

15 September 2025

## **“Backstreet Alliance – The Local’s Guide to Kowloon City” Kicks Off Collaborative Effort to Promote Local Economy and Character**

Jointly organised by the Hong Kong Small and Medium Enterprises Association (HKSME), the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), and CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP Power), the “Backstreet Alliance – The Local’s Guide to Kowloon City” was officially launched today (15 September) at Kowloon City Plaza. The initiative brings together over 60 restaurants and shops from the Kowloon City district to provide a rich and immersive experience that combines heritage tours, cultural storytelling, iconic movie scenes, Augmented Reality (AR) technology interactions, low-carbon initiatives promotion, and merchant offers to both locals and tourists. It also aims at promoting the district’s economic and cultural development.

The launch ceremony was officiated by Mr Algernon Yau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development; Mr Xu Xiaolin, Deputy Director-General of the Coordination Department, Liaison Office of The Central People’s Government in the HKSAR; and Mr Ivanhoe Chang, District Officer (Kowloon City). The ceremony was jointly officiated by Ar Donald Choi, Managing Director of the URA; Ms Quince Chong, Chief Corporate Development Officer of CLP Power; Dr Anthony Lo, Director of Customer Success and Sales of CLP Power Mr Andrew Kwok, President of the HKSME; and Mr Calvin Cheng, Chairman of the HKSME. Members of the Legislative Council and the Kowloon City District Council, and other key stakeholders, also attended the event.

Guests toured booths hosted by distinctive local merchants in Kowloon City, sampling authentic Thai pastries, creatively crafted Chiuchow-style baked goods, traditional Hong Kong-style desserts, and a variety of local snacks, getting a taste of the district’s culinary charm. The URA has set up two creative photo booths at the ceremony. One features an AR digital check-in spots among the three spots developed for Kowloon City, while the other showcases the mock-up of new shopfront design by the URA for shops within the “District-based Building Rehabilitation Pilot Scheme (DB-BR Pilot Scheme)” area in Kowloon City.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr Algernon Yau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, remarked, “The Backstreet Alliance has set a great example by fostering cross-sector collaboration and unlocking new opportunities. We wish the initiative

every success in Kowloon City and look forward to its expansion across districts—celebrating local character, engaging merchants, stimulating consumption, and contributing to overall economic growth.”

The “URA Touring with Locals Series” (the Series) was launched earlier in Central and Western District and Wan Chai. Through the collaborative “3B” system, which intertwines the “Built environment”, “Business environment” and “local Bonding”, the URA not only aims to enhance the local characters, but also increase foot traffic and boost the economy, thereby promoting district-based and sustainable urban renewal. In light of the rich Chiuchow and Thai cultural heritage and the bustling commercial landscape in Kowloon City, the URA launches the Kowloon City chapter of the Series this month by rolling out the “Touring Kowloon City with Locals” map, featuring over forty travel hotspots in the area for both local and foreign tourists to visit and explore at their own pace. Starting today, the digital map can be downloaded from the URA website, while free print copies of the map will be available for pick-up at attractions and selected local shops in the district from late September.

The URA also collaborated again with the China Academy of Art to launch in phases three AR digital check-in spots at Lung Kong Road, Tak Ku Ling Road, and Carpenter Road in September to showcase the district’s history and cultural characteristics through the adoption of visible and audible art technology. Visitors can use their mobile devices to view and take photos with the unique AR effects, including low-flying aeroplanes over the old Kai Tak Airport area, Kowloon Walled City, as well as an orange squid (a signature Chiuchow cuisine) and an elephant (the iconic representation of Thailand) soaring in the sky.

Ar Donald Choi, Managing Director of the URA, remarked, “While regenerating the living environment in the old districts, the URA has dedicated significant resources to preserving the area’s local character. This endeavour requires the support and concerted efforts of government departments and local stakeholders. This district consumption promotion activity, the fruition of the tripartite collaboration among the Government, businesses, and the community, aims to enhance the footfall and consumer spending in Kowloon City. I look forward to seeing more citizens from other areas and tourists visiting Kowloon City during the National Day holiday, thereby enhancing local tourism and boosting the economy and consumption in the neighbourhood.”

