

## FUSHUN: RUST BELT BUT HOPEFUL

BASIC INFORMATION		World Rank	Similar To
Urban Area Population (2007)*	1,290,000	273	Las Vegas, Mecca, Perth, Lyon
Urban Land Area: Square Miles	50	475	Bilbao, Hermosillo, Goteborg
Urban Land Area: Square Kilometers	139		
Density: Per Square Mile	25,800	130	Kabul, Ho Chi Minh City,
Density: Per Square Kilometer	9,950		
*Continuously built up area (Urban agglomeration) Land area & density rankings among the approximately 750 urban areas with 500,000+ population. Data from Demographia World Urban Areas data. See: <sup>1</sup> <i>Demographia World Urban Areas Population &amp; Density</i> <i>Demographia World Urban Areas: 2025 &amp; 2030 Population Projections</i>			

November 24, 2008

### LOCATION

Fushun is located in Liaoning Province, in the “Dong Bei” (northeast) of China, which is also referred to as Manchuria. The core of Fushun is approximately 30 miles (45 kilometers) east of the core of Shenyang, the provincial capital and a much larger urban area. It is only 7 miles (11 kilometers) from the Shenyang Ring Expressway (or “third ring”) to the western fringe of Fushun.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Fushun is a historic coal mining and industrial urban area that in many ways may be the most representative of China’s “Rust Belt.” Much larger Shenyang, to the east, is also considered a Rust Belt urban area, but its much larger size (the largest urban area in Manchuria and among the 10 largest in China) and provincial government functions appear to have shielded it more than Fushun. The Fushun urban area has a population of nearly 1,300,000, while the Fushun administrative region (formally the “city” Fushun) has a population of 2,300,000.<sup>2</sup> Fushun appears to be considerably less prosperous than many other large urban areas of China and not surprising has a higher population density --- nearly double that of neighboring Shenyang. The widespread, large project construction

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf> and <http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua2015.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> See “Cities in China”, below.

of high-rise condominiums, town houses and villas (detached houses) that is occurring in the larger urban areas of China appears to be occurring at a lesser rate in Fushun.

Fushun is located on both sides of the Hun River, which also follows a course through the southern section of Shenyang.

## **CENTRAL LIAONING: AN EMERGING MEGAREGION**

Despite its proximity to Shenyang, it would be incorrect to consider Fushun a part of the Shenyang metropolitan area, because there is little commuting between the two urban areas. However, this may change. A mega-metropolitan region could be developing. Shenyang is expanding rapidly and provincial maps indicate that a fourth ring road will be built between 30 and 45 miles (50 and 75 kilometers) from the core of Shenyang. The road would skirt the eastern fringe of Fushun. The fourth ring would also be built between Liaoyang, an urban area of 550,000 population to the south and Anshan, an urban area of 1,510,000 just further to the south. Today, these separate urban areas have a population of more than 8,000,000. With China's strong migration from the country-side to urban areas, a megaregion or metropolitan region of 12,000,000 or more.

## **GETTING TO FUSHUN**

Airport access to Fushun is by Taoxian International Airport in Shenyang. Fushun is close enough to Shenyang that travel by taxi is by far the quickest and most convenient, unless a car can be rented (currently China is not a part of the international drivers permit treaty, which makes it difficult for foreigners to rent cars). There is also frequent bus service from the North Station area ("uptown") of Shenyang and an infrequent train service.

The new fast train from Beijing makes the more than 400 mile (650 kilometer) trip to Shenyang in little over 4 hours, with rental car, taxi, bus or rail connections to Fushun.

A modern toll freeway, a part of China's extensive "interstate" or "motorway" standard system connects Fushun to much of the rest of the country. There is also a free "interstate" or "motorway" standard roadway from the Shenyang third ring expressway to the western fringe of Fushun. This free road, like similar facilities in China, is referred to as a "thruway." The toll freeway is north of the river, while the thruway is on the south side of the river.

