

Exploration of Government Collaboration in the Co-Location of Guangzhou and Foshan

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Abstract: The basic feature of China's economic development in the new era is the shift from the stage of high-speed growth to the stage of high-quality development, and the concept of crosstownization is developed in the context of economic globalization and regional economic integration. Co-location is a requirement of the times, and the essence is close cooperation between cities and towns to achieve good and fast development. This paper explores the governmental collaboration aspect of the Guangzhou-Foshan co-location, discussing three aspects: the current situation, problems and suggestions, analyzing the current situation of the development of the Guangzhou-Foshan co-location, the main problems and putting forward suggestions for future development.

1 Introduction

With the development of society, co-location has become an important form to achieve regional integration and promote regional synergistic development in China. The concept of co-location in China was first proposed by Shenzhen in the Shenzhen 2030 Urban Development Strategy: to strengthen cooperation with Hong Kong in high-end manufacturing, modern services and other areas, and to form a "co-location" development with Hong Kong.^[1] Nearly 20 years have passed, and more than 20 pairs of cities nationwide have proposed to promote the development strategy of co-location, which has become the gas pedal of regional high-quality development.^[2] As the policy advances, regional co-location faces a series of problems, especially in government collaboration, mainly in inefficient communication between governments, etc. This paper mainly explores the issue of governmental collaboration in Guangzhou-Foshan co-location, with the intention of discussing the problems of governmental collaboration in the context of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location and proposing solutions to provide reference and reference for other regions, thus providing a small contribution to the high-quality development of the national economy.

2 The meaning of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location

Co-location refers to the joint development of two or several neighboring cities while cooperating in various aspects such as economic, social, and natural ecological environment.^[3] The co-located cities will echo with other cities in decision-making to achieve common development, complement each other's strengths and take

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advantage of each other's shortcomings; and integrate and learn from each other in terms of urban characteristics. In a limited resource environment, co-location can drive incremental development and make co-located cities more competitive. It is important to note that co-location is not simply a matter of controlling various data between cities to keep them the same, nor is it a matter of expanding outward to include all surrounding cities in the co-location plan, but rather combining cities with different strengths to produce a more competitive economy.

On March 19, 2009, Guangzhou Mayor Zhang Guangning and Foshan Mayor Chen Yunxian signed the "Guangzhou Foshan City Co-city Construction Cooperation Agreement" and four docking agreements on urban planning, transportation infrastructure, industrial collaboration and environmental protection between the two cities in Nanhai District, Foshan City, which marked the official launch of Guangzhou-Foshan Co-city. After this, the "Guangzhou City Master Plan (2011 - 2020)" and the "Foshan City Master Plan (2011 - 2020)" approved by the State Council also proposed to further promote the co-location of Guangzhou and Foshan.^[4] On November 23, 2016, Guangzhou and Foshan held a working exchange forum in Guangzhou, where the two sides planned to promote higher-level co-location and join hands to build a "super city". Guangzhou and Foshan are the first and third largest cities in Guangdong Province, respectively, with bordering borders about 200 km long. In terms of transportation construction, the transportation and railroad network system between the two cities is relatively complete, which helps the flow of people and resources between the cities; the new PRD hub airport is located in Foshan Gaoming, which will form an effective linkage with Baiyun International Airport; Foshan West Station is included in Guangzhou's "five main and four auxiliary" passenger hub pattern, Nansha Port Railway is completed

and operational, Guigang High Speed Railway South Guangzhou high-speed railway speed upgrade, Guangzhou-Zhan high-speed railway and other high-speed railway channel to speed up the construction, Guangzhou Station to Guangzhou South Station liaison line and other hub projects steadily advance the preliminary work, Guangzhou-Foshan pole railroad hub pattern has been rapidly optimized and upgraded. In terms of science and technology innovation projects, the two governments and the rest of the cities in the Greater Bay Area are working together in depth to build two national advanced manufacturing clusters, namely Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Foshan-Dongguan intelligent equipment, Guangzhou-Foshan-Huizhou ultra-high-definition video and intelligent home appliances, as well as a national fuel-cell vehicle demonstration city cluster, focusing on making breakthroughs in cooperation in the fields of automobiles, new-generation information technology, biomedicine and health, and forming a pattern of collaborative industrial development based on the division of labor in the industrial chain.[5] In preschool education, Liwan District of Guangzhou City and Chancheng District of Foshan City have started in-depth cooperation on preschool education projects. In terms of environmental protection, the two municipal governments will focus on increasing the protection of the cross-border river surges between Guangzhou and Foshan. The enactment of these policies will enable the two cities to consolidate and enhance government resources and improve efficiency in environmental management projects. The two municipal governments will assess the section water quality to achieve full compliance; systematically carry out Guangzhou&Foshan cross-border and shared drinking water source protection zone construction project clean-up compensation; complete the Pingzhou waterway, Guangzhou&Foshan River, Southwest Chung and other cross-city Bi Road construction and other four cooperation projects, so that the water is clearer and the shore is greener. In terms of co-location of government services, 2,721 government service matters can be handled across cities, and the scope of matters will be further expanded this year; in terms of medical and health cooperation, the synergistic mechanism for prevention and treatment of major infectious diseases and pre-hospital emergency care in the junction area will be improved; in terms of social security cooperation, resource sharing of employment information and skills training will be carried out, and deeper cooperation in social assistance and elderly care services will be promoted, etc.

