

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1739)

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Capital Projects
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (YAU Kwok-ting)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Question:

Regarding the pedestrian accessibility of hillside communities (in particular communities with higher proportion of elderly people, such as Chuk Yuen North Estate in Wong Tai Sin) and the planning and resource allocation of hillside escalator link system, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

- (1) Whether a systematic review has been conducted on the pedestrian walkability and barrier-free access facilities of hilly communities across Hong Kong, particularly in districts with a higher proportion of elderly people? Did the Government reserve any specific resources in the 2026-27 Financial Year to initiate or expand systematic studies on accessibility? If yes, what are the details regarding the estimated amount, the geographical scope covered etc.?
- (2) Under the “Hillside Escalator Link and Elevator System (HEL) Projects and “Universal Accessibility” (UA) Programme, how many pedestrian link systems or related barrier-free facility projects were implemented by the Government in hilly communities over the past 3 years? Please provide a breakdown by district, specifying the nature of each project (e.g. escalators, lifts, subways, or covered footbridges), the service population demographics (including the proportion of elderly people), the current stage of development (e.g. technical feasibility study/design/funding secured pending commencement/ under construction), and the anticipated completion dates.
- (3) Regarding the proposed project of the Pedestrian Link near Chuk Yuen North Estate under the “hillside escalator link system”, what are the specific contents of the completed preliminary design and technical feasibility study? What is the estimated construction cost? Will a concrete timetable for the commencement and commissioning of the project be established?
- (4) Under the 2026-27 budgetary arrangements, what is the total amount of resources reserved by the Highways Department under Head 60 and the relevant subheads of the Capital Works Reserve Fund for the studies and works aimed at improving accessibility in hilly communities (including hillside escalator/elevator systems and the provision of

barrier-free access facilities at footbridges, elevated walkways, and subways etc.)? Furthermore, will the Government establish clearer indicators to prioritise these projects (such as gradient, distance from railway stations/bus terminus, and the proportion of elderly people etc.), and introduce new tools such as 3D Pedestrian Network analysis to regularly review and publicise the walkability ratings and improvement timelines for various hillside communities?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

(1) and (2)

The Government has long been attaching great importance to the accessibility of communities, enhancing the accessibility of hillside areas and installing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways through Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems (hereinafter “HEL”) Projects and “Universal Accessibility” (UA) Programme respectively.

(I) Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems (HEL)

When the Transport Department (TD) plans for the HEL Projects, it follows an assessment mechanism, which was reported by Government to the Subcommittee on Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in end 2019 and was consented by the LegCo Members afterwards, to conduct independent scoring of “social benefits” (considerations include numbers of beneficiaries and target beneficiaries, feasibility of prompt implementation, and effectiveness in providing convenience) and “cost-effectiveness”, followed by comprehensive considerations. This is to ensure that apart from being cost-effective, the implemented projects can clearly benefit and are accepted by members of the public.

The HEL Projects completed or commenced by the Government over the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Project name	Facility	No. of people served (elderly aged 65 or above)	Progress of works	Anticipated completion date
Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Castle Peak Road and Kung Yip Street, Kwai Chung	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System	17 500 (about 3 600)	Completed in the fourth quarter of 2023	-
Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Saddle	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System	28 000 (about 6 400)	Completed in the third quarter of 2025	-

Project name	Facility	No. of people served (elderly aged 65 or above)	Progress of works	Anticipated completion date
Ridge Garden and Sai Sha Road				
Braemar Hill Pedestrian Link	Lifts and escalators	16 500 (about 4 100)	Under construction	To be completed in stages starting from mid 2026
Pedestrian Walkway System between Hing Shing Road and Tai Wo Hau Road	Escalator Link System	24 000 (about 4 200)	Under construction	Third quarter of 2026
Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Lau Sin Street and Tin Hau Temple Road	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System	6 800 (about 1 500)	Under tendering	First quarter of 2029
Wah Sing Street to Castle Peak Road – Kwai Chung Escalator Link System	Escalator Link System	18 200 (about 4 900)	Under tendering	First quarter of 2029
Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System between Lai King Hill Road and Lai Cho Road, Kwai Chung	Lift and Pedestrian Walkway System	24 000 (about 11 000)	Under tendering	Third quarter of 2029

