

Whole City [Gunsan, Korea/ Population: 280,000]

Introduction

There is a special city in Korea. Surrounded by rivers, sea, and quite and still mountains with a gift of natural scenes harmonized with the largest park in the country; and the land of opportunity and success guaranteed, with Saemangeum Seawall, the greatest on earth, and international maritime attractions. It's a DREAM HUB, Gunsan!

Past

Gunsan once grew as an advance base for exporting the rice to Japan, which was produced in Korea's largest breadbasket during Japanese colonial eras, the Honam Plains. It was a gateway to Yellow Sea as well as a strategic location for seaborne trade. Since 1970s, however, Gunsan was neglected in the process of Korean style modernization, and as a result Gunsan was dwindled away and on the decline as a city.

Present

Gunsan has changed into a growing city through continuous job creation, environment-friendly urban development, expansion of urban infrastructure. Now it is moving forward the development of "Eco-city" based on the gifted nature and environment and the development of "Creative City" which creates new value through its rich history and its identity as a city of modern culture.

Future

Gunsan will lead green industry in the world and the well-balanced development of new and old downtowns along with the Saemangeum Project. It will grow as a masterpiece city of international tourism and business with a half million citizens where urban area and human grow together.

1. Enhancement of the Natural and Built Landscapes

Gunsan is experiencing a busy time solving improper development and downturn of old downtown resulting from expansion of the city and is preparing to be a hub of prestigious culture and business. "Composition of Urban Forest" and maintenance of eco-friendly city designs are infusing vitality into urban area. The development of old downtown is in process for a well-balanced development of new and old downtowns. Composition of trails provides citizens with high quality life and easy access to public benefits. Also a park where used to be tainted with unauthorized facilities and pollution has been converted into the most precious resting area for Gunsan citizens.

2. Arts, Culture, and Heritage

Gunsan is a city where culture and art has been taking root deeply enough to be called a "City of Arts and Tradition" over the past. Gunsan is raising its dignity through supporting performance and building infrastructure such as "Gunsan Modern History Museum," "Gunsan Arts Center," and "Modern Arts Creation Belt Project." To support works of artists, it has created a street of artists enjoying quality culture.

Meanwhile Gunsan is also planting itself in sports as a dynamic hub city for sports by holding various national sports events such as "Gunsan Saemangeum International Marathon," and "Gunsan Saemangeum Walkathon." Also the bike festival, baseball and soccer games are held all the year round. In April, Gunsan becomes a city of festivals where about 20 different festivals are held with their own theme of culture, arts, and sports respectively. That's not all. In November, the largest eco-festival is held every year, the World Migratory Birds Festival

3. Environment Best Practices

Gunsan is called a "Treasure House of Nature" because of its natural attractions such as an internationally renowned habitat of migratory birds, *Geumgang* Lake, and one of the best wetlands

with biodiversity, *Oksan Reservoir*. To preserve its clean environment, various environment-friendly policies are implemented such as environmental campaign and biodiversity management project. Gunsan has transformed the lake, where used to be polluted by unauthorized floating buildings, into the most beloved natural resting place for the citizens. By composition of “Urban Forest,” Gunsan infused green vitality into urban area, and by composition of *Gubul-gil*, a trail, it made people enjoy the beautiful scenery and experience history. Also dim and dangerous alleys have been born again as an artist’s street of nature. With these efforts, Gunsan is now leading green tourism. Also by introducing natural gas vehicles (NGV) and operating Wing-In-Ground crafts, the transportation for the next generation, Gunsan is ready to lead green transportation system in the future.

4. Community Participation and Empowerment

Gunsan has institutionalized operating various committees to give citizens more opportunities to participate in all the life enhancing policy decision process. To name a few, the “Gunsan Development Council” playing a role as a think tank, the “Civic Participation Budgeting” which citizens may take part ranges from budgeting to budget implementation, the “Public Design Commission,” and the “Environment Pollution Commission.” Gunsan also has trained “Honorary Environmental Inspectors” to enhance doomwatch and preserve environment. It also has operated training for eco-leaders who will lead environmental action campaign in everyday life. By establishing the “Saemangeum Watershed Saving Council”, collaborative governance of civic, public, and academic fields, Gunsan is making the utmost efforts for water improvement of rivers around Saemangeum and preservation its ecosystem as creating waterfront cultural space. In order to realize citizen autonomy, sundry activities are in process at 27 community centers. Citizens get variety of things to see, to enjoy, and to learn through citizens unification festivals, they are harmonized with each other and united into one, and thus are raising the quality of life by themselves in Gunsan.

5. Healthy Lifestyle

Gunsan has introduced a concept of “Healthy City” to all of its welfare policies and is using this concept in implementing all sorts of welfare policies connected with local sources, so that all the citizens can lead healthy life physically, economically, and environmentally. In order to solve health disparities, Gunsan has developed the “Customized Health Management System”. “Gunsan Multicultural Center” and “Healthy Family Support Center” have been operated for helping multicultural families for their social adaption and health care. For the nutritional risk groups such as pregnant women and infants, Gunsan has providing with organized nutrition class, counseling, and nutrition supplements. In urban parks, Gunsan has operated “Cypress Forest Therapy Class” to share the gift of healing from the nature. To promote citizens’ health care, Gunsan has vitalized sports for all and systemized “Four Projects for Citizens Healthy Life Practice” covering “No Smoking,” “Exercises,” “Nutrition,” and “Moderate Drinking”.

6. Strategic Planning

Along with the opening of the world’s longest 33km-long Saemangeum Seawall causeway, inner land development has been started. To achieve the goal of constructing the “Green Masterpiece City in Northeast Asia with Wealth, Harmony, and Dignity” which will lead green industry, Gunsan is signaling its great transformation in the heart of Korea. To be a hub city in Northeast Asia and lead the future of Saemangeum, Gunsan has established “Gunsan City Master Plan” and “General Development Plan for Old Downtown” that aims to be completed by 2030 according to the Master Plan for Saemangeum Project of the central government of Korea. Through these plans the old and new downtowns will be developed in balance, and all the individual plans will be cohesive. To create harmonious city landscape which accords with the vision for city construction, the “Basic Plan for City Landscape” and the “Long-term Plan for Environment Preservation” are in the process

of establishment and will be completed by 2020. As including the development plan for waterfront space on the maritime reclaimed land in the “National Ports Master Plan” of the central government, the plan will be realized sooner or later.