On the other hand, before the arrival of the “Golden Week” peak shopping season, the URA will beautify the shopfronts of about 40 shops in the vicinity of Lung Kong Road and South Wall Road within the DB-BR Pilot Scheme area. The shopfront decorations and installations, designed to reflect the distinctive local character of the Kowloon City district, will be infused with the shop owners’ customised text and

images to create a series of unique designs for their stores. These will be displayed to enhance the local character, attract locals and tourists, and boost the local economy.

In addition, the URA has planned to carry out place-making initiatives in Kowloon City in phases. These will include adopting design themes inspired by Chiuchow, Thailand, and the former Kai Tak Airport to enhance streetscapes—such as pavements, roads, railings, and other public facilities. For buildings that have participated in the DB-BR Pilot Scheme, the URA will provide repair subsidies and façade beautification designs, incorporating local character into building entrances, canopies, and exterior walls.

The URA has also invited mural artists from Thailand and Mainland China to paint large-scale murals on the façades of selected buildings, adding an artistic atmosphere and vibrancy to the community. The related works are expected to be completed progressively early next year, thus strengthening the local character of Kowloon City.

This initiative is run in partnership with the “CLP Retail and Catering Coupons Programme”, which is funded by the “CLP Community Energy Saving Fund”, with support from over 300 merchants in Kowloon City, including grocery stores, restaurants, and snack shops. It aims to boost more local spending and economic activity in the district, benefiting both residents and businesses. CLP Power also supports restaurants in the district looking to enhance their energy efficiency by implementing improvement works, including replacing traditional cooking appliances with more energy-efficient electrical cooking appliances, thereby promoting a low-carbon dining culture.

Ms Quince Chong, Chief Corporate Development Officer of CLP Power, said, “CLP Power is committed to driving local economic development and enhancing community well-being, while actively promoting energy efficiency and decarbonisation. We are delighted to collaborate with the HKSME and the URA to launch a variety of community initiatives. By combining the CLP retail and catering coupons with merchant offers, we aim to encourage local spending, stimulate the local economy, and accelerate businesses towards low-carbon transformation, injecting new momentum into sustainable development in Kowloon City.”

In collaboration with the HKSME and CLP Power, the URA has produced a limited-edition “Local’s Guide” listing participating merchants for this initiative. These include restaurants and shops that have taken part in CLP Power’s various energy-saving, decarbonisation, or community support programmes. The guide aims to boost local consumption while advocating for a green economy.

Mr Andrew Kwok, President of the HKSME, stated, “The Backstreet Alliance is launching its third chapter in Kowloon City to support the multiple-entry Individual

Visit Scheme and the HKSAR Government's vision of 'Tourism is Everywhere'. This initiative follows successful launches in the Central and Western Districts and Wan Chai over the past year. The HKSME aims to promote Hong Kong's unique tourism offerings and support small businesses through this initiative, and simultaneously stimulate the silver economy through various activities, thereby fostering a better business environment."

During the promotional period, customers can enjoy discounts at various participating merchants within designated areas by using either physical or virtual discount cards. The HKSME is providing over 50 participating merchants with complimentary promotional opportunities on Xiaohongshu, enabling them to attract potential customers without incurring any advertising production or placement costs. Additionally, the program will guide foot traffic from Kai Tak Sports Park to Kowloon City, enhancing consumer spending and fostering positive interactions between emerging and established districts, ultimately revitalising small businesses in Kowloon City.

In support of the development of the silver economy, the organisers hosted a special charity luncheon at the nostalgic Chinese restaurant "Wall City Flavour", welcoming around 80 elderly guests. Each guest received a gift bag containing offers from local merchants alongside a selection of Chiuchow, Thai, and Hong Kong-style pastries, encouraging seniors to engage with the community and enjoy local shopping.

Following the luncheon, the elderly guests took part in a cultural tea-tasting workshop and visited the "Kowloon Walled City: A Cinematic Journey" Movie Set Exhibition. These activities aimed to encourage seniors to socialise and try new experiences, while also promoting public support for the silver economy and demonstrating the community's care for the elderly.

