



Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2017

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Boao Forum for Asia Institute

March 26th, 2017

Session 41

The Character of A City

Time: 15:30 - 17:00, March 26th, 2017

Venue: ICC, Level 1, Dong Yu Grand Ballroom A

Moderator:

-WU Bofan, Host, Dong-Wu Talk-show

Panelists:

-Xiaoli DONG, Vice Mayor, Qingdao

-REN Xuefeng, Party Secretary, Guangzhou

-Davis WANG, Co-Founder and CEO, Mobike.com

-YOO Jeong-bok, Mayor, Incheon

-ZHANG Xiaomei, Group Executive Director & CEO, Riverside Group

Key points:

- The character of a city comes from its own resources. We need to design and plan a city based on its own advantages.
- With the economic development and technological progress, people's lives are becoming more intelligent. Fast-paced life hinders people from living and enjoying their life to a certain extent. Mobike brings people back to reality from the virtual world.



- To create a personalized city requires the work of government, enterprises and individuals.
- In the process of urbanization, China and South Korea should learn from each other's strengths and lessons, focus on the future, and develop hand in hand to make contributions to economic development and political friendship between China and South Korea.
- Enterprises should motivate and improve themselves in a spirit of craftsmanship so as to provide more sophisticated products and services.

Synopsis:

With the further development of economy, how to achieve urbanization has become a common problem for all the countries in their economic development. At present, in some areas of China, a uniform model is being adopted. This phenomenon is a warning sign to the government and enterprises that they should develop their own characteristics amid the renovation and expansion of the city and apply their own personalized labels.

The Beauty of A Personalized City

Xiaoli DONG shared the experience of personalized development of Qingdao City. Xiaoli DONG noted that over the years, the happiness of Qingdao residents has been ranking the first among all cities and it is also the most liveable city. The beauty of Qingdao is mainly manifested in five aspects: the beauty of nature, the beauty of people and culture, the beauty of history, the beauty of opening and the beauty of economy. Qingdao is the spokesman of “beauty” and “happiness”.

YOO Jeong-bok elaborated on the development advantages of Incheon City. Incheon, with a population of over 3 million, is the third largest city in South Korea. As the first open port in South Korea, Incheon was the first city to start modernization in South Korea. In addition, Incheon is South Korea’s largest transportation hub. According to statistics, in 2016, the number of



passengers that travelled through Incheon reached over 57 million. It is highly competitive among the cities of South Korea. The Incheon Municipal Government attaches great importance to cooperation with China, and has formed a special group to develop relations with China and engage in exchanges and cooperation. China and South Korea should face the future, achieve common development and contribute to the development of Asia and the world as a whole.

Experience of Urban Personalization

Xiaoli DONG believes that besides Qingdao's excellent resources, from the perspective of urban management, the character of Qingdao is built on three dimensions. First, urban development must be based on the city's historical heritage while carrying forward the spirit of the city. In the construction of the city, we should fully listen to the opinions of the public, and inspire people to show deep love for the city. Second, respect the law of urban development. Each city develops building upon its own history and culture. It cannot be developed radically. Third, city managers should fully understand the region's people and local characteristics, and further integrate themselves into the local society. Only in this way can we build a better city.

ZHANG Xiaomei noted that to develop a personalized city, we first need to define the character of a city. Different places have different characteristics. A city's personality is to be found more in its spirit and cultural connotations. Personalized cities have five things in common:

- First, public space for cultural cohesion;
- Second, native celebrities and anecdotes;
- Third, unique festivals and activities;
- Fourth, local and characteristic food and fair;
- Fifth, beautiful natural landscape.



ZHANG Xiaomei noted that the personalized development of a city must be based on the advantages of the city. The competitiveness of the city lies in the design. The government should start with urban planning and urban design to create a personalized city.

The “Fast” and “Slow” in Urban Personalization

Davis WANG noted that in the fast-paced modern life, to improve the quality of people’s life, we need to have the spirit of craftsmen and carefully build our products. Take Mobike as an example. Mobike is devoted to optimizing shaft drive technology .The purpose is to provide users with the most thoughtful services. The bicycle shaft technology can effectively avoid chain-off or clothes getting stuck in the chain. Mobike focuses on the future and expects to maintain the dynamism and vitality of the enterprise through technology.

ZHANG Xiaomei noted that in the process of building small towns with special characters, Riverside Group also faced a dilemma of “fast” or “slow”. During the past 10 years, the government’s concept of urban development has changed from emphasis on GDP growth to emphasis on ecological environment, history and culture. The city managers are making progress and contributing to urban positioning, urban planning, urban laws and regulations. Riverside Group, as an enterprise, maintains a good balance between “fast” and “slow” in its development. Specifically, it enhances work efficiency by using node management to complete projects as scheduled. This is the “fast” side; in the process of development, it constantly refines the city's personality by preserving and presenting local culture and heritages. This is the “slow” side. It can be said that craftsmanship of Riverside Group helps shape the soul of the city.

Davis WANG noted that during the past 30 years, China’s economy has experienced rapid development, and people’ living standard has been greatly improved. China’s car ownership ranks first in the world. People used to be



spending much more time on smart devices. Now Mobile brings people back to reality and allows them to appreciate and enjoy life in reality.