

Vertical Cities Asia Symposium
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Growth and Sustainability

First we shape our environment, and then our environment shapes us. Compact cities always face a host of challenge as they grow. Densification of a compact city in itself poses major challenges. Given the complexities of a city's fabric, rising aspirations of citizens, outcry for preservation and conservation against the need for development and economic growth, how can we ensure sustainability as the city grows? In face of physical and socio-economic challenges, how can we increase the city's capacity in terms of development density and diversity without sacrificing liveability? This calls for innovation and ingenuity in creating sustainable environment in a high rise, high density living environment as the city grows, optimizing development intensity and developing harmonious communities.

Take Hong Kong as an example, with a land area of just over 1,100 km² full of mountains, and only 28% is built-up. With a population of about 7 million, we must make optimal use of the scarce land resources. Growth and disruption always go hand in hand, and we need to strike a fine balance in quest for sustainability. There are always plenty of physical and social issues to address. We care for people, we care for the environment. We need to engage the people, find common goals and find win-win solutions for sustainability.