3 The current situation of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location

3.1 Economic

In 2021, Guangzhou's primary industry grew by 5.5% over the previous year (the same below). Foshan's primary industry grew by 9.5%. The national primary industry increased by 7.1%. The growth level of primary industry in Guangzhou is lower than the national average, while the

growth level of Foshan is higher than the national average. Guangzhou secondary industry growth of 8.5%, Foshan secondary industry growth of 9.3%, the national secondary industry growth of 8.2%, Guangzhou and Foshan growth levels are higher than the national level. Guangzhou's tertiary industry increased by 8%, Foshan's tertiary industry grew by 7%, the national tertiary industry grew by 8.2%, Guangzhou and Foshan are below the national growth level. The total annual consumer price level in Guangzhou rose by 1.1%, and the total annual consumer price level in Foshan rose by 1.1%, basically remaining the same. In the external economy, the total value of Guangzhou's annual merchandise import and export increased by 13.5% over the previous year, the total value of Foshan's annual merchandise import and export increased by 21.7% over the previous year, and the national annual goods import and export increased by 21.4% over the previous year. Guangzhou's total import and export growth level is much lower than the national growth level while Foshan's total export value is slightly higher than the national average.

3.2 Social aspects

At the social level, Guangzhou City 2021 (the same below) had a resident population of 18,810,600 at the end of the year, with a natural population growth rate of 6.26% and an urbanization rate of 86.46%; Foshan City had a resident population of 9,612,600 at the end of the year, with a natural population growth rate of 6.28% and an urbanization rate of 95.21%. The urbanization rate of Guangzhou is lower than the urbanization rate of Foshan. In terms of natural population growth rate, the national natural population growth rate is 0.34%, and the natural population growth rate of Guangzhou and Foshan are both higher than the national average. The high natural population growth rates in Guangzhou and Foshan are due to the large influx of foreign population. The urban registered unemployment rate in Guangzhou was 2.22% and in Foshan was 2.4%; the national urban survey unemployment rate at the end of the year was 5.1%. Guangzhou City, urban residents per capita disposable income increased by 8.9%, rural residents per capita disposable income increased by 10.4%; Foshan City, urban residents per capita disposable income increased by 8.4% over the previous year, rural residents per capita disposable income increased by 9.6% over the previous year; the national urban residents per capita disposable income increased by 7.1% over the previous year. The per capita disposable income of rural residents increased by 9.7% over the previous year. In contrast, the growth rate of urban and rural per capita disposable income in Guangzhou is higher than the national average, while the growth rate of per capita disposable income in Foshan is only higher than the national average in urban areas, while the rural per capita disposable income is slightly lower than the national average.

3.3. Education and Environment

In terms of compulsory education, elementary school

enrollment in Guangzhou increased by 6.84% over the previous year; junior high school enrollment increased by 4.49% over the previous year. Foshan elementary school enrollment increased by 6.53% over the previous year; junior high school enrollment increased by 7.4% over the previous year. In contrast, the percentage increase for junior high school students in Guangzhou is relatively low, while the percentage increase for elementary school students is almost the same. In terms of higher education, Guangzhou has 11 general higher education schools and 2 adult higher education schools, with 44,600 students enrolled in various forms of higher education and 141,900 students; Foshan has 13 general higher education schools, with 53,500 students enrolled and 153,200 students enrolled. In comparison, (poor summary) the average number of haze days in the city of Guangzhou in 2021 is 4 days, 0.6 days less than the previous year. The number of days with air quality at or better than Level 2 in Foshan was 312. At the same time, both Guangzhou and Foshan have reached 100% of urban household waste disposal rate.

