

Linking Hong Kong and Macao, Connecting the World

The Nansha Plan Encourages the Emergence of a Gateway for High-Level Opening-up in the Greater Bay Area.



Guangzhou, Guangdong Oct 24, 2022 ([IssueWire.com](http://www.IssueWire.com)) - A few days ago, the State Council issued the *Overall Plan for Promoting Comprehensive Cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao by Further Deepening the Opening-up in the Nansha District of Guangzhou* (hereinafter referred to as the *Nansha Plan*). In order to provide facilitation measures for the development of Hong Kong and Macao businesses and institutions and jointly build a high-level opening-up gateway to the world in Nansha, Nansha is becoming a hub of rules alignment, which will further promote the opening-up, cooperation, and continuous deepening of rules alignment and mechanism connections among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao. Nansha will build a comprehensive service base for Chinese businesses to *go global*. Simultaneously, it will support Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao to build a joint shipping trade center and a new international economic cooperative platform for the Greater Bay Area to connect with the *Belt and Road Initiative*. The story of the birth of a gateway for high-level opening-up is being written in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

(Subheading) **Joining Hands: Leading and Driving the In-depth Comprehensive Cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao**

On June 24, the State Council Information Office held a press conference. Guo Lanfeng, an official of the National Development and Reform Commission, said that during the compilation of the *Nansha Plan*, two key points were focused on. They were *comprehensive cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao* and *world-oriented*. He emphasized the collaboration with Hong Kong and Macao to deepen the opening-up result from the synergy of the domestic and international development and the development foundation of Nansha.

Jointly building a gateway for high-level opening-up is one of the five development directions proposed by the *Plan*. Nansha is one of the important intersections of domestic and international circulation. It has the unique advantage of connecting two markets and utilizing resources from both. The *Plan* proposes that Nansha should play an important role in strengthening international economic cooperation and specify the necessity of studying how to further reduce the entry threshold for Hong Kong's professional service providers to do business in the mainland. Relying on Guangzhou's and especially Nansha's industrial foundation and market resources, Nansha will attempt to jointly work with Hong Kong and Macao to promote foreign trade and economic cooperation and the construction of a new hub for opening up.

Creating a hub for aligning rules and mechanisms by joining hands with Hong Kong and Macao is another development direction mentioned in the *Nansha Plan*. As the alignment of rules and mechanisms is both difficult and crucial amidst the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the smooth flow of elements depends on aligned rules. The *Nansha Plan* requires Nansha to explore and promote the *soft connection* of the rules and mechanisms with Hong Kong and Macao in terms of the financial market, public services, and social management. It specifies that cross-border motor vehicle insurance and cross-border commercial health insurance will be encouraged in Nansha, which will subsequently help carry forward the alignment of rules and mechanisms in the Greater Bay Area.

Under the framework of *One Country, Two Systems*, how will Nansha District join hands with Hong Kong and Macao to build a cooperation zone? In April 2021, the Consultative Committee on Guangdong-Hong Kong Co-operation (Guangzhou Nansha) (hereinafter referred to as the *Consultative Committee*) was established. In September, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council successively issued the *Overall Plan for the Construction of the Hengqin Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone* and *The Plan for Comprehensively Deepening Reform and Opening up of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone*. Finally, the *Nansha Plan* was released in June this year.

Guo Lanfeng said that Hengqin of Zhuhai, Qianhai of Shenzhen, and Nansha of Guangzhou are all major cooperative platforms specified in the *Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area*. Among them, the *Hengqin Plan* primarily aims to promote the moderate and diversified development of Macao's economy. It was designed with the guidelines of serving Macao and promoting the integrated development of Hengqin and Macao. The *Qianhai Plan* focuses on region expansion and reform and opening up. It supports in-depth cooperation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen in Qianhai centered on the modern service industry and Hong Kong's competitive industries.

"It can be said that Hengqin and Qianhai focus on supporting Macao and Hong Kong, respectively. The two regions jointly promote in-depth cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao," Guo Lanfeng said, "A different emphasis is being laid on Hengqin, Qianhai, and Nansha, with the main purpose of exploring, piloting, and gathering experience in main development areas. Through the working model of *promoting development in all areas by drawing upon the experience gained on key points*, the three places will play a leading role in comprehensive in-depth cooperation with Hong Kong

and Macao. Thus, these measures will expand the development space, support economic and social development, and maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao. "

Wang Fuqiang, Director of the Department of Regional and Industrial Economics Research of the Center of China's International Economic Exchanges, believes that the organizational structures of Qianhai and Hengqin are innovations of systems and mechanisms, which are still on trial. The *Nansha Plan* proposes to *establish a consultative committee made up of representatives from the governments, industry associations, chambers of commerce, think tanks, experts, and academia to provide consultation and suggestions for the construction of Nansha*. A consensus can be built from all parties and create a synergy for development.

