

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Purpose

The subject Consultancy Study for Enhancement of the Accessibility of Physical Environment in Hong Kong (the Study) has been commissioned in February 2019, to assist in formulating a strategy and practical recommendations for enhancing the accessibility of the physical environment in Hong Kong.

2 Background

The 2017 Policy Address announced that the Government had tasked the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (RAC) to formulate a new Persons with Disabilities and Rehabilitation Programme Plan (RPP) to set out the strategic directions and recommendations for responding to the service needs of persons with disabilities. One of the RPP strategic directions is to promote disability inclusive culture, facilitate accessible environment, transportation and access to information so that persons with disabilities can fully participate in social life. RAC submitted the new RPP to the Government in June 2020. The Government formally released the new RPP in July 2020, accepting in principle the strategic directions and recommendations therein.

The Task Force on Accessibility under RAC is responsible for examining accessibility matters relating to persons with disabilities, and making recommendations on strategic directions and measures for inclusion in the new RPP. In this connection, the Task Force has been taking forward and overseeing the Study for implementing the RPP strategic recommendation - "conduct research on the international standards / best practices / guidelines on universal design, and taking full account of the constraints and opportunities in Hong Kong, formulate feasible, achievable and practical strategies and recommendations; adopt the methodology of 'Travel Chain Analysis' to identify various barriers and propose measures to eliminate the barriers, with a view to creating an accessible community and living environment".

3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the Study are to formulate a strategy, with proposed practical measures, with a view to creating an environment that promotes freedom of choice and independence, and respects the individual's right to live a full life with dignity, irrespective of differences in ability and age; and facilitating users of different abilities to access buildings and services independently through improving the physical environment / facilities and application of innovative technology and assistive devices by phases within an appropriate timeframe.

4 Scope of the Study

The Study has performed the following tasks: desktop research on "Principles and Standards on Universal Accessibility" in six cities (London, Osaka, Shanghai, Sydney, Vancouver and Singapore), a gap analysis based on a benchmarking exercise on the extent of accessibility in Hong Kong with the participation of persons with disabilities, stakeholder engagements, and formulation of strategy and recommendations.

5 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings of the research studies and benchmarking exercise as well as comments collated through stakeholder engagements, the Study puts forward 20 recommendations along six directions for implementation in the short to long term:

Control Measures

1. Application of universal design
2. Review and revamp of Design Manual: Barrier Free Access 2008
3. Reflection of universal design in town planning

Building / Premises Management

4. Set up best practice building management guidance for universal accessibility
5. Training of building management practitioners
6. Improvement of Access Co-ordinator and Access Officer Scheme

Accessibility Assessment Mechanism

7. Establishment of an accessibility accreditation body
8. Development of a standard for accredited accessibility assessment programme

Education

9. Promotion of universal accessibility design and ICT with universal design through public education and publicity
10. Introduction of universal accessibility design and ICT with universal design to schools
11. Raising awareness of practitioners and professionals on universal accessibility design and ICT with universal design

Incentive Schemes

12. Increasing awareness of funding schemes for universal accessibility improvement
13. Incentive schemes for universal accessibility improvement works
14. Supporting incentive schemes with voluntary accessibility rating

Information Technology

15. Financial support for innovative accessible solution and service providers
16. Development of technological solutions
17. Cross-sector collaboration for innovative accessible solutions
18. Development and implementation of Common Spatial Data Infrastructure
19. Standardisation of digital maps , websites, and mobile APPs development
20. Management and maintenance of digital information

The recommendations of the Study observe the RPP strategic directions and provide for the strategicness and flexibility for implementation in tandem or at stages as appropriate for achieving synergistic effects.
