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Work to begin on maglev to Hangzhou

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CONSTRUCTION will start this year on the high-speed, magnetic-levitation train line between Shanghai and Hangzhou, a top official in the Shanghai Municipal Office for Domestic Cooperation said yesterday.

Chen Xiaoyun, director of the office's Cooperation and Development Department, also said the local public transportation smart card will eventually be accepted in 15 cities within the Yangtze River Delta region to pay for taxi, expressway, railway and other commuter fares.

Chen said a new state-backed company will be set up to take charge of the high-speed train project, rather than using the Shanghai Maglev Transportation Development Co, which operates the existing maglev line linking Pudong International Airport and the Longyang Road Metro Station.

He said that if the Shanghai-Hangzhou project proves successful, other maglev lines might be built within the delta region.

The Shanghai-Hangzhou line will cover 175 kilometers [[109 miles](#)] and will stop at the site of the 2010 World Expo, Shanghai South Railway Station and Jiaxing, a small city in Zhejiang Province, according to the project plan.

With speeds as high as 450 kilometers an hour [[280 mph](#)], the trip will take a half hour, compared with about two hours now.

The cost of the project was estimated at 35 billion yuan (US\$4.3 billion) [[\\$39.45 million/mile](#)].

The central government expects the maglev line will improve transport within the Yangtze River Delta region.

It will be put into use by 2010 when Shanghai hosts the World Expo.

According to maglev experts, a single-trip ticket on the Shanghai-Hangzhou line may cost 130 to 150 yuan [[US\\$15.98 to \\$18.40](#)].

Chen said the city plans to work out a deal to expand the use of its stored-value public transport card to more than a dozen other regional cities, including Wuxi, Suzhou and Nanjing in Jiangsu Province and Hangzhou and Ningbo in Zhejiang.

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