4 Analysis of governmental collaboration in Guangzhou-Foshan co-location

4.1 Inefficient communication leads to competitive internal conflict

The government of Guangzhou&Foshan is not clear about the boundaries of the respective functional areas, and there is serious industrial homogeneity between the two places. The division of labor among regions on professional boundaries is also unclear, leading to waste of resources and ineffective competition. The main reason for the industrial homogeneity and the unclear professional division of labor boundaries in sub-functional areas is the lack of clarity in the planning of the industrial system and the layout of the division of labor between the governments of Guangdong and Foshan for the misalignment of industrial development. At the same time, the lack of communication between the governments also leads to the lack of unified and perfect planning between the two regions. There is no actual geographical distinction between Guangzhou and Foshan, leading to a particularly serious problem of homogenization in the border area between the two places.[6] In terms of urban project development and construction, the government of Guangzhou&Foshan also has the same problem of inefficient communication. Among them, the governments of Guangzhou and Foshan are divided and local protectionism prevails, which is not conducive to the development of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location, nor is it conducive to information sharing and resource complementation between governments. Looking at the results of development and reform in the past decade or so, although the two cities have made great strides in the field of cooperation and cooperation methods, but the degree of cooperation in key areas and major projects still needs to be deepened. From the development of 2011 to the present,

not see Guangzhou&Foshan breakthrough class such as in the West River diversion flow and other major infrastructure projects on the big action, the two cities cooperation is still lack of such key planning projects make cooperation and development difficult to break through the bottleneck, to achieve the development of cooperation at a higher level docking.[7] At present, there are strong economic ties between the cities and towns in the Guangzhou-Foshan region, and this connection is manifested in the form of passenger flow, logistics, information flow and other forms of flow clustering and diffusion, but due to the administrative system and management problems, the road traffic network between Guangzhou and Foshan has been difficult to achieve full access, the junction of the two cities still have a number of cut-off roads hindering the travel of the public. In terms of infrastructure, there are still problems with the construction of the natural gas network, the electricity grid and the information network, resulting in a large gap between the natural gas and water tariffs, which causes inconvenience to the public, even though the two areas are clearly located next to each other. Many key projects for the benefit of the people are not reasonably coordinated, lacking in articulation, and unable to fully play the role of regional services. If the lack of communication between Guangzhou and Foshan governments continues, it will become the primary factor limiting the development of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location. (Find an example) If the lack of communication between the Guangzhou and Foshan governments continues, it will become the primary factor limiting the development of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location. At the same time, the emergence of the "isomorphic phenomenon" will cause great waste of development resources and duplication of investment in construction, or worse, will lead to vicious competition in the industry, resulting in the emergence of local protection forces to form a vicious circle. Guangzhou's development in the automotive industry has formed an industrial overlap with Foshan. Guangzhou's new energy vehicle production grew rapidly from 2017-2021, with production reaching 150,000 units in 2021, accounting for 4.2% of the country's new energy vehicle production. In 2021, Guangzhou's total vehicle production was as high as 2,966,400 units, ranking first in the country for the third consecutive year. In 2021, the number of new energy vehicle enterprises in Guangzhou increased by 5210, an increase of 47.88% over the previous year. Among them, Guangzhou Automobile Group as the backbone of the development of Guangzhou's automotive industry has provided a lot of support for the development of the new energy industry. On August 25, 2022, Guangzhou Automobile Group announced to carry out the industrialization of independent battery construction, with a total project investment of 10.9 billion yuan. In December 2018, "Foshan City to accelerate the development of new energy vehicle industry and the promotion and application of a number of policy measures" was announced. This policy also encourages the development of Foshan's new energy vehicle industry by rewarding projects with a total investment of more than 1 billion yuan and put into operation within three years. In the last five years of development, Guangzhou and Foshan

have created unnecessary competition in new energy vehicles. Such competition will not only consume government funds, but also the two cities will not reach the expected development in new energy.

