Large-scale Development
-ULI and the Asia Society

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Introduction

Asian cities took the idea of urban density to a new level. How livable and sustainable are these high density cities?
What makes high density work? Is it the infrastructure in place? The people themselves?
Introduction

Cities throughout Asia are not stopping there either. They’re only getting bigger...
Introduction

Balancing new development with heritage conservation is the key to making these cities unique and distinctive.
Introduction

What can we learn from these high density Asian cities? How can we make cities more livable for more people?
ULI 10 Principles
for a Sustainable Approach to New Development for a more livable
Hong Kong
ULI 10 Principles for Hong Kong

Ten Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development
Towards Sustainable and Integrated Large-Scale Developments for a More Livable Hong Kong
Hong Kong Podium Development

Issues of Large-scale Development

- Huge isolated podiums create blank perimeter
- Walls at street level topped by walled building towers block air ventilation across the urban fabric.
- Perimeter-block streetwalls are not designed with setbacks, creating narrow streets devoid of landscaping or trees.
- The podium, which directly abuts the street, forms narrow, deep street canyons, trapping air pollutants and worsening the heat-island effect.
- Retail uses are inward looking, and public open space is limited to the podium level.
Hong Kong Podium Development

Issues of Large-scale Development

- Circulation patterns end at the development and are not integrated within the site boundary.
- Community connections are disrupted because the urban grid is not extended.
- Though the impact on adjacent land values is positive, especially for transit developments, it may lead to rice inflation in certain cases.
- A project-based focus hampers the creation of great places with high-quality public spaces.
Hong Kong Development Timeline

HONGKONG DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Central South 1960s
Mong Kok 1970s
Taikoo 1980s
Kowloon Station 2000s


Mixed-use Development
Jardine House (1972)
Hopewell Centre (1980)
Lippo Centre (1988)
HSBC (1985)
Bank of China (1990)
Central Plaza (1992)
Exchange Square (1988)
IFC (2003)
Kowloon Station (2007)
10 Principles - Objectives

Objective:

Identify key challenges of large-scale developments in Hong Kong and benchmark these projects against successful regional and international case studies.

Identify key opportunities for a sustainable approach to new developments on existing development practices.

Develop a series of principles which outline an alternate development approach to ensure more sensitive and integrated developments.
10 Principles - Methodology

Stage 1

Review of Large Scale Developments in Hong Kong

Benchmark against Regional and International Case Studies

Set up the Steering Committee

Organize a ULI workshop with multiple stakeholders

Produce an interim report
10 Principles - Methodology

Stage 2

Review the workshop findings

Formulate preliminary principles for integrated large-scale developments

Draft the Ten Principles report highlighting local, regional, and international case studies.

Organize Kai Tak review panel session

Launch the final report
10 Principles - Workshop

Approximately 50 stakeholders from the public and private sectors attended.

Breakout Sessions
- Group 1: Planning, urban design, and regulatory implications
- Group 2: Infrastructure, transport network, and sustainability
- Group 3: Development, implementation, and economic viability
10 Principles - Overview

1. **Build on Your Strengths**
   Rethink the strategic vision and policy framework

2. **Create Great Places**
   Adopt a place-making approach

3. **Extend the Urban Grid**
   Develop to an appropriate scale and density

4. **Open Up Public Space**
   Provide accessible public open space

5. **Integrate Infrastructure**
   Ensure transport and infrastructure integration
10 Principles - Overview

6. Activate the Streets
Enhance street level interface and continuity

7. Keep it Flexible
Facilitate good urban design and flexible zoning

8. Promote Sustainability
Go beyond sustainable building design

9. Engage People Early On
Enable upfront public engagement

10. Manage, Control & Coordinate
Implement coordinated management control
1 – Build on Your Strengths

Building on Hong Kong’s strengths Strategic location, financial success, transportation efficiency, unique skyline, high-density development, vibrant street life etc.

A paradigm shift is needed to focus on longer term value creation rather than short-term economic gain.

- Strong leadership
- Integrated Strategic Vision
- Clear policy framework
- Proactive approach
1 – Build on Your Strengths

District-wide visions with 3-D urban design plans using a bottom-up approach with community engagement

All government departments should work together with the community, developers and stakeholders to achieve the common city vision

City’s long-term success depends on environmental and social sustainability not just high economic value
1 – Build on Your Strengths

Hong Kong 2030 Study
Based on a participatory approach
To leverage the existing urban infrastructure
To concentrate on the reuse and recycling of the old urban fabric
To do more with less

Singapore Concept Plan 2001
Mapped out the vision for the city and has been updating continuously
Based on a decentralization policy
Physical planning as means to attain economic, political, environmental and social goals.

