THE STORY BEGINS...

Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu's historic move to map out medium- to long-term strategic ambitions in Hong Kong's first five-year plan together with his annual policy address marks the beginning of a whole new chapter for the city.

Given how the two documents are "*inextricably related*", as Lee said, the latest policy address marks the start of the new journey for the coming year. The address – Lee's last in this current term of government – lays out five major development opportunities and 25 key livelihood measures, ranging from targets for the Northern Metropolis to family-friendly policies catering to babies and the elderly. Below is an overview of the key moves.

See full **policy address** online

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

These development opportunities are to attract talent and businesses and deepen international cooperation.

TALENT Develop the Northern Metropolis University Town, increasing funded research postgraduate places by 30%

INDUSTRY Speed up building of international gold trading market; foster low-altitude and emerging industries

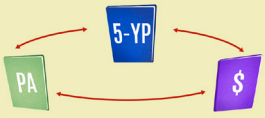
BUSINESS INVESTMENT Start on all nine new development areas of Northern Metropolis; speed up five major works projects

INSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS Building a global capital of mediation

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION Two UN bodies establishing presence in city; encourage Asian and international sports associations to do the same

WHAT NEXT AND HOW THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN, POLICY ADDRESS AND BUDGET ARE LINKED

The three documents form a framework where the five-year plan "leads" by setting the big picture; the policy address "implements" with specific initiatives and projects for the year and the budget "supports" both by providing solid resource support.



The chief executive will report to the Chinese president on the implementation of the five-year plan during the annual duty visit.

Source: HKSAR Government

WIDE-RANGING INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS

These are to enhance social well-being, spanning education, healthcare, housing and welfare.

More opportunities for youth

Collaborate with the business sector to provide over 30,000 job, internship and training quotas to support youngsters just entering the workforce

Affordable meals for the needy

Run "community dining halls" to provide affordable and nutritious meals for people in need

City management

Set up an "AI City Brain" integrated city management system, strengthen city management and emergency response capabilities

AI risk governance

Combat the use of AI in criminal activities, enhance the protection of minors using it and promote assessment of AI ethical risks

Advance quality education

Introduce a free digital-education learning resource platform equipped with AI Large Language Models

Strengthen support for carers

Increase the allowance for carers from low-income families to HK$3,300 per month

Better elderly care

Introduce a pilot scheme to bring in foreign domestic carers with more advanced training in elderly care to look after older residents

Building maintenance reforms

Overhaul the city's building maintenance regime

Shorter wait for housing

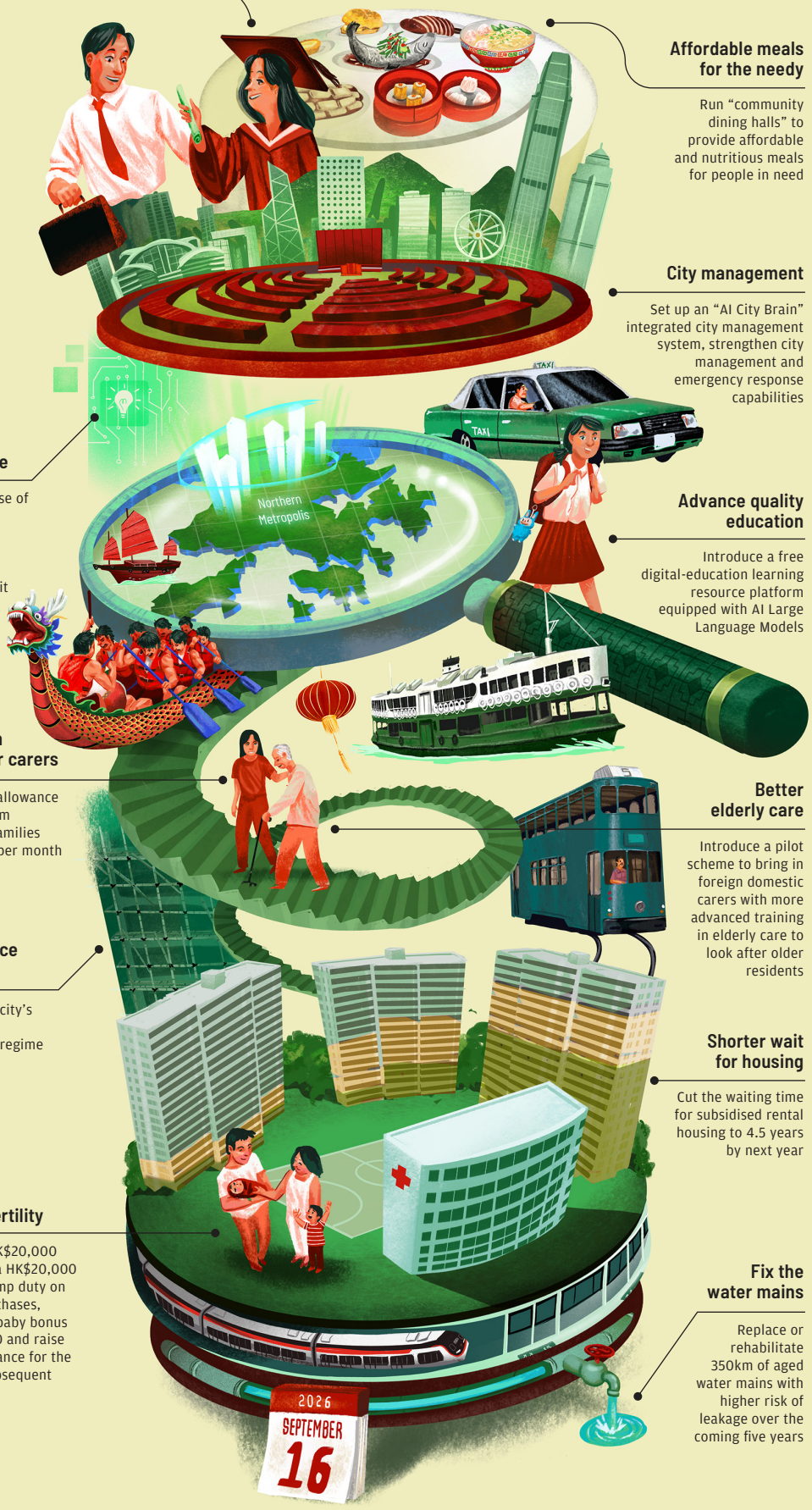
Cut the waiting time for subsidised rental housing to 4.5 years by next year

Promote fertility

Extend the HK$20,000 baby bonus, a HK$20,000 waiver in stamp duty on property purchases, increase the baby bonus to HK$30,000 and raise the tax allowance for the second or subsequent child born

Fix the water mains

Replace or rehabilitate 350km of aged water mains with higher risk of leakage over the coming five years



See **SCMP Plus** for more

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