



Ratepayers will be expecting improved services from MPSJ following the upgrade.



Noraini says Subang Jaya has fulfilled all 12 criteria for city status.

the strengths and weaknesses in urban areas, and the mayors or council presidents must include it in their key performance indicators (KPI).

The six dimensions are competitive economy, sustainable environmental quality, sustainable community, optimum use of land and natural resources, efficient transportation and infrastructure, and effective governance.

Nor Hisham had said the most important thing was to ensure that the residents of the municipality were happy with the facilities and utilities in place.

"Our motto is Bandar Idaman (Dream City)," he added.

However, despite surpassing all the criteria, city status remained elusive.



Rubbish collection is one of the main concerns of MPSJ residents. — Filepic

In 2018, MPSJ president Noraini Roslan said the council's application had been rejected twice by the Government.

Noraini said previous applications were rejected based on the Federal Government's policy that each state was allowed to have only one city.

"Special consideration had been given to Selangor where both Shah Alam and Petaling Jaya were granted city status.

"If this policy is changed, then there is a high probability that Subang Jaya will achieve city status," she said, adding that the township had fulfilled all 12 criteria, including a population exceeding 500,000 and financial independence with revenue of not less than RM100mil a year.

While it is a triumph for MPSJ, residents expressed worry that it may lead to an assessment tax hike. Past reports about MPSJ's quest for city status were often met with mixed feelings from the public.

While some were happy at the prospect of MPSJ being upgraded, others said there was still room for improvement.

Lake Edge Residents Association (RA) secretary Mariam Osman had said MPSJ would need to ensure its services reflected the new status.

"We see less frequent waste collection and public cleaning and when we ask the contractors, they say it is due to budget cuts."

# Bicycle patrols and smart solutions

IT HAS BEEN a busy year for the Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) as it implemented several pilot projects to make the municipality a safer, greener and smarter place to live and work in.

MPSJ's enforcement team now has a cycling unit which patrols three townships — Taipan MPSJ HQ, USJ 10 and Bandar Puteri, Puchong.

Enforcement Department deputy director Ahmad Hasan said MPSJ received feedback from ratepayers that bicycle patrols were more effective.

Furthermore, it is cheaper to use bicycles, he added.

MPSJ spent RM35,820 for 12 bicycles at a cost of RM2,985 each. Another pilot project was the use of 5G technology to address parking, congestion and security issues.

MPSJ is collaborating with TM One to deploy 5G technology in SS15, Subang Jaya, to address specific issues faced by the community.

MPSJ is the first local authority in the country to use the 5G standard in its daily operations.

The pilot project involves the Smart Traffic Light, Smart Parking and Smart Safety as well as security solutions.

The 5G-enabled Smart Traffic Light solution programmes traffic lights to respond to real-time, rich data collected by connected high-definition (HD) cameras and sensors to enable improved traffic flow and reduce idle time at red lights.

Meanwhile, the Smart Parking solution enables real-time parking bay monitoring using HD cameras and Artificial Intelligence (AI) so users can search for vacant parking bays and reduce time spent searching for a spot.

Safety was also top on the agenda with closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras installed and plans for more in the future.

At the SS15 commercial area, MPSJ plans to instal over 100 high-tech CCTV cameras to monitor parking and traffic flow.

MPSJ president Noraini Roslan said under the proposed pilot project, the CCTVs would be equipped with enhanced technology and algorithms that could gauge the behaviour of motorists and alert MPSJ or the police if action was needed.

"If people park at a certain place illegally, the CCTV will alert MPSJ's control room so our enforcement officers can take action.

"This will be done soon, depending on the budget, and we will be partnering with TMOne," she said.

Noraini added that CCTVs would be placed at a lower level in public spaces to enable face recognition and vehicle registration identification.

Meanwhile, eight new CCTVs were installed at the wet market section of Pasar Rakyat in Seri Kembangan.

Seri Kembangan assemblyman Ean Yong Hian Wah said it cost RM5,200 to install the new CCTVs. With the new additions, there are a total of 16 CCTVs at the market, which has seen a rise in petty crime over the past few months.

There are about 200 hawkers with stalls at the market, which opened in 2010.

MPSJ also allocated RM300,000 and RM450,000, respectively, to repair drains in Kampung Seri Kembangan and Taman Sungai Besi.

Ongoing works for the MRT Sungai Buloh-Serdang-Putrajaya (SSP) line project was also in the news as residents complained about traffic congestion and flood woes.



Communications and Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo and Ean Yong checking out the new CCTVs at the Seri Kembangan market.



Seri Kembangan residents expressed concern about ongoing construction of the MRT SSP line.

Also known as MRT2, the SSP line, scheduled for completion in July 2022, is expected to serve a two million-catchment population.

Tai Cheng Heng, who is the councillor in charge of Seri Kembangan, said the construction site was dusty and too close to Jalan Raya 1 in Seri Kembangan.

Fellow councillor Wong Yii Seang said after the construction started, maintenance of the stretch of road stopped.

"The residents in my area welcome the MRT2 construction, but there are a few issues here and there, such as lack of grass-cutting maintenance, potholes and flash floods.

"The bridge across Sungai Kuyoh was often flooded during a downpour ever since the MRT2 construction started. It is not a major flood but it can be dangerous for motorists," he said.

Both Wong and Tai said the council will look into the matter. MPSJ held a two-day dialogue with stakeholders in Serdang and Puchong to get feedback on how it could better utilise funds in the 2020 budget.

During the dialogue, MPSJ councillors and representatives from developers and NGOs were split into four groups and asked to list what they hoped to see included in the council's 2020 budget.

The four groups discussed infrastructure and socio-economy, sustainable development, landscaping and beautification, and community and resident engagement programmes.

MPSJ accountant Mohd Fadzil Mahat said the council's main focus next year would be building a safe, green, smart, prosperous, healthy and women-friendly municipality.

This year was not without controversy for MPSJ. In October, a video of MPSJ dog-catchers having an altercation with a couple over a stray dog went viral.

The over four-minute video recorded by the woman showed several MPSJ officers trying to capture a dog under a car, while a man tried to intervene with the officers.

Selangor local government, public transportation and new village development state executive councillor Ng Sze Han later apologised on behalf of the state government for the ill-treatment of the dog during the operation.

Koh Tat Meng, the man who intervened, was then charged for obstructing a public servant in the course of his duties. He later filed a civil suit against the council for alleged assault.

The incident also caught the attention of Tengku Permaisuri of Selangor, Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin, who is also the Royal Patron of the Stray Free Selangor (SFS) campaign.

In a statement posted on the Selangor Royal Office Facebook page, she expressed regret over the rough manner shown by the council employees and that she was disappointed and saddened that such cruelty was still happening in the community despite numerous awareness campaigns on strays.

To address these concerns, a joint programme between the Selangor government and MPSJ on animal control was organised earlier this month. According to a MPSJ councillor who attended the dialogue, NGOs invited for the programme had differing opinions on how animal control should be carried out.