEC has made a submission to the Planning Department to put forward its views and input into this strategic plan.

Summary of BEC's Submission

BEC welcomes the HKSAR Government's engagement on "Hong Kong 2030+". We largely agree with the 3 building blocks and the conceptual spatial framework, but take the view that this forward-looking plan could be enhanced.

The followings are the 5 principles we urge the Government to take on board:

1. The 2030+ strategy should be aligned with Hong Kong's climate goals.

Ensure the strategic plan is sufficiently ambitious to steer Hong Kong towards meeting the goals of the Climate Action Plan 2030+ and the longer term goals of the Paris Agreement – essentially reaching carbon neutrality in Greenhouse Gas emissions in the second half of the century. Hong Kong 2030+ could do more to articulate and develop a vision of a city with net zero carbon emissions.

2. Hong Kong should strive to be an exemplary liveable city.

By the 2030s, Hong Kong should stand out as a healthy, liveable city as this is key to the city's appeal to businesses and people. We recommend a number of actions:

- Ensuring excellent air quality
- Addressing noise pollution
- Improvements to the public spaces
- Excellence in design and operation of buildings
- Improvements to our country parks
- Develop a circular economy approach

3. Hong Kong should be a testbed for smart and innovative sustainable development approaches as a means of cultivating human capital and business expertise to leverage economic opportunities in the Belt & Road.

To incorporate this goal into Hong Kong 2030+, the building block on “economic opportunities” should be amended to include a commitment to make Hong Kong a testbed for development, application and commercialisation of these approaches and technologies. The potential for Universities to support this should be recognised. In this way, Hong Kong can leverage its position in the Pearl River Delta, Belt and Road, and beyond to make use of this capacity and expertise as economic opportunities arise from a greater interest regionally and beyond in sustainable cities.

4. Embodied carbon in construction should be addressed and minimised.

We recommend that a low embodied carbon strategy be enshrined as a goal in public procurement policy as well as Development Bureau/Buildings Department/Civil Engineering and Development Department regulations and guidance documents. This will reduce our carbon emissions, support innovation in new processes and materials, reduce waste, and back up the smart and green city vision.

5. Embed the value of the natural environment – both marine and terrestrial - into policies and appraisal methodologies.

Though this is recognised in Building Blocks 1 & 3, in terms of landscape and regenerating environmental capacity, greater emphasis should be put on:

- Systematically identifying brownfield areas for redevelopment and optimising the use of existing built-up land
- Bringing nature into the city through a holistic approach to urban ecology
- Ensuring sufficient value is given to ecosystems/nature using natural capital and ecosystem valuation approaches
- Swift implementation of the actions set out in Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

BEC recognises that a key challenge is the implementation of the proposals of Hong Kong 2030+ and doing so in a way that helps deliver the Government’s other strategies on sustainable development. To this end, BEC suggests the establishment of a ministerial level inter-departmental steering committee to identify and oversee all the regulatory and administrative changes that will be required in order to achieve this vision.

About Business Environment Council Limited 商界環保協會有限公司

Business Environment Council Limited (“BEC”) is an independent, charitable membership organisation, established by the business sector in Hong Kong. Since its establishment in 1992, BEC has been at the forefront of promoting environmental excellence by advocating the uptake of clean technologies and practices which reduce waste, conserve resources, prevent pollution and improve corporate environmental and social responsibility. BEC offers sustainable solutions and professional services covering advisory, research, assessment, training and award programs for government, business and the community, thus enabling environmental protection and contributing to the transition to a low carbon economy.

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