Nansha, Guangzhou

(Subtitle) Expansion: Strengthening the Construction of an International Exchange Platform

World-oriented is an important topic in the *Nansha Plan*. Zhang Hu, member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Guangdong Provincial Committee and executive vice governor of Guangdong Province, said that *world-oriented* is regarded as one of the important strategic positions of Nansha, which requires Nansha to play a leading role in Greater Bay Area's participation in international cooperation and competition. Guangdong Province should accurately understand Nansha's development direction of further opening up and utilizing domestic and international markets and resources. Guangdong is too. take full advantage of the role of the Greater Bay Area as a system innovation high ground, a gateway for opening up, and a comprehensive service hub. Linking Hong Kong and Macao, Guangdong Province should build an institutional system and supervision model that is in line with international rules to better attract international resources and help Chinese market entities to go global. This will improve its global resource allocation capability and contribute to the new development pattern. Nansha's four functions will be emphasized, which are comprehensive services to *go global*, international shipping and logistics hub, the engine of international economic cooperation, and a new platform of international communication.

In order to build a gateway for high-level opening-up, Nansha of Guangzhou is accelerating the creation of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao cooperation platforms. The *Nansha Plan* states that it will build a comprehensive service base for Chinese businesses to *go global*, strengthening cooperation with professional service providers in Hong Kong to jointly build an integrated online and offline comprehensive service system of international investment and financing. The *Nansha Plan* also supports Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao to join hands in Nansha to build a shipping trade center. Moreover, a supply chain management platform will be established in the Greater Bay Area for commodities, such as bulk raw materials, consumer goods, food, and artwork.

To turn the above into reality, the *Nansha Plan* proposes that Nansha should implement the *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)* at a high standard and gather experience. It should benchmark against the *Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)* and *Digital Economy Partnership (DEPA)* and other high-level international free trade agreements while stepping up pressure testing.

Mao Yanhua, Dean of the Institute of Regional Opening and Cooperation of Sun Yat-sen University and professor of the Hong Kong-Macao-Pearl River Delta Research Center, said that Nansha should strengthen international economic cooperation by conducting pressure tests on high-standard economic and trade rules while building an international exchange platform. International economic cooperation, particularly with the European Union and the developed economies of North America, should be

promoted, which will help Na

The *Nansha Plan* proposes some safeguard measures in terms of policy and fund support. Funding of 10 billion yuan will be allocated for new local government debt each year from 2022 to 2024. Meanwhile, the annual land use quota in Nansha will be reasonably increased. It also proposes that Nansha will try to adopt an innovative mode of cooperation, including setting up statutory bodies or adopting the appointment system, as well as attracting professionals and international talent from Hong Kong and Macao to be engaged in the construction and management of Nansha.

We should better support Nansha in terms of land and capital and give full play to its advantages as a major strategic platform. With the strengths from the government, industry associations, chambers of commerce, think tanks, experts, and scholars, Nansha will actively participate in global governance in a profound way, such as the formulation of international trade rules, which helps Nansha play a better leading role in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

(Subtitle) A Crisscross: Based in the Greater Bay Area, in collaboration with Hong Kong and Macao, and facing the world

Located in the geographical center of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Nansha, after more than ten years of trials and transformation, has formed using *three zones and one center* coordinated development pattern, namely the State-level New Area, Pilot Free Trade Zone, Demonstration Zone for Comprehensive Cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao, and the Guangzhou sub-center with the function of a gateway hub. Its position has constantly improved in national, provincial, and municipal strategies.

Guo Yonghang, Deputy Secretary of the CPC Guangzhou Municipal Committee and Mayor of Guangzhou Municipality said that the development of Nansha is happening at the right time, in the right place, and with the right people; it has unique advantages and policy support. The *Plan* proposes five development directions based on the positioning of Nansha as a major strategic platform. Guangzhou will comprehensively strengthen the leadership of the Party, keep *The Top Priorities of the Country* in mind, seize the historical opportunity, adhere to the principle of *keeping it new, real, and refined*, and live up to the mission of the times.

In the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Nansha is accelerating its construction as a major platform comparable to Hengqin and Qianhai. In accordance with the step-by-step construction arrangement, Nansha Bay, Qingsheng Hub, and Nansha Hub in the Nansha Area of China (Guangdong) Pilot Free Trade Zone with a total area of 23 square kilometers will be the pilot start-up area.

Xie Baojian, professor and doctoral supervisor of the Department of Economics of Jinan University and Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Economy Research Institute, has been paying special attention to the development of Nansha. He believes that the three areas boast location advantages, a complete industrial development foundation, and transportation infrastructure, and notable results of the pilot are showing. It means that the three areas could be examples of great significance.

"In the future, Nansha Bay, as the facade of Nansha, will continue to experiment in shipping services, trade services, and international exchanges. Qingsheng Hub is the hub of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong high-speed rail and the location of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou). It is developing joint technology innovation and promoting the industrialization of research achievements, which is worth looking forward to. Nansha hub, the intersection of multiple railways and

expressways, is striving to build a future facade of Nansha. It also promotes Hong Kong and Macao youth innovation and start-ups, improves high-end business services, and launches pilot policies, such as QDLP, " Xie Baojian said.

With the promulgation of the *Nansha Plan*, Hengqin, Qianhai, and Nansha will become the core engines of the Greater Bay Area. With their respective functions and missions, this triangle surrounding the Pearl River Estuary will effectively support the high-quality development of the region and promote a higher-level opening-up. They will enhance the development level of Hong Kong and Macao and contribute to the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao. Driven by these three engines, it will be possible to build the Greater Bay Area into a world-class bay area and a world-class city cluster.

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