

**Speaking Points of the Secretary for Development
for the Special Finance Committee Meeting (Works)
on 8 April 2020 (Wednesday)**

Chairman,

- In the new financial year, we have got four priority areas under the Works portfolio.
- First of all, with approval from the Legislative Council's (LegCo's) Finance Committee in mid-March for the creation of two directorate posts to lead the Project Strategy and Governance Office, we will press ahead with Construction 2.0 and lead the reform of the construction industry by advocating innovation, professionalisation and revitalisation. Apart from implementing measures to control the costs of public works, we will push forward the digitisation of works supervision systems for all major public works projects in phases with a view to strengthening project supervision and enhancing efficiency, safety and performance quality.
- Secondly, to meet the challenges of a shortage of skilled workers and an ageing workforce in the construction industry, we will continue to work with the Construction Industry Council to strengthen the training of construction workers, particularly regarding the application of new technologies and safety awareness, so as to attract more young people to join the industry. We will also encourage in-service workers to upgrade their skill levels and develop multiple skills, so as to allow for more flexible deployment of workers to alleviate manpower shortages. In addition, we will encourage and support a wider adoption of innovative technologies to speed up the development of the construction industry through the \$1 billion Construction Innovation and Technology Fund.
- Thirdly, regarding studies on works projects, apart from seeking funding approval for studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters, we plan to conduct a planning and engineering study on reclamation at Lung Kwu Tan and the coastal area of Tuen Mun West. We hope to have further discussion at the Public Works Subcommittee meetings in due course. In addition, funding approval is also being sought for an engineering study on Road P1 in Lantau in order to meet the development needs along the northshore of Lantau.

- Fourthly, we will continue to develop Kowloon East into the second core business district and take forward initiatives in San Po Kong to enhance connectivity, improve the environment and promote diversified development. This year, we will prepare amendments to the outline zoning plan for development of the Kwun Tong Action Area. As regards the Kowloon Bay Action Area, demolition of the former waste recycling centre there has begun. Construction of a footbridge connecting the Kowloon Bay MTR station and the future East Kowloon Cultural Centre is now in progress. Works on revitalising the Tsui Ping River and improving Lam Wah Street Playground will commence pending LegCo's funding approval.
- Now, I would like to brief Members on three areas of work that may be of concern to all of us. First of all, regarding protection of public safety, we propose additional funding of \$2 billion for expanding the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme, so that the total number of aged lifts that can benefit from the scheme will increase from about 5 000 to about 8 000.
- Besides, we propose to set aside about \$440 million to launch a five-year subsidy scheme to encourage property owners to implement water safety plans for their buildings. It is expected that about 5 000 buildings will benefit from the scheme.
- As for tree care, we have set up a Tree Risk Inspection Squad to enhance the auditing of tree risk assessments and management work, and to conduct inspections and spot checks more frequently. Also, we will set up a \$200 million Urban Forestry Support Fund this year to implement various new measures to strengthen manpower training, public education and promotion of proper tree care.
- The above is a brief account of our work. The controlling officers of the Works Branch and the relevant departments under the Development Bureau have already replied to 76 questions raised by Members on issues concerning deployment of resources under the Works portfolio. We are happy to answer any further questions that Members may now wish to raise.