Vancouver Downtown Plan
Designed to reverse the effects of urban sprawl
Urban design philosophy with a high-density typology – rezoned downtown for residential use
Transit and pedestrian oriented

PlaNYC, New York
Outlined the city’s vision for over 25 years
Calls for more city control over large-scale development
3 major components: OpeNYC, MaintaiNYC, GreeNYC
2 – Create Great Places

Place-making principles for a livable, walkable and sustainable city:

- Ensure high-quality design to reflect the character of the surrounding community to stimulate activity and economic vitality paying attention to how the building touches the ground.

- Integrate public spaces with landscaping, attractive street furniture and public art to create a sense of place; allow flexible use of space and promote private events that bring vitality to the area and stimulate social interaction.
2 – Create Great Places

Place-making principles for a livable, walkable and sustainable city:

- Promote pedestrian connectivity by creating integrated blocks, tree lined streets, and pleasant walkways, as well as comfortable, well marked, continuous streets that are vibrant.

- Create a high-quality public realm that enhances the appeal of the pedestrian environment, strengthens the sense of place, and supports a diverse range of activities.

- Establish a unique identity with landmarks and public space as a gateway to the development to create attractive destinations.
2 – Create Great Places

Taikoo Place, Hong Kong
Integrated with the district over time – created a unique sense of place and character
Connected by footbridges and within walking distance of MTR

Life Hub Daning, Shanghai
A trendy development respecting local tradition
Offers pedestrian friendly, retail-lined streets
Proximity to mass transit or bus transit

Roppongi Hills, Tokyo
An integrated development with high-rise inner urban communities
Allows people to live, work, play, and shop in proximity to eliminate commuting time
3 – Extend the Urban Grid

ICF Elevated Walkways.

Langham Place, HK

Kowloon Station, HK

Kowloon Station Development, HK
Superblocks disrupt connections to surrounding districts resulting in isolated development that are inward looking.

What scale of development is appropriate to integrate with the existing urban fabric?

Integrated blocks become attractive for people to live, work and visit and create a sense of place and retain value in the longer-term.

Mixed use above the station is good, but development should be permeable at ground level to integrate well with adjacent areas.
3 – Extend the Urban Grid

Extend the urban grid to facilitate pedestrian walkability and use public space to integrate with the surrounding area.

Appropriate development scale and pedestrian friendly streets are necessary to increase the vibrancy of the area and make the development attractive and commercially successful.

Making streets pedestrian friendly and allowing access to a well-managed public space is important.
3 – Extend the Urban Grid

Liverpool One, UK
Retains many of the street patterns that shoppers and visitors have been familiar with for a long time
Creates a link between the west and east side of the city to the waterfront
Planned six different districts within this large site, each with a different character

Whampoa Garden, HK
Adapting high-density living environment in Hong Kong
Well connected public open space located at first-floor podium level
Connected by foot-bridge and linked to vibrant life of the street

Landmark East, HK
A street level open space that is well integrated
Open space at grade allowing pedestrian movement and street continuity

IFC, HK
The Airport Express Hong Kong Station and the transport hub are directly beneath it.
The IFC development is connected with the Central district by footbridges on the 2nd level.
Limited open space within the urban area that has the potential to bring different groups in the society together

Many newly created public open spaces are on podiums which tend to be physically and visually less accessible

Developers often provide open public space within private developments for bonus plot ratio, but how accessible are these spaces?

Strategy to integrate landscaping, public art, and civic functions within public open space and along streets to create a continuous and high-quality public realm
Public open space should be well defined, and connected with walking routes and bicycle paths provided where feasible.

It is important that public open space is pedestrian friendly and a place for people from all walks of life, young and old, rich and poor.

