

Plan of the proposed Hoi Sum Promenade/ Fluid open space weaving between greenery, art work and sea

Image by Nicole Chiew, Rachel Lee, Julian Ng, Janice Man, Kam Ching Tung, Ceci Wong

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN STUDY ON KOWLOON CITY THEMED WALKING TRAIL ROUTE 4 HOI SUM PROMENADE

“Participatory design” and “public engagement” are terms which appear more and more often in contemporary architectural discourse. While the power distribution between architect, client and users always falls into the realm of open-ended discussion, the “participatory” approach has been highly promoted due to its consideration of the voices of all stakeholders, especially the users, in the production of architecture and is often seen as a way to bridge between the profession and the general public.

This project is an action-research on the topic of participatory design in architecture.

To design the design process.

Invited by Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited, architectural students from The University of Hong Kong were invited to redesign the Kowloon City Themed Walking Trail Route 4 – Hoi Sum Promenade with the engagement of local communities.

To improve the quality of public space and to introduce more recreational facilities were the primary design agendas. Using participatory design was the key focus and how architects can use different engagement tools to achieve a more comprehensive design outcome was being explored in this project.

The design outcome has been further studied by the NGO as part of the Kowloon City Themed Walking Trail.

Besides conventional architectural analysis tools which studied the physical and environmental settings, this project has introduced Participatory Design Method to take into consideration its social dynamics, especially in the ethnographical research.

Site observation, on-site interviews with existing users, two engagement workshops with different target end user groups (elderly and young children), two sessions of design discussion with the NGO and online survey were implemented to collect feedback from various stakeholders related to the project.

Time is a major constraint in both this project and participatory design. The project was limited to three months which was equivalent to a time frame of one academic semester. During the said period, communication with various local stakeholders

over the design was overly emphasized.

With the help of the NGO's deep connection within the community, we were able to hold 2 sessions of design workshops with 1 primary school and 1 elderly centre.

Digital platform and online survey were also an important tool to reach out to more potential users within such a short period of time.

Thanks to both the physical and digital engagement, we were capable to understand the major public concern and their aspiration towards the outcome and able to propose a more inclusive design to the community.

In total, we have reached out to 130 public members as a base sample for our analysis and design conception.

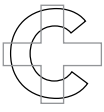
During the implementation of the project, our major challenge is to balance the interest of various stakeholders, which includes the needs of different age group and the demand from the client (NGO).

Workshop activities were designed so as to quantify and visualize the needs of all public needs. Architectural models, rather than treated as a representation tool, were being used



Project concept/ Paving idea on Hoi Ham Island

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Elevation of the proposed Hoi Sum Promenade/ Continuous shading and seating area along the Hoi Sum Promenade

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as engaging tools with the elderly and kids in primary schools. Mapping exercise was transformed into mind-map drawings, which help us to study the perception of the public towards the existing condition.

As the whole design process was focused on communication with end users, through videotaping and word cloud method, we could jot down and quantify the main themes and key words that were often expressed by the public.

As this project is participatory driven, materials and resources are decided based on the site observation and workshop outcome. Natural and warm materials such as wood were being suggested by the elderly according to their physical needs. Colourful and dynamic designs were brought up by young kids. Historical and environmental concerns were discerned from both of the age groups.

As this project revolved around public space enhancement, materials were meticulously chosen to be robust and long lasting from the client's perspective.

This Participatory Design study of the Kowloon City Themed Walking Trail is a collaboration among Department of Architecture, University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited, under the course "Research

on "Participatory Design" led by Lecturer Rosalia H.C. Leung. The objective of the study is to include various public opinion in the early design stage for a better public space design implementation.

For more details of the overall Kowloon City Themed Walking Trail, please visit <https://kowlooncitywalkingtrail.hk/en/>, operated by Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited. 📍

PROJECT DATA

Project Name
Participatory Design Study on Kowloon City Themed Walking Trail Route 4 Hoi Sum Promenade

Location
Hoi Sum Promenade, Kowloon City, Hong Kong

Status Of Construction
Design study stage

Expected Completion
2024

Site Area
6.5km walking trail

Client
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited

Design Architect
Rosalia H.C. Leung (course instructor) and students from Department of Architecture, HKU

Images
Rosalia H.C. Leung, Department of Architecture, University of Hong Kong