

Behind the Scenes: Jurong Lake District, Singapore Panel

Insights on the ULI Advisory Services Panel Process



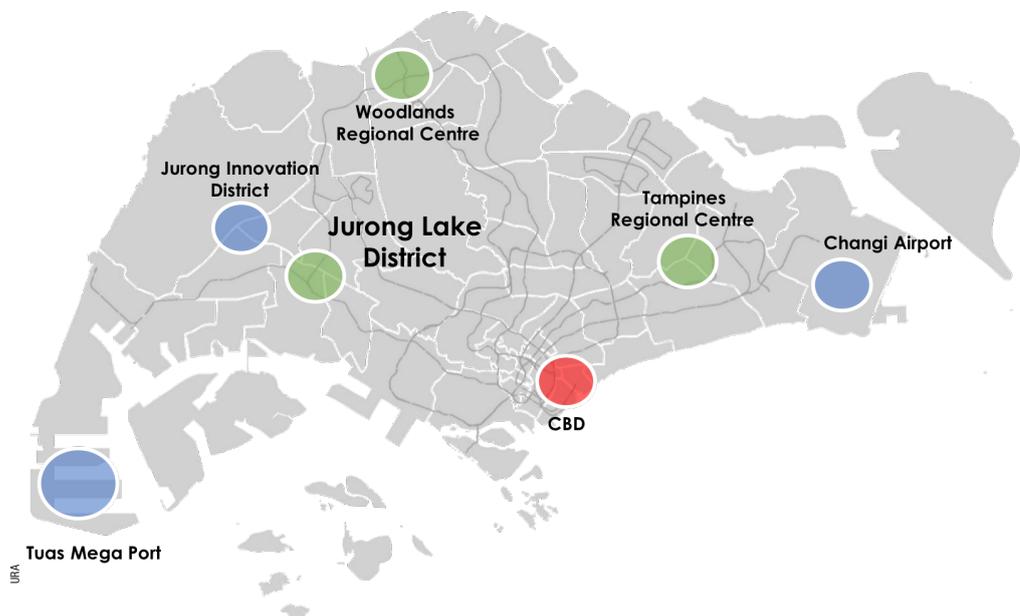
For over 70 years, the Urban Land Institute (ULI)'s Advisory Services Programme has worked to bring together the finest expertise in real estate to provide insights on best practice in challenging land-use issues ranging from planning, to development, heritage, and regulatory policy. In total, ULI has now convened more than 600 Advisory Services Panels (ASPs), staffed by volunteers from its 40,000 inter-disciplinary membership base. By providing an unbiased outside point of view from this very deep pool of expertise, the Advisory Services programme has and continues to deliver fresh insights and innovative solutions to seemingly intractable real estate problems.

In January 2018, the Ministry of National Development's Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) of Singapore (collectively known as 'the Sponsors') approached ULI to form an Advisory Services panel of ten highly qualified practitioners to provide strategic advice on Jurong Lake District, a growth area that is planned as a smart and sustainable mixed-use business district. Hailing from three continents and five countries, the ULI Jurong Lake District panel members (collectively known as "the Panel") were selected based on their expertise in finance, master development, and transportation, as well as their ability to provide independent views on development strategies. The following piece further explores the Jurong Lake District panel's scope and process.

Background and the Panel's Assignment

Located in western Singapore, the 360-hectare Jurong Lake District encompasses two precincts: a commercial hub at Jurong Gateway, and a leisure, recreational and mixed-use area at Lakeside. A draft master plan to transform Jurong Lake District was unveiled by URA in August 2017, proposing a lively and vibrant mixed-use

A map of Singapore highlighting the CBD, major growth nodes, and key developments surrounding the Jurong Lake District.



business district that capitalised on the area's upcoming developments. The Sponsors asked the Panel to advise on the following master plan aspects:

- The sale and partnership structure of a strategic parcel of land at Jurong Lake District, taking into account planning objectives, changing needs, external risks and the project's long gestation period.
- Boosting the district's appeal to users and investors, taking into account its position relative to the CBD, nearby developments such as the Tuas Mega Port, the Jurong Innovation District, and enhanced connectivity to transport infrastructure.

