

New economic drivers go into top gear at Weifang high-tech zone

Companies announce projects involving millions of yuan in investment, **Yuan Shenggao** reports.

The Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone is gearing up to promote high-quality economic growth, to support the province of Shandong's efforts to replace old economic growth drivers with new ones.

Leading companies including Weichai Power, GoerTek and Shengrui Transmission have announced 66 projects involving millions yuan investment, aimed at boosting their capacity on the innovation front.

Meanwhile, many small and medium-sized companies, such as Wohua Pharmaceuticals and Shandong Tianrui Heavy Industry, have developed their core competitiveness and maintained double-digit revenue growth in recent years.

The zone has implemented a series of measures — including the rollout of e-government application systems, so businesses can get certification or fill in forms online, and streamlined administration procedures — to extend the growth of companies.

Officials in the zone are required to take care of individual projects, so business demand can be served in the quickest and most efficient manner.

Chu Baojie, Weifang's director of communications and Party chief of the zone's working committee, said government officials should be encouraged to "race with entrepreneurs" to promote business development in 2016.

Chu noted that SMEs are a major driver in increasing technological innovation and replacing old economic development drivers with new ones.

"For SMEs, the competition to innovate is fierce and time is their lifeblood," he said. "We have to consider problems from the angle of the entrepreneur and help them solve problems in the most effective and efficient manner."

For the zone's government, supporting business development is a key task, while supporting the integration of industry and urban development is seen as equally imperative.

An urban development plan — tailor-made for the zone to support its internationalization, and put together by experts from the United States and Japan — was unveiled early this year.

Over the past 10 months, new traffic systems have been rolled out to upgrade the transport network. In addition, officials said 81 "pocket size" parks have been added to the zone. Other civic improvements have included the redecoration of exteriors of buildings and construction of retail precincts that combine fashion, leisure and entertainment — providing one-stop convenience for residents.



Technicians at Weichai Power, a leading company in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, carry out quality inspections at the production line. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Zebra crossings in the zone are upgraded to improve traffic flow.



Curtis Shelby, a teacher from the US, holds class in the zone.



Visitors at a subdistrict-level museum in the zone look at the old exhibits, which were preserved to represent the local traditions and culture inherited from their ancestors.

Apart from upgrading its infrastructure, improving the quality of its school system, seen as a vital part of the zone's internationalization, has been enhanced in recent years.

A total of 9 million yuan (\$1.29 million) in cash performance bonuses were given to top teachers and school principals on Sept 7, to reward their contributions to education in the zone. The zone also announced it has invested 3 billion yuan to build 26 schools and kindergartens in recent years.

The zone's authorities have vowed to continuously make efforts to ensure that every resident in the region can

enjoy good education.

As part of the urban upgrade process, some residents living in rural areas have been relocated to new apartments.

Officials said local authorities had taken great care to ensure relocated residents enjoyed significantly better living conditions in their new homes.

They said the zone would accelerate construction of new apartments, so that people could move into their new homes as soon as possible.

The zone is also encouraging property developers to construct high-end apartments, featuring quality design and efficient property management services, to set

tle those relocated residents. The construction of low quality properties is not allowed.

Officials said that although residents enjoyed their new lives in the high-rise buildings, they also wanted to preserve some old aspects, representing local traditions and culture.

In response to their demands, the zone built subdistrict-level and village-level museums — so residents can conserve documents containing family trees, social history and anecdotes that have cultural and historical value.

Officials said that those museums would give the younger generations the opportunity to learn the past

local traditions and culture.

"Building subdistrict-level and village-level museums to help residents preserve this history is one of the key tasks of the zone," said Fang Guo, a consultant from the zone's administrative committee.

"We are accelerating construction of those museums this year."

To date, 45 subdistrict-level museums, 41 village-level museums, among other projects, have been planned, according to the zone.

Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone's investment in local living standard enhancement projects has been increasing year-on-year.

The zone invested 3.2 billion yuan in 59 projects in 2016 and 2017. The overall amount is projected to reach 4.03 billion yuan in 2018, according to zone officials.

Liu Jie and Zhou Jinjiang contributed to this story.



Technicians at Shandong Supermal Generating Equipment in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone check power generators produced by the company.

