

Zhuhai in perfect place to pounce on historic opportunities

SEZ attracting thousands of businesses and making trade deals around the world



A bird's-eye view of Zhuhai, the only city on the Chinese mainland to connect Hong Kong and Macao by land. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Zhuhai, a city of only 40 years in Guangdong province, has vowed to map out a high-quality growth plan to embrace historic development opportunities.

As a powerhouse on the western bank of the Pearl River Estuary, Zhuhai was one of the earliest special economic zones in China, and has been placed at the forefront of reform and opening-up.

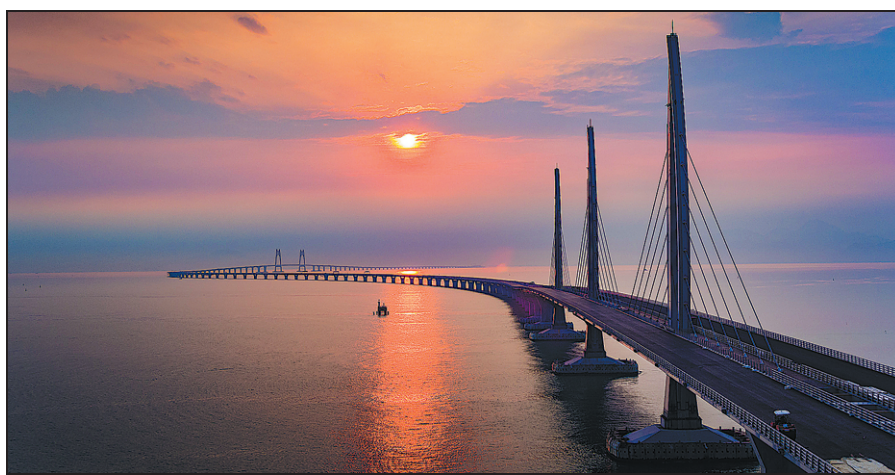
According to the Zhuhai government, the city's GDP reached 291.5 billion yuan (\$41.11 billion) in 2018. With more than 3,000 international trade enterprises, the city has ranked among China's top 10 for years in terms of foreign trade.

With the opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge in 2018 and the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Zhuhai is closer than ever to its goal of becoming a regional gateway and Zhuhai wants to become a quality development model among coastal cities, officials said.

In recent years, Zhuhai built the Hengqin section of the China (Guangdong) Pilot Free Trade Zone and the Pearl River Delta National Innovation Demonstration Zone and it has achieved remarkable results.

Last year, Hengqin, which was included as part of the China (Guangdong) Pilot Free Trade Zone in 2015, announced a package of policies. They included 66 measures covering 18 areas to seek quality economic development and broaden its appeal to the world.

As of 2018, more than 60,000 business entities had settled down



The 55-kilometer-long Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is the longest sea crossing in the world. ZHU RUIHENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

in Hengqin. The Hengqin FTZ saw its GDP reach 24.4 billion yuan in 2018 with an average annual growth rate of 29.1 percent during the past four years.

So far, Zhuhai has established trade relations with more than 220 countries and regions. In 2018, a total of 3,973 new foreign-invested enterprises were set up in the city, an increase of 153.9 percent from the previous year. The total foreign investment value exceeded 15.6 billion yuan, an increase of nearly 30 percent compared with the same period last year.

Zhuhai is prioritizing innovation. Over the past few years, the city government has insisted upon boosting innovation and creating a scientific and technological innovation system.

It is promoting the construction of high-level universities such as the Zhuhai Campus of Sun Yat-sen University, boosting scientific and technological innovation. It has also launched plans to attract more talent from around the world.

The city also issued measures to cultivate and introduce leading industries, offering beneficial policies, funding, talent and land supports for the development of entire industrial chains. Zhuhai aims to cultivate a batch of unicorn enterprises — startups valued at over \$1 billion — and gazelle enterprises — high-growth companies — via its various investment funds.

So far, Zhuhai is home to more than 2,000 high-tech enterprises. Many of them, such as Yunzhou-Tech (Oceanalpha) and Naruida, are

set to be qualified to unicorn status.

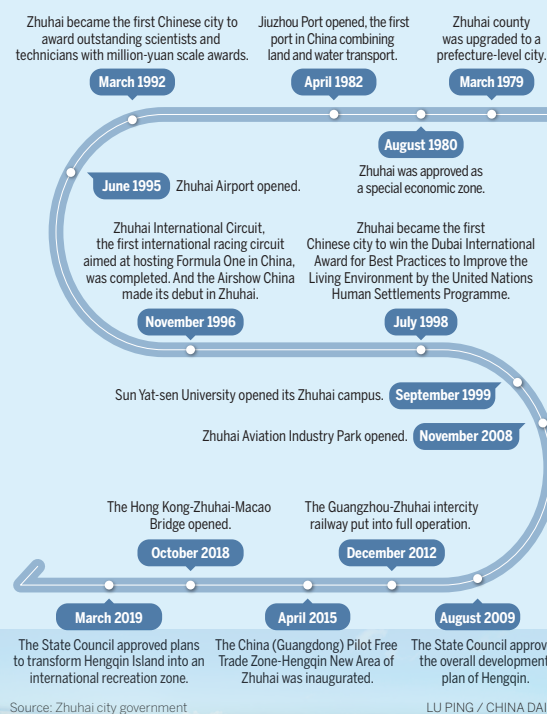
Zhuhai has implemented measures to strengthen opening-up and attract investment, such as providing enterprise headquarters projects with up to a 100-million-yuan in financial assistance.

