

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 6

(Oral Reply)

Asked by the Hon CHAN Kam-lam

Date of meeting: 21 December 2005

Replied by: Mr Michael SUEN,
GBS, JP Secretary for
Housing, Planning and
Lands

Question

In the Shenzhen 2030 Development Strategy published early this month, the Shenzhen Planning Bureau stated its wish for Shenzhen and Hong Kong to cooperate and develop jointly into an international metropolis. Regarding the integration of Shenzhen and Hong Kong, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) whether it will establish a regular mechanism with the Shenzhen authorities to consider how the Shenzhen 2030 Development Strategy and the Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy prepared by the Hong Kong Planning Department may tie in with each other;
- (b) whether, in addition to the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor under construction and the Eastern Corridor under

consideration, the authorities have studied other cross-boundary links; if not, of the reasons for that; and

- (c) of the timing for the existing boundary control points to implement co-location of immigration and customs facilities, in order to enhance efficiency and promote the integration of Shenzhen and Hong Kong?

Reply

Madam President,

My reply to the 3-part question is as follows:

- (a) With the ever-closer ties between Guangdong and Hong Kong in the realms of social and economic development, urban development in the two places is set to give rise to the Greater Pearl River Delta Township. Tied up with the above development, the Planning Department and various cities in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) Region have long ago mutually exchanged findings of strategic planning studies and the relevant planning information. Planning information is also exchanged through the existing liaison mechanisms, such as the Expert Group on Hong Kong/Guangdong Town Planning and Development (hereinafter referred to as “the Expert Group”) under the Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference.

In the study of “Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy” (hereinafter referred to as “HK 2030”), the

Planning Department confirms that strengthening ties with the Mainland is a basic planning direction for the future development of Hong Kong. In each of the first three stages of the Study, the Planning Department paid visits to the planning authorities in Shenzhen and other PRD cities to brief them on the proposals put forward in “HK 2030” and listen to their views, which are subsequently set out in the Stage 3 Public Consultation Report. In the meantime, the Shenzhen planning authorities, during the preparation of the “Shenzhen 2030 Development Strategy” (hereinafter referred to as “Shenzhen 2030”), kept the Planning Department abreast of their studies through the information exchange mechanism under the Expert Group. To ensure that the development in the two places may tie in with each other, we will continue to exchange planning information with the “Shenzhen 2030” team through the Expert Group and use this forum for the exchange of planning ideas and deliberation of issues of mutual concern. Given that the Expert Group has served effectively as a channel for research and consultation,

there is no need to set up any additional mechanisms.

- (b) On the issue of cross-boundary facilities, in order to keep the forecasts on cross-boundary flow of people and goods up-to-date, Hong Kong and Guangdong authorities will exchange information on passenger and freight traffic between the two places on a frequent basis. We will keep an eye on the situation and consider if additional cross-boundary infrastructural facilities or crossings should be provided having regard to the long-term needs.

As regards specific cross-boundary projects, the Joint Expert Group set up by the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau and the State Ministry of Railways is pressing ahead with the advance work for the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (hereinafter referred to as "ERL"). A consensus has been reached with respect to the alignment of and the locations of the stations for the Mainland section of the ERL. A dedicated express line linking Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou, the ERL will cut the journey time

between Hong Kong and Guangzhou from about 100 minutes as at present to within one hour. The Mainland section will start from Shibi Station in Guangzhou, pass through Humen in Dongguan and Longhua Station in Shenzhen, and then cross the boundary through Huanggang into Hong Kong. The Mainland authorities have just embarked on the construction of the Shibi-Longhua section (the section connecting Guangzhou and Shenzhen) and arrangements will be made to synchronise the construction of the remaining section from Longhua in Shenzhen to the boundary with the project programme of the Hong Kong section. The HKSAR Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government are now exchanging views on the planning and design for the Longhua Station and the connection of the two sections of the ERL. It is the common wish of both sides to design a station that will meet the needs of cross-boundary passengers and serve well as a transportation hub. As regards the Hong Kong section, we are now considering the feasibility study report submitted by KCRC in July 2005.

- (c) According to the information from the Security Bureau, at present, our consensus with the Mainland is to implement co-location of immigration and customs facilities at the new control point for the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor and to expedite construction works for such facilities to tie in with the commissioning of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor. There is at present no plan to implement co-location at other boundary control points.