Supermal adopts new technology, generates success

By **YUAN SHENGGAO**

Shandong Supermal Generating Equipment Co, located in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, has improved the thermal efficiency of its gas power generator by more than 38 percent through adopting a new technology developed by Shandong University this year.

Supermal has long been committed to promoting innovation to support many of its long-term goals. It is the latest move by the manufacturer of industrial electricity generators to promote the commercialization of research results.

The company that has an annual sales revenue of more than 100 million yuan (\$14.35 million), and has registered 32 patents and more than 90 percent of its products are sold in the overseas market.

"Supermal has targeted demand from mid to high-end markets. We focus on the development of fuel and gas power generators, production and sales," said Chen Guangliang, deputy general manager of Supermal. "We have pressing demand for advanced technologies when companies grow fast."

In recent years, Supermal has partnered with leading universities and institutes such as Shandong University and Tianjin University to support its R&D. It has also commercialized many domestic and international leading technologies to support the growth of the company.

Its efforts have generated returns, with the company developing more than 200 different products.

Its products are widely used in sectors such as railways, telecommunications and are adopted in some high-rise buildings. Supermal's sales network has expanded to more than 40 countries and regions including Africa, Europe and Southeast Asia.

We have pressing demand for advanced technologies when companies grow fast."

Chen Guangliang, deputy general manager of Shandong Supermal Generating Equipment Co

The management of Supermal believe that technology-based commercialization is not equivalent to purchasing a patent or achieving research results — the gap between results and industrialized products should be filled.

In Supermal, every new technology is tested, developed, applied in real cases and promoted to see if it can be used to make new products, techniques, new materials and even form a new industry.

This year, the company joined with professor Zhang Junhong from Tianjin University in working to further reduce noise from power generating equipment. They looked at reducing levels of 100 to 125 decibels to less than 60 decibels.

Its newly designed power generator is also 8 percent smaller than the previous model, according to the company.

"Supermal will focus on developing a power generator cloud-based monitoring center and constructing of new energy vehicle power charging stations based on big dipper positioning," Chen added.

The new technologies will expand Supermal's product offerings and establish a strong foundation to support the company's internationalization and future development.

Zhuang Jian contributed to this story.

Virtual reality used to educate people on how to react in emergencies

By **YUAN SHENGGAO**

A facility for people to learn about how to deal with emergency situations in industrial production was established in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone in June.

Weifang Vision Land VR Information and Technology Co, a startup launched by Wei Zheng and his business partner Han Yizhen, is taking on the role as the technology developer.

The virtual reality technology-based software not only helps people to detect the hidden hazards in scaffolds, but also helps to teach people

more about scaffolding and evaluate whether a new staff member has sufficient safety knowledge about them.

"We're different from boring, traditional safety training courses," Wei said.

"Our VR technology-based solution makes people engage in an immersive environment, which is really similar to the real world."

More importantly, Wei's software can also be used to teach people how to escape from such emergencies as earthquakes, fires and explosions.

"People may have only one chance to escape in those incidents, so it is necessary



Weifang Vision Land VR Information and Technology Co, based in the zone, provides virtual reality technology-based software to teach people about safety.

to create opportunities to practice in an immersive

environment," Wei said. Wei started his career in a

film and television production company in South Korea in 2014. VR technology was booming a few months later, according to Wei.

Wei had a strong passion for new technologies and believed VR would play a vital role in helping to drive economic development.

He quit his job and spent a year learning about VR technology in South Korea.

Wei registered his business in June last year with his best friend Han and decided to focus on software development.

The new company was based in the zone and in the wake of a boom experienced

by China's VR industry, it has experienced strong growth.

To date, Wei and Han have developed more than 20 types of software to serve different market needs.

They have partnered with many companies and organizations in Shandong province, including a fire fighting center in Xuzhou and Huanan Weifang Power Generation Co.

Wei said they decided to settle in the zone not only because rental and utility costs are lower, but also because they can enjoy better service and a better business environment.

The zone provided many

supporting policies for them, according to Wei.

He said that one example was that the zone's human resource management center provided suggestions on their presentation before they participated in a startup competition.

Looking ahead, Wei said they will pay closer attention to the education sector and focus on developing products related to kids, as well as occupational and safety education, to bring the benefits of the cutting-edge technology to more people.

Yin Tingting contributed to this story.