4.2 Benefit compensation mechanism is not yet clear, and overlapping policy projects lead to industrial isomorphism

From the interests of consultation mechanisms and cooperation framework agreements signed, although the two cities have signed such as "1 + 4" and "Guangzhou-Foshan co-city cooperation framework agreement" and other multifaceted, broad-level coordination and cooperation in the development of intention documents, but the implementation of the policy is still lack of binding force, the rigidity of norms is still slightly inadequate. Cooperation norms are not legal documents, and do not have effective legal constraints and strong enforcement, coordination is difficult to carry out, law enforcement and related departments do not have the legal effect of the provisions to cooperate with the implementation of the policy, the two cities to cooperate in a number of projects is only on paper. A typical example is the serious conflict of interests between the two cities in environmental protection, such as in the management of the Pearl River water basin, and the fact that the synergistic management mechanism between the two cities in environmental protection has not been fully established, which will have a great resistance to the co-location of the two cities and the realization of mutually beneficial economic cooperation and development.[8] At the same time, the unclear benefit compensation mechanism would allow the governments of Guangdong and Foshan to establish government programs that are extremely similar. Due to the similarity of environmental resources and conditions between the two regions, government subsidy funds are disbursed to similar industries. These industries usually open and develop simultaneously in both locations, thus creating a homogeneous phenomenon. The emergence of isomorphic phenomenon will cause great waste of development resources and duplication of investment in construction, and even more will lead to vicious competition in the industry, resulting in the formation of a vicious circle of local protection forces. In terms of talent resource interchange, Guangzhou has not been able to attract enough high-tech talent to Foshan through its status as the provincial capital. The development of small and medium-sized downstream enterprises is constrained by the inability to improve themselves to let the market gradually solidify, unable to form a healthy competition.

4.3 Excessive exploitation of environmental resources by co-located development

Ecological costs have always been the main concomitant of the urban construction and development process. We can not take the old road of "pollution first and then treatment" in western countries, using the environment as the sacrifice of urban development, and only seeking rapid increase of economic development speed, disregarding the

maximum carrying capacity of environmental development. According to relevant information and data, in Guangzhou, the development intensity of Yuexiu, Liwan, Haizhu and other areas are close to 80%, while in the periphery of the city, such as Panyu, Huangpu, Baiyun and other areas, as well as Foshan's Shunde, Nanhai, its development intensity has also reached 40%-60%, only the periphery of Conghua, Zengcheng, Nansha, Gaoming, Sanshui part of the regional development intensity does not exceed. The serious lack of back-up land resources will lead to a major reduction in urban development potential.[9] The emergence of concomitant environmental problems such as acid rain, water pollution and eutrophication of water bodies has posed new challenges to the living environment of human beings. For example, in the junction area of Guangzhou-Foshan Fengxiu Gang industrial zone, the industrial zone adjacent to the Pearl River, which contains plastic mold manufacturing companies, metal manufacturing industries and garment manufacturing plants and other highly polluting enterprises. Although the environmental protection supervision department issued a strict policy to eliminate the random discharge of pollutants, but many of these industrial areas located at the junction of Guangzhou and Foshan have become the culprit of pollution of the Pearl River and other waters. After more than a decade of co-location of Guangzhou-Foshan, many junctions of territorial affiliation, administrative areas have been updated. However, many times the law enforcement and administrative departments are not fully unified, which leads to the junction of the "three regardless" zone. The administrative departments and law enforcement agencies in both places have been shirking their responsibilities for a long time after receiving complaints from the public, leading to an increasingly serious pollution situation.

5 Optimization measures of governmental collaboration in Guangzhou-Foshan co-location

5.1 Breaking through the single administrative cage and focusing on cross-regional administrative efficiency are potential requirements for the connotation of co-location

The regional administrative center, as the administrative subject of co-location development, puts it at another level above the local administrative center in terms of development planning layout, i.e. carrying out the establishment of provincial administrative centers and regional administrative subjects. As we can see from the development and construction experience of Western countries, there are two ways to upgrade cross-regional administrative centers: the first is to establish the organizational form of the League of Cities, and the second is to establish a regional council. The regional alliance mechanism is a form of organization similar to a confederation of cities, in which members of various alliances cede public power to each other, redistribute management rights and jurisdictions, and clarify their

main responsibilities in urban development. As a combination of urban economic and political alliance and a kind of high-level administrative organization, it will play an important force in regional integration to achieve integrated development, but its emphasis has a high prerequisite for political integration. The requirements of the regional committee are relatively simple, and it only needs to achieve coordinated development among cities in the region in terms of industrial structure layout development, information infrastructure co-build and share, comprehensive land use, environmental co-build and co-protection, etc. to establish a cross-regional management administrative organization category. Guangzhou&Foshan can currently adopt the governance model of cross-regional management committee system. The establishment of a permanent daily leading organ as the main administrative carrier of the regional committee, the implementation of the joint meeting system, the main responsible person is responsible for the relevant organizational coordination work. Joint intra-city and inter-city meetings are held regularly. To set up specific policy implementation agencies in the area of urban development planning and infrastructure industry alignment, to establish a mechanism for mutual trust and consultation between the two sides, and to accomplish the goal of coordinated industrial development in the region. [1].

