

Public comment sought on Beijing-Xiongan rail

An environmental impact assessment for a new high-speed railway linking Beijing and Xiongan New Area was released on Saturday. It was the first public acknowledgment that a new line will be built.

China Railway Design Corp announced the assessment on its website and is seeking public comment.

According to the notice, the Beijing-Xiongan railway will start at Liying in Beijing's Daxing district, pass through Langfang and terminate at Xiongan East Railway Station—a total length of 100.3 kilometers.

The new line will also pass through the capital's new airport, which will be about 36 km from Liying and about 64 km from Xiongan New Area. The airport is expected to open in 2019.

The existence of a railway plan was reported in April by Tianjin News. According to the report, a planning map showed two railway stations in the new area—Xiongan Railway Station and Xiongan East Railway Station. The environmental assessment covers the latter.

According to an earlier report, the Tianjin-Xiongan railway route will connect the area with Tianjin's new railway station, which is also in the planning stages.

An older rail line is already in operation. Passengers must transfer in Baoding or Tianjin to get to the Xiongan area on high-speed rail.

Since July 7, four daily high-speed railway services have been started. The journey takes one hour and 50 minutes.

The new Beijing-Xiongan line follows a different route.

Xiongan New Area is located in the center of a triangular area defined by Beijing, Tianjin and Shijiazhuang, capital of Hebei province.

Located about 100 km southwest of downtown Beijing, the new area will mostly cover Xiongxian, Rongcheng and Anxin counties in Hebei.

It will eventually encompass 2,000 square kilometers, with a population of up to 2.5 million people.

Under the area's development plan, a major transportation network should be in place in Xiongan by 2020. The area will be well connected to Beijing, Tianjin and other cities in Hebei by 2022, when the Winter Olympic Games will be held.

Xiongan New Area is intended to house the bulk of Beijing's noncapital

functions, including some administrative and public institutions, company headquarters, financial institutions, higher education institutions, and science and technology units.