## **THE URBAN FORM**

The Fushun urban form is similar to other urban areas dependent on coal and located in river valleys. The urban area is long and narrow and hugs the river. The urban area is long and narrow. From west to east, the urban area extends more than 20 miles (more than 32 kilometers). North to south, the urban area rarely exceeds 5 miles (8 kilometers), with most of the urban area south of the Hun River, which courses east to west.

On the south edge of the urban area is a large open-pit coal mine, the "Magnificent West Pit," which is visible using *Google Earth* (illustration from *Google Earth* below). The Pit is located just a few blocks south of the residential area in the Southwestern Sector and the Central Industrial Sector.



The older part of the urban area is on the south side of the Hun River. The historic core is also on the south side of the river.

Entering the urban area from Shenyang, one encounters the Southwestern Sector, which is composed principally of modest multi-family dwellings of five to seven floors, which appear to be a standard design that was used throughout China, especially in the period between the 1949 revolution and the reforms that began in the late 1970s (Slides 112-142). After a few miles, the residential areas give way to what might be called the Central Industrial Sector (Slides 100-111). This area has the appearance of disused rust belt areas in US urban areas, such as Youngstown, Ohio or Pittsburgh. At the end of the Central Industrial Sector there is a coal fired power plant, with two large towers. The historic core of the urban area begins at this point, and includes major shopping areas, the railroad station and administrative facilities. This area also includes substantial residential areas, somewhat more modest than in the Southwestern Sector (Slides 1-55).

Up to this point, Fushun does not look much different than would be expected for a declining rust belt urban area. But, that impression is soon dismissed by the relative prosperity of the newer section, to the north of the Hun River (Slides 56-99). This is a modern area of wide streets, new condominium buildings and relatively new shopping centers. There is also a modern though unopened, new railroad station, which appears to have been abandoned mid-construction with no indication of construction activity (Slide 65).

In spite of the reverses experienced by Fushun, there is a strong indication of progress. Perhaps it is that the spectacularly rising prosperity of China is simply spilling over, even into those areas where it might not have been as obviously expected.

## **“CITIES” IN CHINA**

Analysts often get confused by the “city” terminology used in China. All of the Dongguan urban area is contained within the city of Dongguan. Similarly, most (if not all) Chinese urban areas are contained within a single city. While Chinese cities are municipalities, they are far different from municipalities in the western world. They routinely include large areas of agricultural land, which keeps their density relatively low and leads publishers and analysts to report density data that is so low that it belies a complete misunderstanding of urban geography. For example, the largest municipality in the world is Chongqing, which has more than 30,000,000 people. Its land area is more than 30,000 square miles (more than 80,000 square kms) ---nearly as large as Austria or the state of Indiana. The urban area of Chongqing, however has a far more modest population of 4,000,000