5.2 Take the overall development situation as a priority, break through the local protectionist ideology, and continuously eliminate policy implementation barriers

As a national central city, Guangzhou should play the role of "big brother" in the reform of the administrative management system of urban governance, take the lead in demonstrating how to break the administrative management model dominated by local interests, improve the formulation of policies and plans for coordinated regional development, play the fundamental role of the market in resource allocation, improve the coordination mechanism for the distribution of interests, and The establishment of a standardized model of cooperation in government behavior to prevent the waste of production resources caused by vicious competition between the two cities. The two municipal governments should achieve complementary advantages in the development of modern industrial systems based on a thorough examination of their respective advantageous industries. To eliminate the homogeneity of industrial structure in the region as the primary principle of regional development, realize the rapid flow of production factors between the region and prevent the occurrence of internal vicious competitive behavior. Specifically, that is, the Guangzhou Municipal Government should focus its major construction efforts on the development of high-end service industries such as international business, logistics park construction, financial services management platform, logistics integration, etc., and focus on the development of highly sophisticated product supply services such as fine chemicals and petroleum material reserves. Foshan

government should give full play to the advantages of Foshan and Guangzhou in the geographical location of the immediate vicinity of Guangzhou, Guangzhou as the basis for strengthening its traditional processing and manufacturing industries, such as ceramic building materials, household goods and other industries related to the construction of complementary mode in achieving increased value added products and Guangzhou, the formation of a modern industrial structure system of staggered development.

5.3 Focus on ecological green space and ecological corridor construction and establish effective communication mechanism

Work together to build an ecological protection forest system along the main river trunk, build a structural ecological green corridor, increase the monitoring of ecological damage, focus on restoring the main public green areas in the main urban areas of the city; revitalize the construction of water conservancy infrastructure, strengthen the key maintenance of farmland protection zones in the region; strengthen the integration of water source protection, comprehensive improvement of cross-regional water pollution management problems, clear upstream and downstream pollution Responsibility subjects, and improve the construction of legal regulation system related to water pollution and river protection and prevention. The two regions have already achieved a high level of cooperation in the areas of transportation infrastructure sharing, communication co-location, and health care co-location, issues that received widespread attention when co-location was first proposed, and which have been elevated to the level of public governance theoretical concerns. As a professional group of urbanization construction, the demands of the two municipalities in terms of urban development interests should be constantly met. The two municipal governments should take the initiative to accommodate the interests of these groups in urban development and industrial planning, and guide them in planning for the establishment of a modern enterprise system and guiding the benign development of industries. Furthermore, the government should take the initiative to hold more activities similar to the urban development industry forum, so that researchers and experts and scholars can speak and social opinions can be widely adopted, and an effective communication mechanism between the two sides can be established, so that regular intercommunication can be achieved in the process of crosstown construction; an open information system can be adopted, so that the general public can enjoy a high degree of the right to know in the construction of crosstown.

6 Conclusions

Strengthening regional or city cooperation and promoting regional integration is an important trend in today's world economic development and an important action to adapt to economic globalization and regional integration. Closely related to regional integration, co-location is

actually a concept to enhance the competitiveness of cities. The development of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location is conducive to the integration of resources and the formation of a mutually beneficial development pattern between the two cities, which is an important move to achieve economic growth from a high-speed stage to a high-quality development stage. The development of Guangzhou-Foshan co-location still has problems such as inefficient communication and unclear compensation mechanism for benefits. The over-exploitation of environmental resources must also be given greater attention. To promote the integration of Guangzhou and Foshan, we should insist on breaking through the administrative cage and strengthening administrative efficiency; speed up the establishment of a compensation mechanism to integrate the interests of the two cities to achieve the complementary advantages of the two places, coordinated development, while strengthening the common protection of the ecological environment. For this reason, it is necessary to pay attention to the construction of ecological green areas and ecological corridors, and to establish an effective communication mechanism. The promotion of the above optimization measures will be more conducive to the advancement of Guangzhou-Foshan co-city, providing important support for the high-quality economic development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

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