

PLAN FOR BEIJING'S SOUTHERN AREA



JIAO HONGTAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

A bullet train passes on the Yongding River Railway Bridge, which goes across Beijing's Shijingshan, Fengtai and Fangshan districts and Zhuozhou in Hebei province.

Ambitious roadmap for city's south

Three-year plan has turned area into a thriving commercial hub

By ZHENG XIN
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After the Beijing government decided to boost the development of the capital's southern sections in 2010, the area has turned into a bustling center of commerce and high-tech and educational institutes.

Having ended their reliance on low-end industries such as cement factories and small coal mines, southern Beijing now has a high concentration of bio-medical industry bases and scientific research institutes.

The southern area spans five districts — Fengtai, Fangshan, Daxing and the southern parts of Xicheng and Dongcheng districts, accounting for 20.5 percent of the city's area. More than 4.6 million people lived in these areas by the end of 2008.

According to the municipal government, the average gross regional product in Fengtai, Daxing and Fangshan districts increased by 11.3 percent from 2010 to 2011.

The average gross regional product in the three districts was 2.1 percent higher than the average gross regional product for the entire city.

The local fiscal revenues in the three districts also increased 26 percent, and were 4.2 percent higher than the capital's average fiscal revenue figure.

However, economic development in the southern parts of the city is still lagging behind the northern ones, with fewer high-end industries. The gross

product of the Fengtai, Daxing and Fangshan districts is only 15 percent of the city's total.

The southern part of the capital should further attract investment and high-end enterprises, according to the Beijing government.

The "New South Beijing Three-year Plan" (2013-15) has been approved by municipal authorities, according to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform, which has pledged to invest at least 290 billion yuan (\$46.6 billion) in the southern areas.

These areas will focus on a number of strategic projects with the government continuously providing financial, land and policy support.

Rail transportation, the greenbelt along the Yongding River and public service facilities including schools, health-care centers, elderly care and museums will be at the top of the project's agenda over the next three years, the commission said.

The location of a new airport will also play a major role in the southern region's development, it said.

Rapid construction

The Beijing Subway has seen unprecedented construction in the southern area of the capital in recent years, greatly relieving traffic in the city and providing convenience to local residents.

Including three new lines and extensions to existing lines, the subway system in the southern part of the capital now covers 118 kilometers, with 90 km con-

structed in the past three years.

In addition to the subway, six roads, spanning 167 km, are also being built to connect the southern area with downtown, including Jingliang Road and Puhuangyu Road.

Three water recycling plants, seven heating centers and five power transmission and transformation stations have also been built.

Four forest parks have been set up in the past three years in the southern part of the city. Residents can camp or stroll in the parks free of charge.

More than 4,000 hectares of barren land in southern Beijing has been turned into fields covered with grass and trees in the city's afforestation project.

A total of 31 major environmental protection projects have also greatly improved the air and water quality.

Industrial parks

Several advanced manufacturing bases and civil-military integration industry bases have been set up in the economic and technological development zones in southern Beijing in the past three years. Eight industrial parks have been set up, attracting 52 bio-medical companies and manufacturing enterprises.

The zones attracted more than 200 projects with a total of 120 billion yuan of investment in the past three years.

Low-end industries are leaving the city, and small coal mines, cement plants and lime factories are gradually closing.

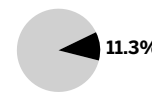
The southern areas will play a significant role in dispersing the capital's exploding population, the government said.

SOUTH BEIJING

First phase of "South Beijing Three-year Plan" (2010-12)
The "New South Beijing Three-year Plan" (2013-15)

Achievements of the past three years

The average annual increase of GDP in the Fengtai, Daxing and Fangshan districts has increased by:

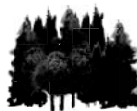


2.1% higher than the city's average level.

The local fiscal revenue has increased by:



4.2% higher than the capital's average figure.



Three water recycling plants

More than 4,000 hectares of barren land in southern Beijing has been turned into green fields.



Six roads covering a total distance of 167 kilometers are also being built to connect the southern part of the capital with downtown, including Jingliang Road and Puhuangyu Road.



With three new lines and extensions to existing lines, southern Beijing's subway system now boasts better carrying capacity, covering 118 kilometers, with 90 kilometers constructed in the past three years.

Source: Beijing government

Plan for the next three years

The new plan's investment will be no less than 290 billion yuan (\$46.6 billion), according to a spokesperson from the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform.

Three water recycling plants

Seven heating centers

Five power transmission and transformation stations

Four forest parks have been set up in the southern part of the city. Residents can visit the parks for free.

