

THE NORTHERN METROPOLIS: A VISION FOR A LIVEABLE & RESILIENT CITY



Why Now?

In the 2021 Policy Address, the Hong Kong Government announced the **Northern Metropolis Development Strategy**, that will provide Hong Kong with a new economic engine, meet the housing shortage, and provide closer integration with Shenzhen, the Greater Bay Area (GBA), and the Mainland over the next 15 years.

Hong Kong's recent social unrest and global COVID-19 pandemic have revealed deep fragilities in the city's economic model resulting in wide inequalities – especially in access to basic affordable housing for lower income groups. While the Government's infrastructure development plans for the Northern Metropolis have the potential to address and alleviate some of the quality-of-life challenges within dense urban districts, there is great opportunity to formulate innovative policies and project ideas to realise a vision for a **liveable** and **resilient** city in the region.

The Government's ambition is to make the Northern Metropolis a **high-quality urban living space for citizens to live and work**. It will be a place people are drawn to live, work, and travel to due to favourable and stable conditions in housing, employment, transportation, and access to public and community resources.

Through **cross-sector stakeholder** and **community engagement** led by the future leaders of the city, the **Hong Kong Young Leaders Programme** will develop a set of **policy** and **project recommendations** for **4 high-potential areas** to support the Government's development, and **drive the creation of equitable economic growth**, improve the quality of life, and ensure **societal resilience** in the Northern Metropolis.

4 Focus Areas

1 Creating a Model for Inclusive Housing



Hong Kong's longstanding housing challenge in price and supply has made home ownership unattainable for a vast majority of the population, especially for low to middle income groups, young adults and singles. Furthermore, Hong Kong has the second-highest rent to income ratio in the world taking up 65.8% of a household's income. The Northern Metropolis aims to construct an additional 350,000 residential units to eventually accommodate a population of 2.5 million. This presents an important opportunity to not only increase housing supply but create a model for housing that fosters inclusivity and reduces inequities in access across age, marital status, and socio-economic groups. By implementing a multiprong strategy that involves upstream policies, public-private partnerships, and community-centric approaches in building design, the Northern Metropolis can enable housing for all and create vibrant communities.

2 Developing a Low Carbon Zone

The bulk of Hong Kong's greenhouse gas emissions come from electricity generation (66%), of which 90% come from buildings. Transport is the second largest contributor (18%), followed by waste (8%). There is significant opportunity to pilot the Northern Metropolis as a blueprint for low carbon development in Hong Kong to meet its 2050 decarbonisation target. While the Government has indicated plans to build the Northern Metropolis as a sponge city, thereby enabling sustainable water management, further steps should be taken in collaboration with the private sector to ensure all new developments in the region including buildings, waste management, and transportation integrate neighbourhood-level low-carbon infrastructure and encourage low-consumption lifestyles. Hong Kong should further partake in knowledge- and resource-sharing with other GBA cities to realise this vision.



3 Building a Robust I&T Ecosystem



In order to create a viable regional and international I&T hub through the San Tin Technopole, and sustain economic competitiveness in the long-term, Hong Kong will need to address several existing systemic challenges. The city urgently needs to attract a steady supply of local talent and resolve the skills mismatch between education and I&T business needs, whilst sourcing international I&T talent and companies. Furthermore, while Hong Kong is known for its high-potential in research and development, it lacks expertise in other areas of the I&T supply chain. Leveraging the strengths of the GBA will help to overcome such shortcomings. Apart from funding, mechanisms to promote collaboration across academia, small and medium enterprises, start-ups and large businesses within respective industries (biotech, healthtech, fintech) is also key in helping scale and commercialise I&T initiatives.

4 Cultivating Eco-cultural Tourism

The Northern New Territories region is home to a wide range of environments and freshwater habitats, as well as rural heritage townships that can be preserved and celebrated by developing a local tourism industry. Development in the region can adopt eco-cultural tourism initiatives driven or supported by the local community to integrate the existing rich cultural and environmental resources into new developments in the region in a mutually beneficial way. In line with the Northern Metropolis' goal to build high-quality outdoor eco-recreation and tourism outlets, such efforts would both conserve ecological corridors and preserve local cultural heritage, while balancing economic growth.

