Fondly nicknamed “the world’s factory,” Dongguan was once a manufacturing boomtown consisting of a patchwork of townships. To diversify its traditional, labor-based economy with modern information and service economy sectors, the city of Dongguan is envisioning a new unifying urban center.

LSG Landscape Architecture was invited to provide a landscape master plan, guidelines, and implementation strategies. Teamed with Tsinghua Tongheng Urban Planning and Design Institute, LSG led an international team of design experts and conducted extensive research on cultural, environmental and social resources. The vision for the site was transformed with a detailed design for its waterfront, urban plazas, streetscape and internal courtyard spaces.

The plan is derived from Dongguan’s natural and social heritage and it features the “Guan Cao” reed, the city’s namesake. The new district will serve 180,000 workers that provide stimulus for the local and international economies.

The reed-inspired central landscape core connects the district to the city’s administrative center to the north and weaves together the entry plaza, financial plaza, metro plaza, central retail plaza, science & tech plaza, and the waterfront core. The waterfront core provides an array of recreational, ecological, and commercial functions.