Eight industrial parks have been set up, attracting 52 bio-medical companies and manufacturing enterprises.

The southern districts have attracted more than 200 projects with a total of 120 billion yuan of investment in the past three years.

FENG XIUXIA AND GUILLERMO MUNRO / CHINA DAILY

SOUND BITES

I lived with my grandma during my childhood in an old community in the former Xuanwu district. When I was a kid we used to buy hundreds of coal briquettes to heat the room in the winter. In addition to the inconvenience of carrying those briquettes in the freezing winter, the rooms were sometimes choked with smoke when we lit the stove.

In 2010, the government replaced the traditional coal-burning stoves with electric radiators in the community where grandma has spent most of her life. We also receive a special price for electricity — half price in the morning. This makes the cost of heating in the winter even less.

Liang Wenchao, 30, a Beijing resident who works in the media industry

I love camping, especially in summer and autumn. We usually drive through the downtown to the Olympic Forest Park in the north of the city with friends and relatives to spend the weekend.

The new Riverside Forest Park in Daxing district has saved us the trouble of the drive. After just a few minutes' cycling, we can picnic in the grassland or nap in a hammock.

Many people complain that the environment in the southern part of the capital is not as good as in the northern part. But I believe Riverside Forest Park, as well as the Nanhaizi Park, in Daxing district, will further improve the air quality.

Xia Yin, 26-year-old Beijing resident who works in Daxing district.

I just bought a new apartment in Daxing district. Compared with the apartments in the central part of the city, real estate prices here are so much more affordable for me.

I am optimistic about the development of southern Beijing, especially in the past few years. The new streets are spacious and the forestation is beautiful.

The government has created some forest parks in Daxing and Fengtai districts, which have and will further improve the air quality. Also, with many biological medicine companies and high-end manufacturing businesses moving in, the economic development here is expected to quickly grow.

Feng Hui, 36-year-old technician in Beijing.

New subway lines to get Beijing on fast track

By JIN HAIXING
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Beijing will open a new subway line and complete the extension of an existing line in May, the latest move to improve transport infrastructure in the southern part of the city, municipal authorities said.

The first phase of Line 14, and the last two stations to complete the circular Line 10, will begin operation on May 5, said Lu Zongcun, a senior planner of Beijing MTR Construction Administration Corp, which builds Beijing's subway lines.

The western section of Line 14 will be operational in time to service crowds attending the 9th China (Beijing) International Garden Expo, which is scheduled to begin on May 18, Lu said on Friday.

One of the line's seven stations will be named Garden Expo Station, and the line will connect Beijing's Fengtai district to the downtown area, with its 12.4-kilometer track.

The last two stations of Line 10, Fengtai Station and Niwa Station, will open in May. Once completed, Line 10 will operate in a full circle, becoming Beijing's second subway loop line and the longest line in

the city, according to the city's transport authority.

The southern area of Beijing has long been the poorer side of town, with weaker transport infrastructure. In 2010, the municipal government launched a three-year plan to boost development of the area, including measures to improve transport.

According to a statement from the municipal government, five new subway lines, including the Daxing and Yizhuang lines, have opened in the past three years, increasing the length of subway lines in the southern area to 118 km. Before the development

plan, only two subway lines, Line 4 and Line 5, serviced the capital's southern suburbs.

Extending the subway lines has improved transport in southern parts of the city. Data from the Beijing Mass Transit Railway Operation Corp showed that on Friday, 184,000 trips were taken on the Yizhuang Line and 309,000 on the Daxing Line. But there have been complaints from commuters in online forums that transportation in southern parts of the city still lags behind services provided in the north.

Xiao Fang, a resident of Yizhuang, said the subway stations are often overcrowded.

"So many people take the Yizhuang Line every day. During rush hours I sometimes can't get on the train. The 7-minute interval between trains on the line is also too long," he said.

Xiao said he hopes the government will extend the operation times of the Yizhuang Line.

This year, Beijing will start construction on three new lines — the third phase of Line 8, Line 16 and the Yanfang Line, with most stations located in southern parts of the city, said Lu.

He said planning and design work on the New Airport

Express, a line connecting Beijing's urban area to the new airport in the southern Daxing district, will begin this year.

In 2013, Beijing will start a new three-year plan for its southern area. By the end of 2015, the city will have 13 subway lines servicing residents in the area, with total length of those subway lines reaching 225 km, according to Beijing Evening News.

According to a statement from the municipal government, under the development plan the construction of six main roads connecting the southern and downtown areas is also under way.