

## 適合年長人士的樓宇

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(以下譯文節錄自張先生的發言)

1. 在未來30年間，每四名香港市民便有一位年長人士。建設未來的外在生活環境，建築師、工程師、室內設計師、監管機構、發展商、以及不同年齡人士和機構等，都會扮演重要的角色。
2. 屋宇署的基本職責是執行建築物條例，確保樓宇及樓宇使用者的安全。但我們亦支持在樓宇內發展可以改善生活環境的設施。我們新的焦點是研究通用設計，在可能及合理的情況下，顧及所有樓宇使用者，包括不同年齡人士、體健或殘疾人士的需要。
3. 現時法例規定必須在商業大廈所有部份及住宅樓宇的公眾地方為殘疾人士提供暢通無阻的通道。法例亦規定需要在斜路、梯級及樓梯設有可觸知的警告條及有對比的顏色等。
4. 為配合年長人口及殘疾人士的需要，我們委任顧問全面檢討目前年長人士及殘疾人士的法定及建議性設施。提供這些設施的目的是利便年長人士及殘疾人士自我照顧日常生活所需，並且在可行情況下工作及重新融入家庭和社區。
5. 在未來，我們需要進一步研究是否可以提供設施，使到不同年齡人士及殘疾人士可以在同一樓宇居住，而這些設施亦可容許一個人在同一屋宇由童年住到晚年；因病而暫時行動不便的人士，亦可留在同一屋宇而不需搬到其他地方，例如院舍等。
6. 屋宇署會立即在兩方面與安老事務委員會合作。第一是在建築物條例之下提供誘因，鼓勵在樓宇內提供額外設施例如會所、有上蓋走廊及空中花園等。屋宇署會與有關專家及設施使用者商討加設規定，在樓宇設立為年長人士而設的設施。第二是在屋宇署的樓宇分類計劃之中列入年長人士的設施，這會有助觸發市場的反應。
7. 人生過程中的每個階段，都有可能被長期或短暫的殘疾困擾。通用設計如能適當運用，樓宇的設施將能滿足不同人士的需要，亦為發展商帶來新的市場。我們為外在生活環境所需付出的資源相對來說是很少，亦在我們的能力範圍之內。

## Elderly Friendly Buildings

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(The following is the written speech of Mr. Cheung)

Welcome to the concurrent session on “Remodel the Living Environment”. The topic I wish to share with you today is “Elderly Friendly Buildings” and Buildings Department’s vision that buildings should be designed as far as possible to meet the universal needs of their occupants, young and old, able or disabled.

### Introduction

The report published recently on the ‘Hong Kong Population Projections, 2002 – 2031’ has provided a timely forecast on the impending demographic changes in our population in the coming 30 years. It is significant to note that by the year 2025, in less than 30 years ahead, one out of four HK people will be 60 years old or above.

### Pressing Need

The forecast has indicated to us all that there is a pressing need for us, the government and the private sector, to make provisions for our future, I mean the future of all of us here and the generations to come. Experts and distinguished speakers have already spoken in this morning, and in the concurrent sessions now in progress, on how we should cater for the pressing situation from the political and social point of view.

### Living Environment

As far as the living environment is concerned, I believe we too have an important agenda ahead of us. I would suggest all stakeholders who are responsible for our built environment have an important role to play in the process. These stakeholders include architects, engineers, interior designers, regulators, developers and most important of all, the wide spectrum of persons in the different age groups.

### Buildings Department’s Role

Buildings Department, as a regulator and government agency has of course an important role to play in the process to provide for our future. At the risk of labouring or advertising on BD’s vision and mission, I would like to give a brief picture of what

BD aspires to do in this important undertaking. Buildings Department is primarily charged under the Buildings Ordinance with the responsibility of ensuring the safety of private buildings and the health of their occupants. But, we also encourage the provision of features in buildings which improve our standard of living. Examples of these extra features are clubhouses, covered walkways in estates, wider corridors and more recently green features such as sky gardens, balconies etc.

Our new focus is universal design study, catering where possible and sensible, the needs of all the occupants of buildings, at different age groups, the fit and those with impairment.

### **Current Requirements**

As regards facilities for persons with a disability, we already have statutory requirements for providing access for persons with mobility problems to all parts of commercial buildings, and the common parts of residential buildings. These access facilities include access to at least one of the entrances of the building, the provision of at least one carparking space for the disabled, and at change of levels.

For persons with visual and audio difficulty, there are also requirements for the provision of tactile warning strips and contrasting colour in ramps, steps and stair-cases in all buildings, to site a few examples.

In addition to basic access, there is at present a mandatory requirement for the provision of measures to facilitate the living needs of the disabled. Currently toilets for disabled are required to be provided in all public and commercial buildings. The amenity facilities I just mentioned, such as wider corridors and larger lift lobbies, also provide space for easier maneuvering for persons on wheelchairs. In addition, other amenity features such as clubhouses, sky gardens, and balconies also enhance the living standards of the disabled, the old age and persons of other age groups alike.

### **Future Needs**

To meet the future needs of our aging population and other persons with a disability, temporary or permanent, we have commissioned a consultancy study to carry out a comprehensive review of the current mandatory and recommended facilities for person with a disability. In addition, the consultant will be asked to look into the needs of our aging population. We will of course make reference to international

practices and standards, and take the valuable opportunity provided by this symposium to consult expert from overseas and in Hong Kong.