Street markets act as open space at grade, but their role is compromised and their continuation often threatened.
4 – Open Up Public Place

Exchange Square, HK
Ground level houses a public transport interchange
Well connected at upper level to adjacent development
Accessible open space at the podium

Times Square, HK
Accessible public open space at ground level
Controversial issue with privatization of public space
Re-examine provisions for public open space, and the government quid pro quo with property developers

IFC, HK
Lacks connections to the street level, forcing pedestrians to move to upper podium level to access the open space
Less accessible to the general public, only frequented by office works and mall visitors using the bars and restaurants
4 – Open Up Public Place

Greenbelt, Manila
Offers an unconventional “garden wall” design
Weaves through the meandering open-air plazas, courtyards, and pathways
Outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes nearby. Elevated walkways ensure ample exposure to the park

Concord Pacific Development, Vancouver
Woven into the fabric of the adjacent city grid
Provides public access to the waterfront
Respected as a self-sufficient community, with a range of retail uses, services, and amenities

IFC, Seoul
30% of the green area is required at grade level
Green area at grade level provides street level plaza for pedestrians
Station-related mixed-use developments in Hong Kong provide seamless connection to transit resulting in “Development Oriented Transit”

More recent developments tend to be isolated and less pedestrian friendly with poor integration with the surrounding areas

The challenge moving forward is to better integrate these development at grade with surrounding areas and make them more pedestrian friendly
Physical and social integration can be achieved by reducing road footprint and infrastructure uses and providing more active uses at ground level.

Urban integration and pedestrian connectivity are a priority to avoid isolated developments in the future.

Important to integrate new developments with existing urban fabric of the surrounding older urban areas to preserve the city’s heritage and culture.
5 – Integrate Infrastructure

Kowloon Station, Hong Kong
Economically successful but lack of street level interface
Seamless connection within the site: Elements shopping mall and the MTR
Restricted or no integration with surrounding areas limit pedestrian access from neighboring districts

Tokyo Midtown, Tokyo
Well integrated into the adjacent areas through a large open space at grade
Well connected to the Roppongi railway station

Roppongi Hills, Tokyo
Development seamlessly integrated by the park and network of meandering landscaped public open spaces
Podium edges fold down to street levels
6 – Activate the Streets

Pedestrian priority is important, building should meet the street in a pedestrian friendly manner

Streets of human scale, street-level interface and continuity are also an important for vibrancy

The size of the block and the road footprint determine the type of development and nature of the streets
Urban design guidelines for large scale developments can help avoid blank walls and dead streets.

Streets should be tree-lined and developments should have proper interface with those streets to enhance the sense of belonging and security.

Incentives such as bonus plot ratios to encourage developers to provide public open space and public amenities at grade and underground car parks.
6 – Activate the Streets

**Langham Place, Hong Kong**
Indoor public space with a glass atrium that imitates the outdoor environment
Management issues and confusion for the users – private space or public space?
A poor environment at grade resulted in the closure of a number of entry points to the development

**Xinyi Place, Taipei**
Vision to remodel the Xinyi District as the economic, cultural, and administrative centre of Taipei City
Height limits for buildings, regulating the width of the streets, and designating the types of plants
Ensuring a pleasant pedestrian environment and movement on ground and footbridge levels

**Marina Bay Financial Center, Singapore**
Well connected with other developments
Forms a close cluster with a high quality public realm
Open space at grade
Promenade along the waterfront
7 – Keep it Flexible

Facilitate good urban design through urban design review, planning, regulatory framework and an independent TPB.

Government could take a more proactive approach in hearing public concerns and guiding more sensitive development to add long term value to the city.

Zoning needs to be more flexible to enable mixed uses, including a mix of public, private, and affordable housing, and planning should be done at the district level with specific urban design plans in 3-D.
Government could provide incentives to facilitate good urban design and ensure provision of high-quality public space at grade and pedestrian friendly streets within CDA developments.

Good urban design, sensitive and integrated developments should be encouraged by commending developers and designers.
## 7 – Keep it Flexible

### Zoning Control, New York City

- Safeguard street-level exposure to the sky
- Encourage developers to dedicate such spaces as an open plaza or a street-level arcade

### Design Guidelines, Singapore

- Promotes sky-rise greenery through more relaxed guidelines
- A clear base and bonus plot ratio calculation, setback requirements, height of building edge, size of podium and parameters for all types and scale of developments.

### Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), UK

- Provided independent design advice to help cities create better buildings and high quality public spaces

### Urban Design Review Panel, Vancouver

- Composed of design professionals from the public and private sectors
- Provides advice on significant development permit applications
- Assists in the formulation of urban design policy and criteria
8 – Promote Sustainability

Development needs to focus beyond the sustainability of buildings to incorporate sustainability at a neighborhood and district scale similar to LEED ND.

