



Urban Renewal Strategy Review

Together we cultivate,
plan and enjoy the fruits of
urban renewal

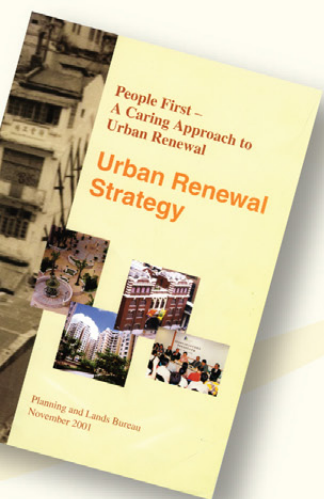


July 2008



Development Bureau

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region



URBAN RENEWAL IN HONG KONG



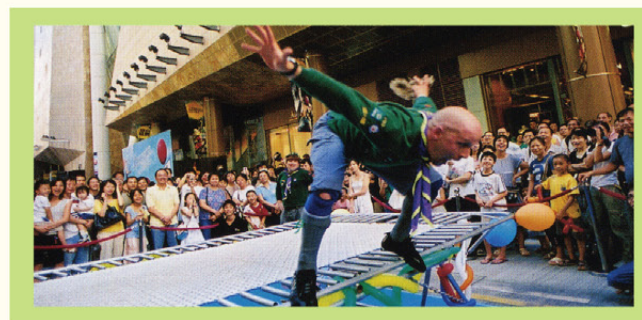
Hong Kong, like most developed cities, faces a formidable problem of aging buildings and urban decay. Some quarters of our community are living or operating in rundown areas which are in dire need of urban regeneration and environmental improvement.

The Government set up the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) in 2001 with a mission to create quality and vibrant living in Hong Kong – a better home in a world-class city. The Government also published an Urban Renewal Strategy (URS) to provide broad policy guidance to the work of URA.



URA'S WORK & ACHIEVEMENTS

For the past seven years, URA has adopted a “4R” strategy, i.e. **Redevelopment**, **Rehabilitation**, **Revitalisation** and **pReservation** to regenerate our urban areas.



So far, URA and its strategic partner, Hong Kong Housing Society, have –

- (a) improved the living conditions of some 18,000 people through commencing 35 redevelopment projects (6 of them having preservation elements) and 2 preservation projects

In addition, URA has –

- (b) benefited about 36,000 residential units in over 450 buildings under rehabilitation schemes
- (c) preserved over 25 historical buildings for adaptive re-use

About 20,000m² of public open space and about 55,000m² of government/community/welfare facilities, e.g. youth centre and residential home for elderly would also be made available upon completion of the 35 redevelopment projects.

More details on the current URS and URA work can be found in www.ursreview.gov.hk and www.ura.org.hk



A NEW ERA FOR URBAN REGENERATION

Community aspirations over what urban renewal and regeneration entail and how they can be achieved have changed much since 2001. The large number of old buildings (15,000 private building stock aged 30 years or above now and rising to 22,000 in the next ten years) also calls for a critical re-think of the urban regeneration programme.

URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGY – THE REVIEW

The Government has launched a root and branch review of URS. There is no pre-determined agenda of the review. The review comprises 3 stages of public engagement –

Stage 1

Envisioning

Jul 2008 - Jan 2009

- Identify key issues and agenda items that should be reviewed.
- Focus group discussions, and feedback from the community through various channels.
- Public seminar to share overseas experience.



Stage 2

Public Engagement

Feb 2009 - Dec 2009

- Engage wider public on the issues and solutions of urban renewal.
- Road shows, public forums, in-depth focus group discussions, and web discussion forum.



Stage 3

Consensus Building

Jan 2010 - Apr 2010

- Review choices and preferences on issues and options.
- Identify majority views on how URS should be revised.
- Workshops with all active participants and general public.

STAGE 1 – ENVISIONING

We are now in the Envisioning Stage. We need **YOU** to help us set the agenda.

Urban renewal is an important development issue with economic and social dimensions involving numerous stakeholders. The following are some snapshots of diverse views towards urban renewal.

I prefer redevelopment to completely upgrade old areas and better utilise scarce land resources.

It is important to preserve historic relics, local characters and social network.

Elaborate planning process and extensive public involvement can foster community consensus.

Hong Kong is a modern city. City development must be forward looking.

There should be better compensation for affected owners and tenants.

It is better to leave urban renewal to private owners and developers.

I wonder what costs society should pay for urban regeneration.

I want to operate in older areas where my small business can survive, why uproot me?

Different aspirations, such as the above, reflect competing and even conflicting demands over urban renewal. It is important to strike a careful balance between –

- interest and needs of individual owners/tenants **versus** the public interest
- financial prudence and sustainability **versus** compensation demands
- development **versus** preservation

SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Below are some questions on urban renewal for you to consider -

- Rehabilitation is a viable alternative to redevelopment in regenerating older districts. However, buildings coming to the end of their physical and economic life will need to be redeveloped ultimately. How and where should the line be drawn?
- Redevelopment may destroy the old ambience and disrupt social network of affected occupants. At the same time, it provides an opportunity to make available public open space and community facilities in built-up areas and injects vitality in such areas. How much redevelopment work should the public sector carry out?
- “People-centred approach to urban renewal”, “preserving social network” and “local characteristics” may carry different meanings to different people. Can community consensus be reached over how to achieve them?
- Community aspirations like low density, preservation and retention of social network come with a price tag. How much is the community prepared to pay for these?
- How to allow early participation in the planning of redevelopment and preservation projects while forestalling speculators from moving in to claim compensation?
- Urban regeneration, in particular redevelopment, revamps and uplifts an old area, but the inevitable effect of ‘gentrification’ may stifle the continued survival of small businesses. How to mitigate such effect?
- Could the Government, the URA, the community, and the private sector complement each other in achieving the goals of urban renewal and regeneration?

HAVE YOUR SAY – BE INFORMED AND GET INVOLVED

Urban renewal is a vital element of a quality city life.
Let's work together to achieve a new sustainable URS -

Come visit the website
www.ursreview.gov.hk
for more information

•
Sign up for the workshops
to help us set the agenda

•
Send us your views by filling in
the attached questionnaire or other forms

Contact Us

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To help us set the agenda for the Review of the Urban Renewal Strategy, please complete the following questionnaire and send it back to us:

1. What community benefits should urban renewal bring about? Which factors should be considered in considering a sustainable urban renewal strategy?

2. Currently, redevelopment plays a significant part in the holistic approach to urban renewal, with lesser emphasis on rehabilitation, preservation and revitalization. Should the weightings among these works be reviewed? And in what aspects?

3. Should the project selection process be reviewed? Should it be decided by the majority view of the community? What areas should we study to address the minority views?

4. URA is required to achieve self-financing in the long run. Does the current self-financing model of urban renewal need to be reviewed?

5. Should the role of the URA be reviewed? What roles should the private sector and the Government play in urban renewal?

6. Should the current compensation methods for redevelopment and preservation be reviewed? What are the key elements of fair compensation methods?

7. Other comments

Name (optional):

Contact (optional): e-mail or postal address, telephone number etc:

Please send the completed questionnaire and/or other comments you may have to:

By Post

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Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

By Fax

: 2845 3489

By email

: enquiry@ursreview.gov.hk

A softcopy of the questionnaire can be downloaded from www.ursreview.gov.hk

If you wish to participate in various public engagement activities, please indicate below:

☐ Yes (at contact indicated above)

☐ No