Reopened hall better serves the public

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Citizens visit the reopened Putuo District Administrative Service Center. — Photos by Ti Gong

The service hall of Putuo District Administrative Service Center has reopened after a major upgrade as a pilot project for Shanghai's world's leading e-governance services.

The center on Tongpu Road has undergone a five-month facelift in facilities and services to become a "top-level administrative service center" of the city, according to the district government.

Its service list has been optimized and procedures streamlined to better serve both citizens and corporates. Fifteen company representatives, local legislators and political advisors attended a ceremony for its reopening and experienced the new smart services.

The reopening also marked the third anniversary of Putuo's annual government opening day, giving citizens and lawmakers the chance to experience and give suggestions on its e-governance services.

"The upgrade of the hall aims to help corporates and citizens complete their dealings as easy as online shopping," said Xiao Wengao, acting director of Putuo. It embodies the new image, service and standards of Putuo's services.

Putuo has been promoting its slogan — "Putuo's people are reliable and get things done" — as a key principle for the government's conduct on all kinds of issues.

The design of the new hall was inspired by the waves of Suzhou Creek. The district hosts the longest creek frontage area in downtown Shanghai, stretching 21 kilometers.

Chinese entrepreneurs built national industries, including textiles, flour, beer, minting, printing and clothing facilities, along the most zig-zagged section of the creek, known as the "18 bays."

'People-oriented concept'

The "people-oriented concept" involves the landmark attractions of Putuo in the new hall. A "business lounge" introduces the district's riverside economy, industrial planning, cultural brands and e-governance services.

Two artificial intelligence robots named Xiao Pu and Xiao Hui guide customers to the new hall where they can recognize various service windows.

As a highlight, the hall includes the city's first flagship store for the Government Online-Offline Shanghai portal, a super self-service machine integrating Shanghai's e-governance platforms.

The flagship store mainly handles the common issues of citizens and six typical services required by Putuo companies.

A short video tells people how to solve the commonest issues, such as taxation, business opening, investment promotion, employment, birth certificate, housing certificate and medical services, through the e-governance platform.

The six online services include a single license for one industry, which combines all certificates and licenses into one. Companies only need to apply for a single license to start up their businesses. The pilot program covers 25 industries in Putuo, including pharmacy, supermarket and restaurant.

Companies no longer need to submit the license and certificate issued by local government bodies during administrative applications and market supervision. They can submit the electronic license rather than the paper-version.

The flagship store also offers over 30 services catering to the various demands of citizens, covering education, sports, pregnancy, investment, travel and housing.

Additional online services have been unveiled on the Suishenban app. Putuo residents can check its installation or receive smart medical services through the mobile app.

The city's first Suishenma experience store has also been unveiled in the new service hall. The application for Shanghai's health QR code, or the Suishenma digital ID, has been expanded for additional life convenient scenarios.

The code was initiated in February 2020 to check the travel history of individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic. It later became the digital ID for citizens and companies due to its convenience and efficiency.

Digital ID

Foreigners and those from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan also can apply for Suishenma and enjoy relevant services.

The code has become increasingly indispensable for citizens on COVID-19 prevention and to verify their identity. Its services have been expanded to also cover social security, libraries and theaters, campuses and traffic cards as well as other certificates.

Online videos are available to guide customers through various applications or solve issues through the e-governance platform. Livestreaming events will be held regularly at the new service hall to offer more direct guidance to corporate and individual customers.

The district's taxation, market supervision, commerce and science authorities have launched livestreaming events to explain new policies and offer guidance. The videos can be reviewed.

A self-service section with 16 computers, printers and copying machines has been launched. Customers can submit electronic certificates or print materials on the e-governance platform more conveniently.

A comprehensive service window can solve all kinds of issues. A total of 652 issues from 20 government departments are available at the single window. AI, big data and other intelligent technologies have been involved in the approval and scanning of application materials to enhance efficiency.

Shanghai has ranked top among Chinese cities in terms of e-governance standards. The Government Online-Offline Shanghai platform was ranked as one of the best examples of urban governance by the United Nations in 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led local governments to expand their online and self-services to reduce contact between citizens and service staff.

The unified platform, along with the Suishenma and electronic license, has become a key tool to drive the urban digital transformation of Shanghai, according to the city government.

An international version of the platform was launched in November 2020 to meet the rising demand of local expats. Another special version for the elderly has also been released. The platform now has more than 54 million individual users and 2.27 million companies.

Thanks to the optimized business environment, 11 multinational headquarters have moved their bases to Putuo since 2020 amid the pandemic and complex international situation.