<http://www.rentalcartours.net>

<http://www.demographia.com>

<http://www.publicpurpose.com>



FUSHUN RENTAL CAR TOUR

# Core Sector (South of the River)



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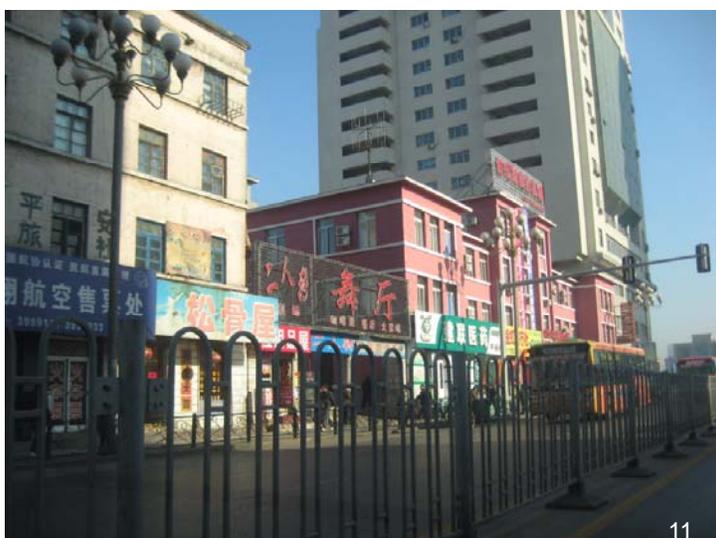
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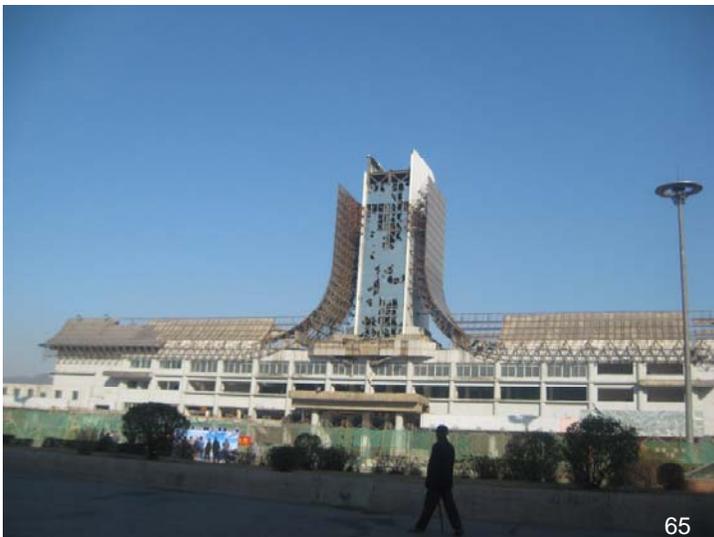
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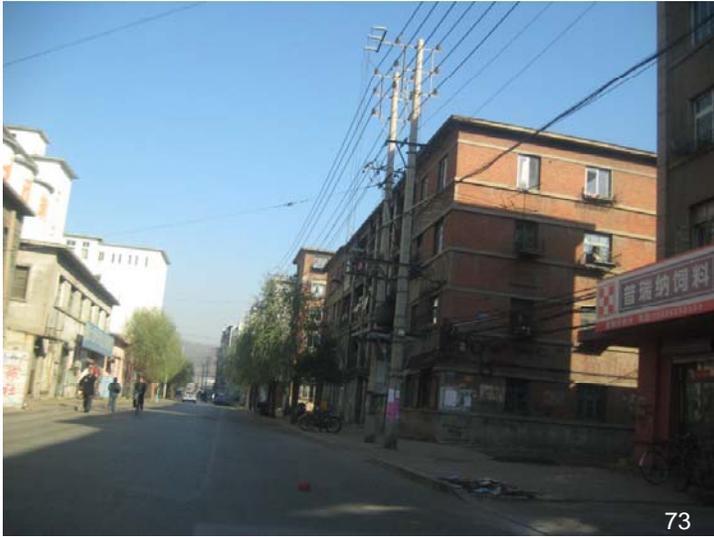
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FUSHUN RENTAL CAR TOUR

# Central Industrial Sector

URBAN TOURS BY RENTAL CAR

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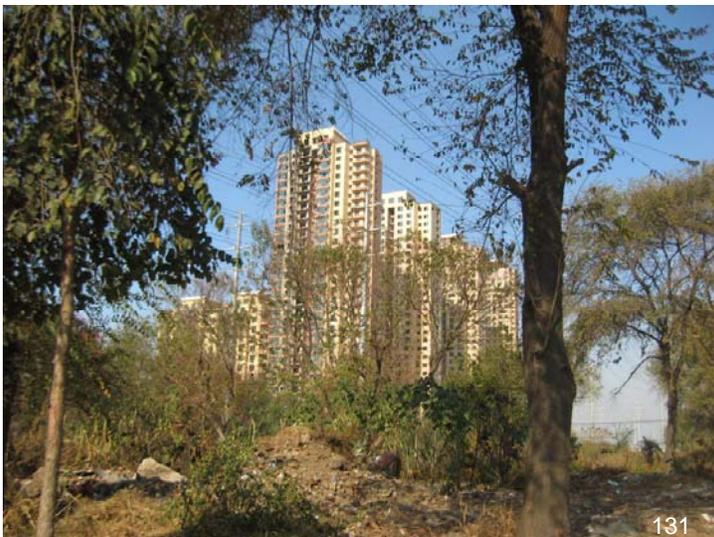
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