



Figure 8.4
In Hong Kong, human activities
take place on many levels.
(Source: Stephen Lau.)



facilities, and most of all, offers easily accessible connections at all times. However, it should be noted that this does not preclude street level activities (Figure 8.4). Ground level is as busy, active and vibrant as the multi-level skywalks. So, it seems that connectivity at all levels is an important concept for a 'sky city' to function effectively. A similar idea, for example, is found in a Japanese proposal to link and connect the otherwise isolated super block office towers in West-Shinjuku

to intensify commercial interactions in this under-used zone of the city, especially during after work hours.³

MILU: a way of spatial planning

Observations from the field study indicate that Hong Kong adopts a compact city planning concept that is frequently applied to a single site combining a number of different uses in a successful way. This form of the compact 'city within a city' approach plays an influential role in the implementation of the MILU concept. Two projects conceived for the new millennium, which represent market preferences that have prevailed since the early 1970s are examined to demonstrate MILU in practice.

Tseng Kwan O New Town, Metro-City residential development

Tseng Kwan O (TKO) is one of 10 satellite towns in Hong Kong. It is separated from the main areas of Hong Kong by an ultra-efficient subway and a public transport system that reaches the CBD within 25 minutes travel time.

The TKO Metro-City development took shape in three phases from May 1997 to April 2000. Phase I contains 2048 households or 6700 residents in six 43-storey towers. Phase II includes 11 towers of 38 storeys and has 3344 households or 13,376 residents. Phase III comprises four towers of 43 storeys that have about 1376 households or 5600 residents. In this 'city within a city', MILU is achieved on a relatively small land parcel with a FAR of 8–10 times the land area, realized by 21 tall towers housing a total population of 25,676 people.

The unique feature of such MILU development is that all of the residential super-high-rise towers are built over a 4-storey podium which covers 100% of the site area. The three phases were developed on three land parcels connected by covered walkways, open 24 hours a day and conveniently connected to the Mass Transit Railway and to neighbouring mixed-use residential developments. On the ground floor there is a terminal for long haul and local commuter buses, maxi-cabs, taxis, and car park entry and exit points. Next to the transport terminal are a post office, food market and supermarket. The podium then includes a two level car park for residents and