(II) “Universal Accessibility” (UA) Programme

The Government has been striving to install barrier-free access facilities at public walkways. Since the “Universal Accessibility” (UA) Programme was launched in August 2012, the Government has carried out timely scope extension to proactively install more barrier-free access facilities (i.e. lifts or ramps) at existing public walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways) in Hong Kong (including existing walkways located in hillside communities) for the convenient use by the elderly and people in need. During the implementation of the UA Programme, the Highways Department (HyD) would maintain communication with local communities and gather their views on proposed walkways for installing barrier-free access facilities, proposed locations of lifts, construction method, etc. Over the past three years, the Government has implemented 187 items under the UA Programme, covering the installation of lifts

for existing walkways located in hillside communities. Details of some relevant items are tabulated below¹:

Item name	Facility	Progress of works	Anticipated completion date
Footbridge along Cochrane Street near Tun Wo Lane (Structure No. HF135)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Completed in the fourth quarter of 2023	--
Across Tsui Lam Road near Tsui Lam Community Hall (Structure No. SK01)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Completed in the fourth quarter of 2023	--
Across Ching Hong Road near Cheung Hong Estate Commercial Centre No. 2 (Structure No. K&T01)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Completed in the fourth quarter of 2024	--
Elevated walkway near Fung Ha Road Flyover in Fung Wah Estate across Fei Tsui Road (Structure No. FW01)	Installation of lifts for existing elevated walkway	Completed in the fourth quarter of 2025	--
Across Chun Wah Road near Lok Wah South Estate (Structure No. KS43)	Installation of lifts for existing subway	Completed in the fourth quarter of 2025	--
Across Ching Hong Road near Ching Shing Court (Structure No. NF125)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Completed in the fourth quarter of 2025	--

¹ The UA Programme strives to install barrier-free access facilities (i.e. lifts or ramps) at all public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways in Hong Kong wherever feasible. The service population structure is not the primary reference data for implementation. Therefore, the HyD does not maintain information regarding proportion of elderly population served by each item.

Item name	Facility	Progress of works	Anticipated completion date
Footbridge in Wong Tai Sin District across Chuk Yuen Road connecting Chuk Yuen Plaza and Chuk Yuen Sports Centre (Structure No. CYS03)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Under construction	First quarter of 2027
Subway across Chuk Yuen Road connecting Pang Ching Court and Chuk Yuen South Estate (Structure No. WTS04)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Under construction	First quarter of 2028
Across Chun Wah Road near Jordan Valley Playground (Structure No. KT05)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Under construction	First quarter of 2028
Across Sau Mau Ping Road near Ning Po No.2 College in Shun Tin Estate (Structure No. KT06)	Installation of lifts for existing footbridge	Under construction	First quarter of 2028

The Government would review the need of conducting systematic examination for the walking accessibility and barrier-free access facilities of hillside communities in Hong Kong in a timely manner, and explore whether dedicated resources would be retained for commencing relevant accessibility studies according to the latest policy development.

- (3) The Government is currently optimising the preliminary design of “Pedestrian Link near Chuk Yuen North Estate” project, with a view to enhancing the system accessibility and the cost-effectiveness of works. The Government will carry out ground investigation works at relevant locations in first half of 2026 to collect geotechnical data for the detailed design works at next stage. Since the project is still under study and design stage, there is no project cost estimate at present. The Government will constantly review the priority of projects and adjust the implementation progress appropriately in the light of the latest policy development.

(4) (I) Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems (HEL)

The Government estimates that the estimate on HEL Projects in 2026-27 financial year is \$218.5 million, which pays for the expenditure on investigation, design and works

under construction within the year. As mentioned above, the Government will follow the stipulated assessment mechanism and clear indicators, constantly review the effectiveness of the assessment mechanism and communicate with various stakeholders when implementing the HEL projects, with a view to ensuring that the relevant projects meet the public needs.

(II) “Universal Accessibility” (UA) Programme

The Government estimates that the works under the UA Programme will require an estimated budget of \$1.1233 billion in the 2026-27 financial year to fund investigation study, design and construction costs for that year. As mentioned above, the HyD will continue to communicate with local communities and provide relevant information of various walkways when implementing the UA Programme, with a view to facilitating the District Council and local stakeholders in setting priorities for lift construction after thorough consideration of relevant factors.

The Government would continue to monitor and enhance the pedestrian facilities and accessibility of hillside communities through existing mechanisms.

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