I think, to design our built environment for the future, it is important to ask ourselves a few questions

#### Questions:

1. First. What is the objective of providing the facilities?
2. Second. How do we approach to cater for the different demographic categories of persons and persons with different types of disability?
3. Third. What facilities should be provided?
4. Fourth. The cost to the society and to some of the stakeholders involved?
5. Finally. How should we make this happen?

I am sure learned speakers and distinguished guests would have many interesting answers to and valuable advice on these five questions. However, before I present to you a few of my thoughts on these issues, I would like to share with you the wisdom of our ancestor by quoting a phrase from the ancient article, "The Story of the Peach Garden" ( " 桃花園記 ") by Mr. Tao Yuan Ming (陶淵明),

“ 黃髮垂髫，並怡然自樂 ”

It is a portrait of harmony with the elderly and youngsters living together happily and enjoying their safe, comfortable and peaceful environment.

Now, back to my humble view on the five questions.

#### Objective

First, on the overall objective, in view of the rapid increase not only in the number but also in the proportion of our aging population, I think we need to cater for two needs. The facilities should enable our aging population and persons with a disability to take care of themselves in terms of their basic living needs. In addition, for those who are basically healthy, whether they are aged or persons with disability, we should provide facilities for them to work wherever possible and contribute to the society. We should also emphasize on the need to enable them to be integrated or re-integrated into their own family and the community.

## Approach

On the second issue regarding approach, can I give a very brief history on how we started to provide for persons with a disability.

First, we started to provide for persons with mobility problems. Then, we extended the facilities to cater for persons with visual and audio difficulties. Now, we have to cater for the aged. I think, for the future we need to look more into the feasibility of providing facilities for persons of all different age groups and disabilities, temporary or permanent. The approach has the following advantages:

- i) I would allow a person to live, if he prefers, in the same flat or building from birth, throughout his youth, in maturity and to old age.
- ii) I would also allow persons of different age groups and generations to live together in the same place.
- iii) Lastly, the provision would also allow persons with a temporary disability, due to illness or injury, to live in a building without the need to move from one building to another, for example an institution.

We would of course need to carry out a more detailed study on the compatibility of the different types of facilities. For example tactile tracks may not be suitable for the aged.

## Facilities

On what facilities to be provided, I think apart from providing for their very basic needs for access to places in which they live and work, there should also be amenity features for them to maintain a high standard of quality of life. In view of the anticipated large proportion of the aged in the coming 30 years, facilities should also be provided for them to be integrated into the society in terms of work and leisure, bearing in mind the usability principle.

## Cost

As regards the cost involved in the provision of these facilities, let me illustrate a few examples. As I have said in the very beginning there are already mandatory requirements for access facilities to new commercial buildings and the common areas of new domestic buildings built after the 80s. Disabled toilets are already provided for in commercial buildings. Therefore, what needs to be provided in addition

to this to cater for the aged may not be, in my view, too cumbersome or costly. I would take the opportunity to illustrate my views by a few examples:

Access:

- i. Wider doors with low threshold to make it much easier to enter a home
- ii. Contrasting colour between floor and walls to help people with visual weakness
- iii. Loading bay for accessibility of ambulance and other vehicles
- iv. Handrails in corridor to enhance mobility

Independent Living:

- i. Lever control water taps
- ii. Loop door handle
- iii. Switches, cooking bench and telephone at appropriate height
- iv. Emergency call bell
- v. Visual alarm for persons with hearing impairment
- vi. Level floor bathroom with hand rails
- vii. Accessible drying rack

Amenities:

- i. Covered walkway to shelter from rain to unpleasant weather
- ii. Enlarged protected lobbies for temporary refuge

This of course apply to new buildings and those constructed in the 80s after the mandatory requirements came in 1984. Therefore, what we need to do for the aged and for our future in the built environment, may only require a little extra effort by all the stakeholders when facilities are incorporated at design stage of course. As a matter of fact, as an entrepreneur, how could a developer ignore the transformation of a young market to an emerging silver market?

### Implementation

Lastly, on how to proceed with requiring the provision of these additional facilities. There are of course different options opened to us. These include mandatory through legislation, the provision of incentives to encourage such provisions, or to mobilize the market forces, such as the emerging silver market mentioned above.

The answer would really come from all the stakeholders. But as one of the stakeholders, Buildings Department would immediately start off on two fronts in co-operation with the Elderly Commission.

First, when providing incentive under the Buildings Ordinance for the construction of such extant features as club houses, covered walkways and sky gardens, Buildings Department will consider in consultation with the professionals and users imposing a requirement for the incorporation of specific facilities for the elderly.

Secondly, adequacy of facilities for the elderly will be included as a criteria in Buildings Department's proposed Building Categorization Scheme. This will help kick starting the operation of the market forces.

### Conclusion

To conclude, aging is a very complex matter with a social, economic and culture dimension, and requires cross-section co-ordination and commitments. However it is an issue affecting us all and all the stakeholders, both in the government and in the private sector. In view of the wide variety of the disabilities, which could happen throughout one's lifetime from birth to old age, temporary or permanent, due to accident, illness or birth, it is high time that we should tackle it in an integrated approach. The universal design approach, when applied sensibly, would better cater for the variety of needs and also provide a market niche for developers to cater for the young and the emerging silver market. Lastly, I would also suggest that the extra efforts we need to make for the built environment may be relatively small and within our capability. All that we need is the will to go that extra mile. Buildings Department will help kick start the process.

Thank you.