The Belt and Road Initiative and the FTZ construction, as well as a series of high-level international exhibitions held in Zhuhai are expected to bring more opportunities to the city to improve its capacity for innovations and industry strength, officials said.

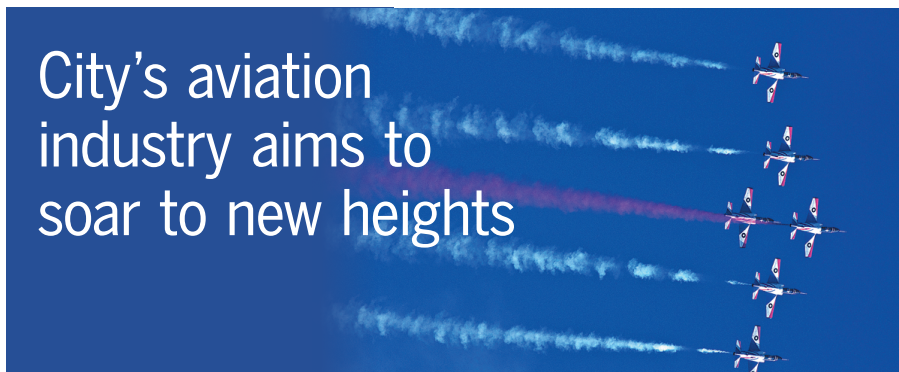


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40 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS



City's aviation industry aims to soar to new heights



Airshow China, held biennially in Zhuhai, is China's largest aviation and aerospace event. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Zhuhai's Airshow China is playing a key role in helping the city's aviation and aerospace industry take off.

The biennial China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition, also known as Airshow China, is one of the world's top air shows. It was launched in Zhuhai in 1996, one year after Zhuhai Airport opened.

At that time, Zhuhai urgently hoped to improve the development environment, develop industries and achieve prosperity by building infrastructure. The city then planned a series of major construction projects, including ports, railways, expressways, Lingdingyang Bridge, power plants and water plants.

Airshow China has witnessed some of the country's achievements in the aviation and aerospace industry that have been made during four decades of reform and opening-up.

It also helped the city build a solid foundation in the aviation industry. A large number of high-quality aviation enterprises have established partnerships with Zhuhai, which

helps the city's image to travel further across the world.

In recent years, China has been advancing the development of aviation and aerospace technology in cooperation with other countries. Airshow China serves as an important channel for China to communicate globally with the latest technologies.

It gives impetus for the country to become a major player in the global aviation and aerospace industry, an official said.

Zhuhai hopes to take the opportunity of Airshow China to highlight how Zhuhai's aviation and aerospace industry was developed from scratch. The event promotes industrial transformation and upgrading to boost innovation development in Zhuhai, an official said.

Now Zhuhai is accelerating the development of the Zhuhai Aviation Industrial Park, the only one of its kind in Guangdong province.

Since it opened in 2008, the park has carried out a number of pilot projects, becoming an "experimental zone" for the country's policy innovation.

One typical innovation is the air service station, which was launched in 2014.

As the first of its kind in China, the station provides a package of flight services from planning, intelligence and meteorology to rescue.

In 2014, the first low-altitude flight route in China — Zhuhai-Yangjiang-Luoding — was opened. It was considered a major breakthrough in China's low-altitude airspace management reform.

After 11 years of development, the park has gathered a number of promising high-tech companies across the whole industrial chain. They range from research and manufacturing to maintenance, operation and training.

A series of breakthroughs have been made in Zhuhai, such as the AG600, the world's largest amphibious aircraft and the sensing satellite constellation project Zhuhai-1.

Officials said the local government is exploring more effective ways to strengthen connections between industrial partners and Airshow China to drive economic growth in Zhuhai.

Green focus hoped to foster sustainability

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Zhuhai of Guangdong province is managing to balance its fast-paced economic growth with sustainable development, according to the local government.

Official figures show that in the first half of 2019, the comprehensive air quality index of Zhuhai improved by 8.3 percent year-on-year. It ranked seventh among 168 key cities in the country, one place higher than the same period in 2018. All of the city's nine centralized drinking water sources were qualified up to standard.

"All of these (results) come from Zhuhai's adherence to the concept of 'clear waters and lush mountains are as valuable as gold and silver', which started at the establishment of the Zhuhai Special Economic Zone and goes through

Zhuhai's development over the past four decades," said Zhang Jingwei, director of the Zhuhai ecology and environment bureau.

Zhuhai has long been at the nation's forefront for the promotion of creating a better ecological environment. It has gained many honors from inside and outside China for its remarkable achievements in this area.

Zhuhai was named one of the first National Garden Cities in 1992 and won the Dubai International Award for Best Practices to improve the Living Environment by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in 1998, the first Chinese city to win this honor.

It was also listed among Demonstration Cities and Counties of China Ecological Civilization Construction by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment in 2017.

An ecological civilization is one based upon ecological principles across all areas of society working toward sustainability.

Zhuhai has made a series of achievements in constructing ecological civilization. These include publishing the ecological environment index, assessing ecological civilization and promoting the GEP (gross ecosystem product) and green development model, which is listed as one of the key tasks in the city's reform.

Zhuhai is a model city for the construction of an ecological civilization in China, said Gao Shiji. He is director of the Institute for Resources and Environment Policies of the Development Research Center of the State Council.

Since the establishment of the Zhuhai Special Economic Zone, the city has paid attention to environmental protection and improvements, and made long-term efforts to realize the equal importance of economic development and environmental preservation, Gao said.



Mangrove forests have become big tourist attraction on Qi'ao Island in Zhuhai. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY