Sejong, Korea’s Multifunctional Administrative City, was created as a national project to relocate government ministries and agencies from Seoul, the aim being to pursue more balanced regional economic development and boost national competitiveness.

Between 2012 and 2014, a total of 37 central ministries and their related offices, which makes for 13,000 public officials, moved to the newly developed city. Fourteen state-funded research institutes with 3,200 researchers have also been relocated there. Aiming to attract a population of 500,000 by 2030, Sejong will be developed as a self-sustaining city that can serve as the administrative capital of Korea and fulfill various functions, including those related to education, research, healthcare, welfare and high-tech industries.

To that end, a three-phase development plan is well underway, with the first-phase plan to be completed within the year. This phase involves the relocation of central administrative organizations and the development of city infrastructure, including roads. Sejong is home to many parks including Sejong Lake Park, the country’s largest artificial lake park (about 690,000 square meters), and the Central Park (1.41 million square meters), all of which represent 52 percent of the city. This figure is the country’s highest. In addition, the city is promoting the world’s best educational environment by introducing advanced education systems including smart schools. The newly-adopted Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system runs along the inner and outer rings of the city, boosting efficiency of the public transit system. During the second phase, from 2016 to 2020, development will focus on boosting the city’s self-sustainability by strengthening the previously mentioned functions. In particular, the city will stand at the center of a Creative Economy Valley that will connect the Daeduk Inopolis, Osong Biovalley, and the International Science Business Belt, and focus on nurturing industry-academia-research clusters that can converge science with industries. For this plan, Sejong designated a 750,000-square-meter land in the city’s southeast in June as an Urban High-Tech Industrial Complex. After the first two phases, Sejong will go through a maturity phase and stand as a self-sustainable city by 2030.

**Special city development projects**

Sejong is promoting special city development projects in five categories: apartments, houses, private buildings including commercial structures, public buildings and bridges. Unlike other newly developed cities in Korea, Sejong has introduced design contests, business proposal bidding and the “block architect” system for private buildings in order to construct high-quality buildings. Thanks to such efforts, the city is home to residential and commercial buildings with unique designs.

The houses in Sejong are being developed under various themes, including traditional Korean and European. State-of-the-art technologies and design have been adopted in the city for public buildings and bridges, which will promote the city as a gigantic architecture and engineering museum. Notable landmarks in the area include the Handuri Bridge, the nation’s first asymmetrical cable-styled bridge with curved pylon, the National Library of Sejong City, which won the Reddot Design Award, Sejong City Hall, the Presidential Archives and more.

With continuous special city development plans, Sejong aims to become the “mecca of architecture and urban planning” for students in those fields.

**Sejong’s new growth engine**

The city’s Urban High-Tech Industrial Complex will be developed as academia-industry-research clusters to lead the city’s growth. In particular, the complex will form clusters with Daedeok Inopolis (IT) and the Osong Bio-converging Industrial District to lead the nation’s creative development. The complex’s Venture Park will house venture and medium-sized companies with strong competitiveness, while the Research Park will serve as a hub for R&D companies and research institutes. The Research Core, also in the complex and designated to support academia-industry-research cooperation, will accommodate the Knowledge Industry Center and Academia-Industry-Research Cooperation Center.

Considering growth potential and connectivity with other clusters in the neighborhood, the complex will focus on attracting tenants from the IT, bio technology and green energy technology industries. It will open after briefing sessions for future tenants, who will be evaluated on factors related to job creation, revenue and technological competitiveness.

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