

## Realising the Marina Bay vision



### **CHING TUAN YEE and BENJAMIN NG reflect on the planning of Singapore's most ambitious urban project and highlight the exciting developments in store for Singaporeans and visitors alike**

THE vision for Marina Bay is that of a high-quality, 24/7 live-work-play environment, one that encapsulates the essence of the global city Singapore is envisaged to be.

Waterfront business districts such as Canary Wharf in London and Pudong in Shanghai have come, in recent years, to signify urban progress and prosperity. They have raised the international profile of their respective cities while spurring growth and investment.

The Singapore example is in Marina Bay. A seamless extension of Singapore's flourishing central business district spanning 360 hectares of prime land for development, Marina Bay is our city's most exciting and ambitious urban project that will support our continuing growth as a major business and financial hub in Asia.

Set by the water's edge and with our signature city skyline as a backdrop, Marina Bay is envisioned to be a Garden City by the Bay, a 24/7 destination presenting an exciting array of opportunities for people to explore new living and lifestyle options, exchange new ideas and information for business, and be entertained by rich leisure and cultural experiences in a distinctive environment.

The groundwork for the expansion of the existing CBD (Central Business District) and its transformation into a waterfront business district focused around Marina Bay had been laid as early as the late 1960s. Land adjacent to the CBD was reclaimed in phases between 1969 and 1992.

The Master Plan for Marina Bay focuses on encouraging a mix of uses (commercial, residential, hotel and entertainment) to ensure that the area remains vibrant around the clock.

The concept of 'white' site zoning also gives developers more flexibility to decide on the mix of uses for each site, including housing, offices, shops, hotels, recreational facilities and public spaces.

To cater for good connectivity and seamless extension, the development parcels at Marina Bay were planned based on a grid urban pattern which extends from the existing road network within the CBD. This grid creates a flexible framework with a series of land parcels that can be amalgamated or sub-divided to meet different requirements as well as changing demands and allow the phasing of developments.

### **Creating signature districts**

In the planning of Marina Bay, specific attention was paid to creating value. The land parcels are located within a series of distinctive districts, each focusing around attractive public open spaces and tree-lined boulevards which will provide signature address locations for developments.

Along the waterfront and fronting key open spaces, building heights are kept low. This maximises views to and from individual developments further away from the waterfront, enhancing their attractiveness and creating a dynamic 'stepped-up' skyline profile as well as more pedestrian scaled areas.

The successful development of Marina Bay is supported by state-of-the-art infrastructure. To date, the government has pumped in more than \$4.5 billion to facilitate development of the area.

A Common Services Tunnel housing electrical and telecommunication cables and other utility services underground is being built, making repeated road diggings a thing of the past. An extensive road and rail network has also been planned, with three MRT stations to be built in the area as part of the new Downtown rail line.

A new vehicular and pedestrian bridge will link Bayfront to Marina Centre. The 280m pedestrian linkway - the longest in Singapore - will sport a dynamic double helix structure. Together with a new waterfront promenade, this will create a continuous walking loop connecting up the necklace of attractions and open spaces around the Bay.

Another key infrastructural project is the Marina Barrage. When officially opened in 2009, it will turn the existing water body into Singapore's first reservoir in the city. This will serve as a new source of fresh water for Singapore and a new lifestyle attraction allowing for a variety of water-based activities and events to take place. It will also house Singapore's tallest fountain project.

### **The softer touch**

Having provided for much of the 'hardware' for the new business district, it became clear that URA had to go beyond its traditional roles of urban planning and land sales management. To this end, the Marina Bay Development Agency was set up within URA to focus on the 'software' for developing the area. Since then, URA has embarked on a full spectrum of marketing, promotion and place management activities to showcase the uniqueness of this new destination.

To generate more buzz, a calendar of events and activities for public spaces and water bodies has been put in place in partnership with various agencies and the private sector. Signature events, like the Marina Bay Singapore New Year's Eve Countdown, have become a new urban tradition. Marina Bay has also become the definitive venue for a host of sporting events like the F1 Powerboat Race, the Oakley City Duathlon and the Great Eastern Women's 10km run.

### **The shape of things to come**

While it will take more than a decade for the entire area at Marina Bay to be fully developed, a host of projects that will offer people from all walks of life exciting and attractive options to live, work and play are already taking shape. These upcoming developments have contributed significantly towards enhancing the area's reputation as a location that offers something for everyone: a tropical living environment among lush greenery; a bustling global business hub and a lifestyle locale presenting a kaleidoscope of entertainment and leisure choices.

**LIVE - by the Bay.** Marina Bay has fast become one of the city's most popular and prestigious residential addresses, with a number of outstanding projects already under construction.

The Sail @ Marina Bay will be the tallest residential development in Singapore at 245 metres when it is completed in 2009. It boasts two towers - one at 70 storeys and the other at 63 storeys. Meanwhile, the Marina Bay Financial Centre incorporates the 55-storey Marina Bay Residences, comprising 428 luxury apartments, and the Marina Bay Suites, a 66-storey development offering 221 exclusive bayside units.