The ULI Advisory Panel Process

Preparations for a five-day Advisory Services panel takes approximately three months. From the start, the sponsor, defined as the party or parties that propose the project, works with ULI to implement a unique panel programme for the on-site week, a highly structured framework that has been effective over the past 70 years in producing optimal outcomes with maximum efficiency.

The ASP agenda is both detailed and intensive. It includes an initial in-depth briefing day comprised of site tours and meetings with sponsor representatives, followed by a day of hour-long interviews with between 50 and 75 industry and community stakeholders. This is followed in turn by two days of deliberations. On the final day, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report detailing the research results and panel recommendations is then provided to the sponsor after 90 days.

Importantly, the success of any ASP depends on thorough preparation. Sponsors therefore need to prepare high-level briefing materials, arrange necessary meetings with local stakeholders, and ensure in general that all necessary information needed for the panel to assess relevant issues is provided while they are on-site.

Due to the Jurong Lake District project scope's complexity, CLC and URA maximised the panel process by working closely with the ULI Advisory Services team to establish prospective questions and objectives. After consulting with senior members of ULI's global leadership at an initial project analysis session at the 2017 ULI Fall Meeting in Los Angeles, the Sponsors refined their brief, asking for a panel to be convened to provide advice on the development strategies for Singapore's Jurong Lake District.

During the months leading up to January 2018, the Sponsors worked with the ULI Advisory Services team in all aspects of planning for the week on site. These tasks range from defining the panel, developing background materials, and gathering resources for panellists to identifying key resources and stakeholders - such as business leaders, community leaders, real estate leaders, residents, public officials, and others - to interview.

Stakeholder Interviews: The Key to Impactful Recommendations

Considered the linchpin of the Advisory Services process, interviews provide a unique opportunity for panelists to engage stakeholders, providing a window to gain local context and understand the issues surrounding the land-use challenge. To ensure objectivity, the sponsor is removed from this process, with the content of interviews remaining confidential. This process of facilitating seasoned practitioners to have candid conversations with local industry and community leaders is what differentiates ASPs from other consultancy practises.

For the Jurong Lake District panel, more than 60 people representing public institutions, land owners, businesses and community leaders participated in the in-depth interviews, and shared their knowledge, history and perspectives on the project. The interviews provided crucial insights within a very compressed timeframe.

Conclusion

At the end of five-day panel week, the Jurong Lake District panel presented with confidence their localized recommendations and strategies for the district's development to the Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance, Lawrence Wong, as well as the senior management of MND and URA. Presentations were followed by a Q&A session, and a formal report was subsequently submitted which is now under review.

The ULI Advisory Services programme moves beyond just the recommendations and a written report. From preparation to execution, the panel process itself provides real, transformative results that often enhance the awareness of the specific project or plan, spark connections among stakeholders from different sectors, and change the way local leaders think about land use planning and development in their communities.



ULI Panel Team

Chair

Jeremy Newsum
Non-Executive Trustee
Grosvenor Estate
London, United Kingdom

Panel Members

Diane Barrett
Chief Projects Officer
City and County of Denver, Colorado
Denver, Colorado, U.S.A.

Albert Chan
Director of Development Planning and Design
Shui On Land
Shanghai, China

George Hongchoy
Chief Executive Officer
Link Asset Management Limited
Hong Kong, SAR

David Joy
Chief Executive Officer
London & Continental Railways
London, United Kingdom

Tom Murphy
Senior Resident Fellow, Canizaro/Klingbeil Family
Chair for Urban Development
Urban Land Institute
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania/Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Jonathan Rose
Architect and Principal – Design and Planning
AECOM
London, United Kingdom

Michael Spies
Senior Managing Director
Tishman Speyer
London, United Kingdom

Simon Treacy
President, Hawaii
The Howard Hughes Corporation
Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A.

Carl Weisbrod
Senior Adviser
HR&A Advisors Inc.
New York, New York, U.S.A.

ULI Project Staff

Thomas Eitler
Senior Vice President, Advisory Services
Urban Land Institute
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Pauline Oh
Senior Vice President, Asia Pacific
Urban Land Institute
Singapore

Steven Gu
Consultant, Asia Pacific
Urban Land Institute
Singapore

About ULI

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is a nonprofit research and education organisation supported by its members. Founded in 1936, ULI now has more than 40,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines working in private enterprise and public service. A multi-disciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates an open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places. For more information, please visit us at <https://uli.org>.