Physical and social integration of developments with the surrounding areas and the district should be considered.

Impacts of gentrification and maintaining existing social networks as far as possible within redevelopment projects.
More specific urban design guidelines should be proposed in order to ensure sustainable and integrated developments at different levels.

There could be bonus plot ratios to encourage vertical greening and green roofs, affordable housing mix.

Avoid developments in ecologically sensitive areas.
8 – Promote Sustainability

Citywalk, Hong Kong
Integrated with the area at ground level: increases visibility and accessibility
Creation of ground floor public passage in exchange for bonus GFA concession
Public space courtyard in the centre has a good width to length ratio

HafenCity, Hamburg
Urban location, mixed uses, lively atmosphere and innovative development process; as well as outstanding open space design

Tokyo Midtown, Japan
More than 40 percent of the project area reserved for urban park
Offers several sustainable features and goes beyond building sustainability

New York City, New York
Pays attention to sustainability at the neighborhood, district and city scale. A city of neighborhoods with a good network of public open spaces
Public engagement is a comparatively new concept in Hong Kong

Process is changing for the better, but both the government and community needs to put more effort into the process

Community lacks trust in engagement exercises: perception of collusion between government and developers
The city relies too heavily on private developers to do social good, but in most cities it is common for Govt. to negotiate with developers to ensure public good.

Need to involve more stakeholders and engage people in a creative way to provide clarity for the community and the developers.

Should engage project stakeholders from diverse backgrounds at an early stage.
9 – Engage People Early On

Vancouver
Extensive experience of public engagement in the planning and urban design process.
Council realized they needed to revamp the planning process to engage citizens from the beginning.
Ensures that new developments integrate well with neighboring areas and contributes to the overall city vision

New York City, New York
Public engagement is an integral part of the plan making process.
A clear city vision and specific urban design guidelines
Major developments go through a review and negotiation process with the planning department
New initiatives are developed with public engagement

London
Decentralizes the power of the government
Sets policy to support local government, communities, neighborhoods, etc.
Created the “Good Practice Guide to Public Engagement in Development Schemes”
Government has offered free planning aid for community groups who cannot afford to pay professional fees
Role of ownership and management can be different

Multiple owners can contribute to diversity, but one owner can also contribute to diversity, the key is coordinated management control.

The concept of Business Improvement Districts and Community Improvement Districts can be adapted to create pedestrian oriented, environmentally friendly, and sustainable developments.

BIDs/CIDs can be led by NGOs with the involvement of private developers and community groups.

Benefit the community and add long-term value to the city and people.
## 10 – Manage, Control & Coordinate

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<tr>
<td>Benefitted by coordinated management control, which allows efficiency and flexibility</td>
<td>Department of URA, Singapore</td>
<td>Protects local environment and infrastructure</td>
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<td>Enables provision of multiple uses and convenient transit options</td>
<td>Responsible for planning, design, implementation, coordination, management, branding and place marketing</td>
<td>Promotes good urban design</td>
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<td>Enables large-scale developers to do more with less</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for the public to enjoy the great places along the waterfront</td>
<td>Tackles crime to improve community safety</td>
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<td>Center City, Philadelphia</td>
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<td>Consults community for local regeneration Projects</td>
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<td>Center City District aims to keep the city clean, safe and well-managed</td>
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<td>Reinforces the city as a vibrant place to work, live, shop and visit</td>
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Ten Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development Launch!

The 10 Principles launch in Hong Kong was well attended by many of the participants from the private and the public sector including academia, government officials, community representatives, and some major developers in Hong Kong.
Ten Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development – Launch!
Hong Kong’s Ten Principles led to Government requesting the Advisory Panel services of ULI

Kai Tak Advisory Panel

Current master plan emphasizes heritage, ecology, sports, and tourism. Efforts are being made to connect Kai Tak with surrounding districts.

Issues discussed:
• A Clear Vision and Integrated Development
• Master Planning and Good Urban Design
• Place Making, Branding and Sustainability
• Implementation and Management Challenges
Recently, ULI North Asia, along with UDP Int’l, have been awarded a grant by the ULI Foundation to further continue our study on Large-scale developments in Hong Kong.

How can the ULI Ten Principles actually begin to influence future developments in Hong Kong?
Thank You!

Questions?