**WORK - by the Bay.** With its prime location in the heart of Singapore's future downtown, Marina Bay continues to be a magnet to global investors and tenants seeking premium office space in a prime location.

The development of Marina Bay will help to further position Singapore as one of Asia's leading financial centres, doubling the size of the existing financial district. The new growth area set aside for the seamless extension of the existing financial district is more than twice the size of London's Canary Wharf and will provide some 2.82 million square metres of office space, equivalent to the office space within Hong Kong's main business district, Central.

Already, a nucleus of office developments is forming with the development of One Raffles Quay, the soon-to-be-completed Marina Bay Financial Centre, and the two recently sold sites at Marina View. Several global banks and multinational corporations, including UBS, Deutsche Bank, DBS and Standard Chartered, are already located or will be locating in these developments.

**PLAY - by the Bay.** The 'fun' factor at Marina Bay is expected to be raised to a new high when the Marina Bay Sands Integrated Resort opens its doors in 2009. With its impressive design featuring a sky park and three soaring 50-storey hotel blocks with landscaped balconies, the area's most anticipated project will add a new dimension to our city skyline.

The integrated resort is poised to be a world-class development that will house a casino, two theatres, 110,000 sq metres of meeting and convention facilities, as well as about 2,500 hotel rooms. Other attractions at the integrated resort include restaurants in the form of two floating crystal pavilions and an ArtScience Museum, the rooftop of which becomes an amphitheatre with tiered seating.

Building on Singapore's green legacy, three world-class waterfront gardens of about 100 hectares have been planned for the area. With the first phase of the project slated for completion in 2010, the Gardens at Marina Bay will be another unique destination attraction for those visiting Singapore and a green sanctuary for people living and working in the city.

Each garden will feature a distinctive design and character. All three gardens will also be interconnected via a series of pedestrian bridges to form a larger loop along the whole waterfront and linked to surrounding developments, open public spaces, transport nodes and attractions.

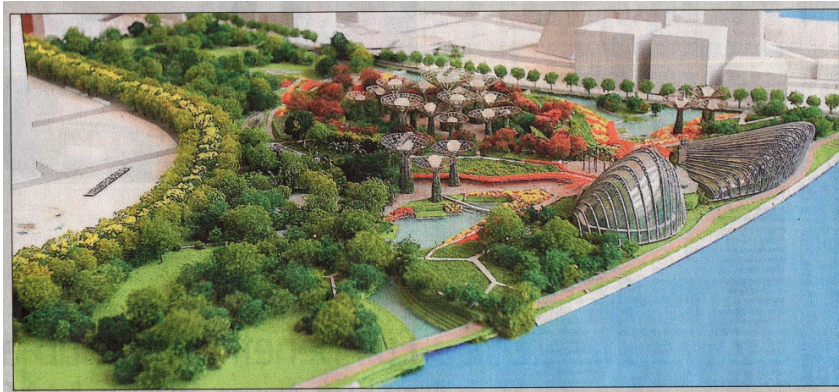
### **Focal point for the community**

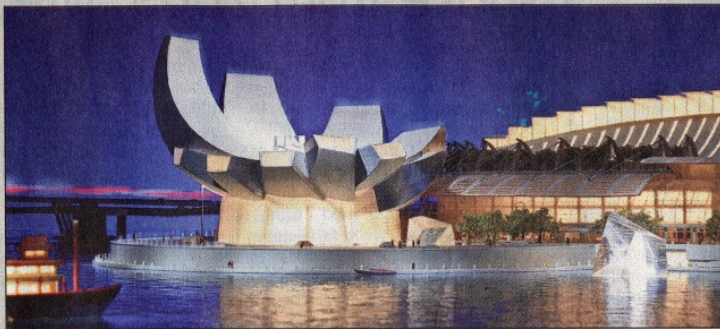
Marina Bay is a prime example of a visionary masterplan that is not only well on its way to becoming a new focal point for the local community, but it has also drawn worldwide attention and interest. Testament to this is its achievement in attracting close to \$16.5 billion worth of private investments to date from international investors and developers from the US, Hong Kong, Australia, Europe as well as the Middle East.

Moving forward, Marina Bay will continue to be the centrepiece of Singapore's urban transformation, providing the city with the opportunity to attract new investments, visitors and talents.

The URA, as the Development Agency for Marina Bay, is committed to our long-term and strategic plans to meet the area's future development needs. We will continue to adopt a holistic and integrated approach in designing the area with people in mind, work with partners and communities to implement key infrastructure, and carry out active promotion and place management activities. We will also engage investors to garner more interesting business concepts and ideas. This will take us closer to our vision of making Marina Bay a choice destination for all, one that promises Singaporeans and visitors alike a brand-new, live-work-play experience.

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**Coming attractions:** Building on Singapore's green legacy, three world-class waterfront gardens (above) of about 100 hectares are planned for the area. Meanwhile, the Marina Bay Sands Integrated Resort will house, among other things, a casino, 110,000 sq metres of meeting and convention facilities, and an ArtScience Museum (left)



**Chain event:** A 280m pedestrian bridge – the longest in Singapore – will, together with a new waterfront promenade, create a continuous walking loop connecting all the attractions and open spaces around the Bay