#### **Event Details – Backstreet Alliance: Kowloon City Edition**

Date: 15 September to 31 October 2025

Website: <https://www.hksme.hk/backstreetalliance/topic/1>

#### **About CLP Power Hong Kong Limited**

CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP Power) is the Hong Kong utility subsidiary wholly owned by CLP Holdings Limited, a company listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and one of the largest investor-owned power businesses in Asia. CLP Power operates a vertically integrated electricity supply business in Hong Kong and provides a highly reliable supply of electricity and excellent customer services to more than six million people in its supply area.

### **About the Urban Renewal Authority**

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) was established in May 2001 under the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance as the statutory body to undertake, encourage, promote and facilitate urban renewal of Hong Kong, with a view to addressing the problem of urban decay and improving the living conditions of residents in old districts.

The URA follows the guidelines set out in the Government's Urban Renewal Strategy in the implementation of its urban renewal initiatives under a "people first, district-based, public participatory" approach. The URA adopts a comprehensive and holistic approach by ways of its two core businesses i.e. redevelopment and rehabilitation, as well as preservation, revitalisation and retrofitting, for creating a sustainable and quality living environment for the people of Hong Kong.

### **About the Hong Kong Small And Medium Enterprises Association**

Established in 1996, the Hong Kong Small and Medium Enterprises Association (HKSME) is dedicated to strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs and securing a business-friendly environment. With the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, HKSME has set up offices on the mainland to help members expand their market reach. It regularly organises study missions, seminars and networking events to facilitate exchange, and acts as a bridge between the sector and the Government to safeguard SMEs' interests.

### **Photo Captions:**

Photo 1



From left to right: Mr Calvin Cheng, Chairman of the HKSME; Mr Ivanhoe Chang, District Officer (Kowloon City); Ms Quince Chong, Chief Corporate Development Officer of CLP Power; Mr Xu Xiaolin, Deputy Director-General of the Coordination Department at the Liaison Office of The Central People's Government in the HKSAR; Mr Algernon Yau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development; Ar Donald Choi, Managing Director of the URA; Mr Andrew Kwok, President of the HKSME; and

Dr Anthony Lo, Director of Customer Success and Sales of CLP Power, officiate at the ceremony, marking the official launch of the district development project.

Photo 2



Distinguished guests, including Legislative Council members, Kowloon City District Council members and merchant representatives, pose for a group photo with officiating guests at the launch ceremony.

Photo 3



Mr Algernon Yau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, remarks in his address that the “Backstreet Alliance” has set a great example by fostering cross-sector collaboration and unlocking new opportunities. He hopes that the initiative every success in Kowloon City and looks forward to its expansion across districts—celebrating local character, engaging merchants, stimulating consumption, and contributing to overall economic growth.

Photo 4



Mr Donald Choi, Managing Director of the URA, remarks that the URA has dedicated significant resources to preserving the area's local character while regenerating the living environment in the old district. He hopes that more people will visit Kowloon City during the National Day holiday, thereby promoting local tourism, and boosting the area's economy and consumption.

Photo 5



Ms Quince Chong, Chief Corporate Development Officer of CLP Power, remarks that by launching a variety of community initiatives and combining the CLP retail and catering coupons with merchant offers, CLP Power aims to encourage local spending, stimulate the local economy, and accelerate businesses towards low-carbon transformation, injecting new momentum into sustainable development in Kowloon City.

Photo 6



Mr Andrew Kwok, President of the HKSME, remarks that Backstreet Alliance is designed to equip small businesses with resources and support, so they no longer face today's challenging environment alone. Through this promotional platform, merchants can collaborate to build a more favourable and sustainable business ecosystem.

Photos 7 to 9





Photos 11 to 12



The URA collaborates with the China Academy of Art to create three new AR virtual attractions in Kowloon City: “Kai Tak Era” (left), “Thai-Chiuchow Grooving” (right), and “Walled City Cube”, which will be launched throughout September.

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