



Young volunteers working together to pick up rubbish around the residential area of Ukay Perdana in conjunction with the launch of the community plogging campaign. — Filepic



A view of Highland Towers, Kuala Lumpur. The area may be redeveloped as a recreational and memorial park. — Filepic

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By SHALINI RAVINDRAN
shaliniravindran@thestar.com.my

THIS year has been one of trial and error for Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) as it embarked on new ideas and projects.

While some of the proposed initiatives and programmes were well-received, several of the projects were met with resistance by the people of Ampang.

One controversial project that is going ahead despite protests is the anaerobic digestion plant in Taman Dato Ahmad Razali.

Although the move was slammed by nearby residents, the project is going on and is expected to be completed by early next year.

It was reported that condominium residents nearby were surprised when they found out that the council had proposed to build the plant on a 0.1ha site in the densely populated residential area next to the Kojaya condominium.

The proposed project is in collaboration with the Housing and Local Government Ministry ministry.

Addressing concerns raised by residents, MPAJ president Datuk Abdul Hamid Hussain said they would monitor the project during its construction and once the plant was operational.

"We want to minimise disruption and will reevaluate the situation if necessary," he said.

Abdul Hamid previously said that particular site was suitable for the plant because it was located near the Ampang Point commercial area, which generated plenty of food waste.

With the digestion plant, he said the waste could be transported quickly and easily for processing, and it was one way of tackling excessive food waste by processing it into compost and biogas instead of filling up landfills.

He said the plant could process one tonne of food waste a day.

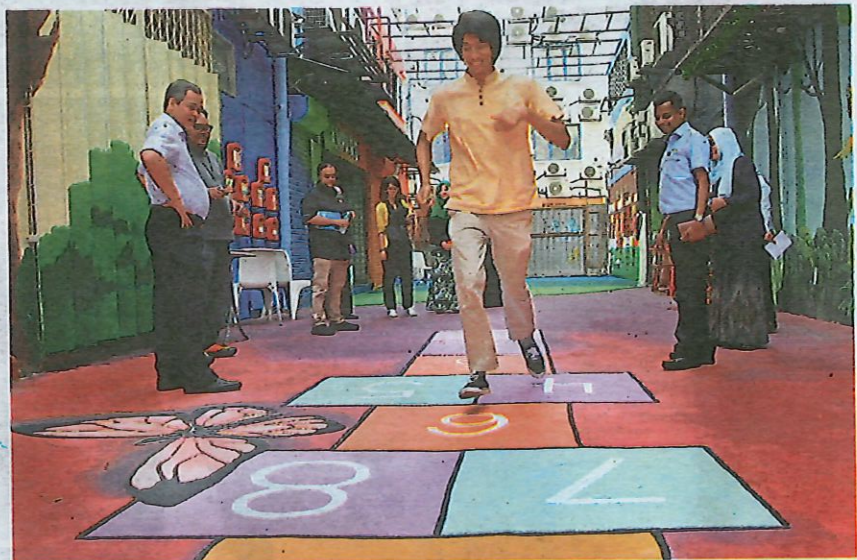
On the flip side, one of MPAJ's more well-received projects was the Plogging Campaign mooted by MPAJ in September.

Plogging is an activity that combines jogging with picking up rubbish. Under the campaign, residents are encouraged to collect discarded plastics, bottles, paper, cans and other items that can be recycled and sold.

Since the start of the campaign, 2,664.79kg of waste was collected,

Forging ahead with plans for Ampang Jaya

Despite objections to some projects, council put into motion several new ideas in 2019



Artist Hafiz Nazri playing a game of hopscotch at the Senario Ampang art street in Ampang. — Filepic

with 1,387kg of recyclable materials.

During the launch of the campaign, minister Zuraida Kamaruddin said the trash-for-cash model would be extended nationwide to promote cleanliness and help supplement income.

She said the ministry was aggressively pursuing the campaign, which was part of the National Community programme, because 60% of the 32 million Malaysians were habitual litterbugs.

On a lighter side, MPAJ hopes to revitalise dead spaces and areas with creative art and paintings.

Their aim is to bring communities together and create within them a sense of responsibility and ownership in such art projects.

The Senario Ampang mural project helped to transform the once dingy and dirty back lane along Jalan Mamanda 7 in Ampang, which has since been spruced up and beautified with 3D murals decorat-

ing the walls.

Now open to the public, the murals are made up of vignettes of attractions as well as landmarks of the area, and invite people to become part of the art.

Abdul Hamid said their aim was to bring life back into these spaces and turn it into a gathering place.

The project is a collaboration between MPAJ and the ministry at an estimated cost of RM468,300 and is also part of MPAJ's Local Agenda 21 Ampang Point beautification master plan.

He added that MPAJ saw the potential for back lanes to be economically viable tourism products as Ampang was a stone's throw from Kuala Lumpur city centre.

The beautification project was initiated in May and there are plans to undertake similar projects in two other back lanes in the Ampang Point area.

Meanwhile, the demolition of the remaining two blocks of the Highland Towers has hit a snag, with land matters causing the delay.

While Zuraida hoped to make an announcement that the towers would be demolished before year end, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari said the state government was still going through the relevant documents to acquire the site.

He added that they were working on the matter, but added that it would take another three to four months as it involved various parties such as the land office and related agencies.

In March, Zuraida said the two towers would be demolished latest by June this year but the date came and went with no demolition plans in sight.

She proposed that the Highland Towers area be re-developed as a recreational and memorial park.