

MESSAGE FROM NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR

"Together, we will cultivate a strong sense of shared mission, leveraging our collective expertise to overcome challenges and shape the future of urban renewal."

Building on Past Successes and Collaborating to Tackle Future Challenges

On 15 June 2025, I was honoured and privileged to assume the role of Managing Director of the URA, a purpose-driven and impactful organisation committed to promoting sustainable urban renewal.

Although my tenure with the URA has only just begun, my professional journey over the past decades has been deeply rooted in urban development. Throughout my career, I have consistently sought to foster culturally rich, economically vibrant and sustainable cities through a people-first approach. This aspiration aligns closely with the URA's vision of creating quality and vibrant urban living in Hong Kong, making it a better home within a world-class city.

Over the past year, the market environment has become increasingly uncertain, due largely to global geopolitical tensions. In response, developers have taken a more cautious approach to project tenders. As the upfront payments from project tenders constitute the URA's main source of revenue, the recent downturn in the property market has resulted in a "buy high, sell low" scenario for previously acquired projects, which has in turn adversely affected the URA's financial position, particularly with regard to cash flow. Accordingly, it is important that we respond prudently to evolving market dynamics and external challenges in the years ahead. Equally important, we must seek innovative and efficient solutions that optimise the effectiveness of urban renewal with limited resources.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my predecessor, Ir Wai Chi Sing, and his dedicated team, who laid a robust foundation for the URA. Over the years, the wide-ranging urban renewal projects and initiatives that have been launched, have significantly improved living conditions for many residents in older districts. Through a planning-led approach, they have enhanced the built environment and delivered more effective outcomes in the renewal of older districts. Despite the economic headwinds of recent years, the URA team has demonstrated unwavering professionalism and innovative thinking in their work. They have succeeded in breaking conventional boundaries to identify opportunities amidst challenges, and have adapted to changing market conditions with resilience and purpose to take urban renewal forward.

At the heart of the URA's success are its people. I am committed to working with my team to foster a transparent, collaborative and empowering work environment in which every colleague can realise their full potential. Together, we will cultivate a strong sense of shared mission, leveraging our collective expertise to overcome challenges and shape the future of urban renewal.

Recently, the Government has granted two sites to facilitate the URA's continued efforts to carry out redevelopment projects in an orderly manner. To this end, I will lead the team in sustaining urban renewal momentum while upholding the principle of prudent financial management. This will involve advancing ongoing redevelopment projects timely and appropriately, while prioritising yet-to-becommenced projects in accordance with our financial position.

At the same time, we will review our operating and financing model to identify areas for enhancement, strengthen our capacity to navigate diverse market conditions, and promote the application of innovative technologies to improve operational efficiency. In addition, we will commence the New Strategy on Building Rehabilitation 2.0 Study, which aims to encourage broader community participation in building rehabilitation, extend the service life of ageing buildings through proper maintenance and repair, and thereby alleviate the pressure on redevelopment.

The long-term advancement of urban renewal necessitates collective effort, and cannot be accomplished by the URA alone. My team and I will continue to strengthen communication and collaboration with the Government and other stakeholders by actively soliciting diverse insights on urban renewal, so as to facilitate comprehensive outcomes. Through cross-sector engagement, I believe we will be better positioned to undertake urban renewal process and deliver solutions that are beneficial to all.

Ar Donald CHOI Wun Hing, BBS, JP **Managing Director** 31 August 2025