



**Kam Wing Chan** 30 October 2011 at 6:28 pm #

Yes, it is quite right that those ten cities are not well known to outsiders, the real reason, however, being that they, as cities we commonly understand the term, are not really that large. Those population figures in this article are rather misleading: they are administrative region figures. In other words, each unit includes the city and the often very large rural areas and rural population. Therefore, as city population sizes, those numbers are highly exaggerated.

If we take only the urbanized areas, as I did using 2000 census figures (we are waiting for the 2010 census data), none of them made to the top 10 largest cities in China (see <http://faculty.washington.edu/kwchan/Chan-article-EACWtr10.pdf>, Table 1). In fact, the largest on this “unknown city” list in 2000 was Changchun. It had only 2.7 urban million population and was the 15th largest city in China.

Most of us have never heard of those biggest Chinese cities because they are simply NOT really that large, especially in the Chinese context.

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[...] We note that while this analysis covers China's most important housing growth markets, the combined floor space additions in hundreds of smaller cities will likely have a substantial impact on national construction-related commodity demand. In this vein, we suggest that readers wishing to gain a greater understanding of China's urban expansion potential examine our analysis of 10 key lesser-known Chinese cities. [...]