

**MTR Corporation welcomes Government's decision on South Island Line (East)**

The MTR Corporation welcomes the Government's decision to proceed with preliminary planning and design for the South Island Line (East). The Corporation will immediately commence the preliminary design for the project, and will continue to discuss with Government on the detailed scope, implementation programme and financial arrangement.

The 7-km South Island Line (East) at an estimated cost of over HK\$7 billion will run from South Horizons, via Lei Tung, Wong Chuk Hang and Ocean Park, to Admiralty, where people will be connected with the existing MTR network to all parts of Hong Kong. The construction of the railway extension is expected to commence in 2011 for completion in 2015.

The South Island Line (East) is designed to meet the long standing demands from local residents in the Southern District for improved transport, as well as a choice of transport services. It also supports the HKSAR Government's policy of having railways as the backbone of public transport in Hong Kong.

The South Island Line (East) will generate substantial transport, economic, social and environmental benefits to the Southern District, and the community at large. With the new railway extension, road traffic congestion can be relieved and the travelling time from the Southern District to other parts of Hong Kong will be significantly reduced. It will only take 4 minutes and 9 minutes to travel from Admiralty to Ocean Park and South Horizons respectively. The improved road traffic conditions will improve the environment and air quality.

"The South Island Line (East) will meet the much-needed public transport demand in the area. It will also facilitate the economic and tourism development in the Southern District. The new railway will provide a convenient link to the Ocean Park and other tourist attractions," said Mr C K Chow, Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation.

The Corporation proposes to adopt the proven 'rail plus property model' for bridging the funding gap of the project. An integrated planning and development approach at station and depot sites will create communities of high quality living and facilitate the rejuvenation of Wong Chuk Hang which will bring about increased economic activities and generate more than 20,000 new jobs. The railway construction will create an additional 2,500 job opportunities and 2,100 operational positions.

The Corporation will continue to work closely with the community in the Southern District to ensure that the railway will be built to best suit their needs.

- End -