

Infrastructure – building for the future

Overview

Hong Kong invests heavily in infrastructure to promote economic and community development. Of the HK\$557.9 billion (US\$71.5 billion) in total estimated government expenditure for 2018-19, some HK\$85.6 billion (15.34%) has been allocated for infrastructure.

Railways

Railways are the backbone of Hong Kong's public transport system, carrying more than five million passengers per day and accounting for about 40% of all public transport passenger trips. Major investments in expanding the rail network include:

- The Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link connects Hong Kong with the national high-speed rail network. Direct trains run between the West Kowloon Station and six shuttle destinations (Futian, Shenzhen North, Humen, Guangmingcheng, Qingsheng and Guangzhou South of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Passenger Line) as well as 38 long-haul destinations including Beijing, Shanghai, Kunming, Guilin, Guiyang, Shijiazhuang, Zhengzhou, Wuhan, Changsha, Hangzhou, Nanchang, Fuzhou, Xiamen and Shantou (updated in November 2018).
- The Sha Tin to Central Link is being built. The Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section and the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section are expected to open in 2019 and 2021 respectively
- By 2021, the total length of Hong Kong's railways will increase to more than 270km, bringing more than 70% of the local population into the railway catchment area. The rail share of local public transport will increase to 43%
- Seven other major projects are planned up to 2031: the Tuen Mun South Extension; the Northern Link (and Kwu Tung Station); the East Kowloon line; the Tung Chung West Extension (and Tung Chung East Station); the North Island Line; Hung Shui Kiu Station; and, the South Island Line (West)
- By 2031, Hong Kong will have about 300km of railways with about 75% of the population and 85% of job opportunities within the railway catchment. The rail share of local public transport will increase to between 45% and 50%
- The MTR Academy has started discussions with rail operators in several countries, including some covered by the Belt and Road Initiative, to offer tailor-made training curriculum for railway executives and professionals to drive excellence in railway operations and expansion.

Roads, bridges and cross-boundary projects

- Construction of connecting road and building structures of the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point is expected to be completed in 2019. Upon commissioning, it will be the seventh land-based crossing between Hong Kong and Shenzhen and is expected to handle up to 30,000 passengers and 17,850 vehicles per day. (updated in November 2018)

- Work is underway on the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link, Central-Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link, Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel, the widening works of Fanling Highway and improvement works of Hiram's Highway.
- The Government is constructing the Central Kowloon Route to link the Yau Ma Tei Interchange in West Kowloon with Kowloon Bay and the Kai Tak Development in East Kowloon, shortening the journey time between West Kowloon and Kowloon Bay via the Central Kowloon Route from 30 to 5 mins during rush hours.
- A feasibility study is underway on Route 11 for the long-term development of the Northwest New Territories and Lantau, and to enhance the road network to the airport.
- The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) connecting Hong Kong with Zhuhai and Macao was opened in October 2018. This cuts the travel time between Zhuhai and Kwai Tsing Container Terminals from 3.5 hours to 75 minutes; and the travel time between Zhuhai and Hong Kong International Airport from 4 hours to 45 minutes. HZMB provides a direct link between Hong Kong and the west coast of the Pearl River Delta and bring significant positive impact on logistics, commerce, trade and tourism. (updated in November 2018)

Fostering pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment

- The Government will continue to take forward "Walk in HK" and encourage people to walk more to reduce the use of mechanised transport for short-distance commuting. The "Walk in HK" initiative will provide user-friendly information on walking routes, enhance pedestrian networks, make walking a pleasant experience, and provide a safe and quality pedestrian environment. Measures include covering suitable walkways in different districts, selecting two pilot areas to study innovative measures for a comfortable walking environments, and hillside escalator links and elevator system projects.
- To promote cycling, individual cycle track sections are being linked up to provide a continuous 82-km east-west backbone for the cycle track network in the New Territories for recreation and to improve the quality of living. Cycle tracks will be provided in the Kai Tak Development as well as some New Development Areas in the New Territories.

Airport three-runway system

- To meet future air traffic growth and maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness as an international aviation hub, the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) started construction of the Three-Runway System (3RS) in 2016. Work will take approximately eight years.
- Upon full commissioning of the 3RS, Hong Kong International Airport will be able to handle air traffic demand at least up to 2030, by which time the annual volumes are expected to be around 100 million passengers and 9 million tonnes of cargo.
- In 2017, the airport handled 72.9 million passengers and 4.94 million tonnes of cargo. Together with 112,000 tonnes of airmail handled, the total cargo and airmail throughput of the airport exceeded 5 million tonnes for the first time. The airport has been the world's busiest for international air cargo for eight consecutive years and ranks third globally for international passenger throughput.