

Town Planning Task Force

Introduction

This paper outlines the administrative and statutory plan making processes, and the possible related problems causing delays in project implementation.

Administrative Part of the Plan Making Process

2. Before preparation of statutory town plans (Outline Zoning Plans) for new development areas, or for major review of existing Outline Zoning Plans, the Government usually carry out Comprehensive Planning and Engineering Studies. To satisfy different objectives and requirements of various government departments is usually one major reason of prolongation of the process.

3. Public engagement is now an integral part of such Planning & Engineering Studies, and a universally accepted model of public engagement is yet to be established. In Hong Kong, the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee, through its active role in promoting public engagement in reviewing the Kai Tak and Wan Chai North Outline Zoning Plans, has significantly increased inclusiveness, transparency, and continuity of the engagement process.

4. However, as the government and the community are going through the learning curve, the process is sometimes painfully slow and may not be heading for resolutions as different stakeholders have different perceptions on the following dilemmas.

- (a) Holistic planning *vs* Area-specific planning
- (b) Public views *vs* Professional knowledge
- (c) Public involvement at critical stages *vs* at every single step
- (d) Consensus views *vs* Majority views
- (e) Best Site *vs* Suitable Site
- (f) Thorough process *vs* Due process

Statutory Part of the Plan Making Process

5. Once the Outline Zoning Plan is prepared and gazetted under the Town Planning Ordinance, the statutory process will come into play. Most parts of the process are governed by time limits. The attached *table* shows briefly the major steps in the process and some problems causing delays for further discussion.