

Invitation for Expression of Views on “Development of a Piazza in Tsim Sha Tsui”

The Tourism Commission (TC) invites the public to express their views on the “Development of a Piazza in Tsim Sha Tsui” project starting from today (22 October 2007) to 21 January 2008.

The existing Public Transport Interchange (PTI) adjacent to the Tsim Sha Tsui (TST) Star Ferry Pier will be relocated to TST East (TSTE). After the completion of the phased diversion of bus routes, the Government plans to develop the vacated site into a piazza.

The proposed development of the TST piazza is still at a conceptual stage. The main objective of the project is to create a new public open space for use by both the locals and tourists alike, thereby enhancing the connectivity and vibrancy of the area and becoming a focal point for both local residents and tourists. The TST Clock Tower, which is one of the top ten attractions in Hong Kong, will be an important icon feature of the piazza. This, coupled with the magnificent harbour view, has tremendous potential to become another key tourist attraction. As such, the proposal is supported by both the tourism trade and the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

With community feedback so far, the Government proposes some pre-requisites for planning the project:

- (1) the existing TST Star Ferry Pier, the TST Clock Tower and the five flag-posts should not be affected;
- (2) suitable arrangements should be put in place to facilitate the local residents and visitors to take buses or taxis to and from TST Star Ferry Pier (i.e. provision of adequate bus stops and taxi stand as close to the TST Star Ferry Pier as possible); and
- (3) irrespective of whether the project is to be implemented by the Government or the private sector, a mechanism should be established to select private partners through an open tender and to allow the public to effectively engage in and monitor the implementation of the project.

Also, in pursuit of the project, the Government should as far as possible avoid creating any additional burden on the traffic and transport conditions in this part of TST, and conduct regular surveys/reviews to gauge community feedback during the phased relocation of bus routes and for the introduction of effective mitigating measures as and when required.

As planning work takes time, in parallel, TC is exploring options for possible uses, and development and management modes of the piazza. It wishes to collect views from the community through different channels with a view to formulating an optimal option for the design, development and management of the piazza. As a first step, TC held a workshop on 30 May to invite relevant stakeholders and professional organisations to express views on the piazza project. The workshop has provided useful information for TC to prepare for the consultation process for taking forward the project. Views and suggestions collected at the workshop were consolidated into a report by an independent consultant. The workshop report has been uploaded onto TC's website (http://www.tourism.gov.hk/english/current/current_piazzatst.html) for public viewing. We hope that the workshop report will serve as a useful reference basis for members of the public to express their views on the uses, and the development and management modes of the piazza.

Members of the public are invited to submit their views on the "Development of a Piazza in Tsim Sha Tsui" project, particularly suggestions on the uses and the development and management modes of the piazza, to TC **by 21 January 2008** through one of the following ways:

By Email : tstpiazza@cedb.gov.hk

By Post : Tourism Commission (Attn.: Mr William WAT)
Room 248, 2/F, East Wing, Central Government
Offices, Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong

By Fax : 2121 1468

To facilitate collation and analysis of public views, members of the public are welcome to use the form provided in TC's website (http://www.tourism.gov.hk/english/current/current_piazzatst.html) for submission of views.

On the basis of the public views collected, we will work out specific proposals for further public engagement. The implementation of the project will be subject to funding approval by the Legislative Council. Subject to progress in the next phase of work, the earliest completion date of the planned piazza is 2010/2011.

22 October 2007