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Highway axis for five 'new cities' gets upgrade

Hu Min

A NEW boost to the development of Shanghai's five "new cities" has been launched as a major highway deemed the development axis of the "new cities" gets a facelift to satisfy the growing traffic demand of the area.

Work on the upgrade of Wai-qingsong Highway crossing the Qingpu New City Central Business District started on Wednesday.

It is a gateway linking the Yangtze River Delta Ecology and Greenery Integration Demonstration Zone and downtown Shanghai.

The project will stretch 4 kilometers and its major underground section between south Gongyuan Road and north Songze Highway will have a designed speed of 60 kilometers per hour.

"An underground corridor will be built to separate passenger and freight transportation," said Zhou Min, deputy chief engineer of the Qingpu Newcity Development (Group) Co.

"In the future, freight transportation vehicles bypassing the area will run

underground to ease expected traffic pressure with the development of the Qingpu New City," he said.

The project will be part of a comprehensive transportation hub comprising Metro Line 17, the Jiading-Qingpu-Songjiang-Jinshan Railway, and a railway linking the Yangtze River Delta Ecology and Greenery Integration Demonstration Zone and Hongqiao area under construction.

The upgrade will take four and a half years.

Shanghai unveiled its plan to develop five "new cities" last January as part of its strategy to connect more tightly with other cities in the Yangtze River Delta region and seek future economic and social development.

On Tuesday, a blueprint on the development of the five "new cities" was unveiled by the city government.

They will step up efforts to lure business investment and introduce at least two headquarters of state-owned enterprises or headquarter agencies by the end of 2025, according to the blueprint.



An automatic throat swab robot does nucleic acid testing for a resident.
— Jiang Xiaowei

Throat swab robots being tested at service center

Huang Yixuan

AUTOMATIC throat swab robots are being tested in Shanghai to help with COVID-19 nucleic acid testing and make the job of testers easier.

An automated nucleic acid testing site has been set up at Linfen Road Community Service Center in Jing'an District, with a robot, instead of humans, collecting swab samples.

The robot completes the entire sampling process for one person in less than a minute. All that a person has to do is show the code, place a brace, reposition and take on a proper mouth shape, press the start

button, hold the position for a few seconds, and the job is done.

The site is not yet open to the public because it needs to be tried out first inside the service center. Over the past week, it has cumulatively collected around 300 samples and has generally worked well without glitches.

At the moment, almost every public place in Shanghai needs a negative nucleic acid test result within 72 hours (or less) and a green health code. This means that there is a high demand for polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing sites and staff.

It is thought that putting

these robots into use will make things easier for medical workers, especially as temperatures rise and they have to wear bulky protective gear.

According to a service center official, it will help save manpower and lower overall labor costs because one robot can replace two to four medical workers at a sampling site.

The time it takes the robot for each sampling process is slightly longer than the manual process, but once fully operational, it will be able to provide 24-hour nucleic acid testing, which will meet the needs of more residents, particularly those in urgent need of PCR testing results.