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## **2022 Six Smart Tourism Attractions Selected:** ***Ulsan, Cheongju, Gyeongju, Namwon, Yangyang, and Hadong***

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Minister HWANG HEE, MCST) together with the Korea Tourism Organization (President AHN Young-Bae, KTO) selected six cities (counties) in Korea as the Smart Tourism Attractions: **Gyeongju, Namwon, Ulsan, and Cheongju**, while two counties are **Yangyang** and **Hadong**. Cities selected as “*Smart Tourist Attractions*” will incorporate state-of-the-art ICT to attract tourists at home and abroad to provide diverse experiences and satisfy visitors. This project will also analyze accumulated tourism information and continuously enhance tourism infrastructure.

Considering the scale of the area and their special features, cities were selected under the three main themes. The first theme is “Cities with good transportation infrastructure” such as airport and railways. The second is “Cities with travel attractions”, and the third is “Cities with hidden Gem”. Cities in the third category are municipal governments with less than 150,000 population. After the initial screening process, 12 cities out of 40 were able to go for the final round. To select the final cities, evaluation for detailed project plan and site visit were conducted. In particular, feasibility of the business plan, the local government's will for business promotion, and the specialized smart tourism implementation plan were highly considered in assessment. The finally selected six municipal governments will be granted with 3.5 billion KRW for the project budget to develop as a comprehensive smart tourist destinations focusing on special features for each areas.

As a result, **Ulsan**<sup>1</sup> and **Cheongju**<sup>2</sup> were selected as cities with good transportation infrastructure network, **Gyeongju**<sup>3</sup> and **Namwon**<sup>4</sup> as the cities for tourists attractions, and **Yangyang**<sup>5</sup> and **Hadong**<sup>6</sup> chosen as the spots with hidden gem.

**Ulsan** and **Cheongju** have good transportation infrastructure that provides a vision of linking local tourism resources centered on major transport hubs. Based on convenient transportation infrastructure such as Ulsan Station, Taehwagang Station, and Ulsan Airport, Ulsan has improved convenience by applying technology to the entire journey to the “*Jangsaengpo Whale Culture Zone*<sup>7</sup>”, showing realistic technology focusing on Ulsan’s representative tourism attractions “*Whale*”.

**Cheongju** plans to recreate the original downtown area, to become as a “*Digilog*”, by incorporating good characteristics of recording cultural city and convenient transportation system such as Osong Station and Cheongju International Airport. With these advantages, the tourists spots will become “*Digilog*”, where digital and analogue meet.

Focusing on special spots, cities in these category plan their visions centering on smart tourism service. **Gyeongju**, selected as a tourist attraction type, will develop immersive digital history and cultural contents at the *Daereungwon district*<sup>8</sup> applying metaverse and providing augmented reality of relics for the *Silla* dynasty period.

**Namwon** will feature *Gwanghallu Pavilion*<sup>9</sup>, providing cultural contents that combine digital technology with rich traditional cultural facilities to create an

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<sup>1</sup> South Korea’s seventh-largest metropolitan city in southern part of South Korea with the population of over 1.1 million.

<sup>2</sup> The capital and the largest city of North Chungcheong Province in South Korea.

<sup>3</sup> A city in the southeastern corner of North Gyeongsang province in South Korea.

<sup>4</sup> A city in North Jeolla Province, South Korea.

<sup>5</sup> A county in Gangwon Province, South Korea with the population approximately 31,000 people.

<sup>6</sup> A county in South Gyeongsang Province, South Korea.

<sup>7</sup> Reproduces the scene of an old whaling village through areas like Whale Plaza, Prehistoric Whale Experience Garden.

<sup>8</sup> Excavated in 1973, a total of 11,526 artifacts were discovered within tomb, including Cheonmado, considered as Korea’s first artwork.

<sup>9</sup> Constructed in 1419, Gwanghallu is one of the Joseon dynasty’s most exemplary structures.

immersive experience tourism city where visitors can experience the joy and spirit of Koreans.

**Yangyang**, a well-known spot for surfers, improves the convenience of surfing tourists who mainly visit this place by integrating a wave forecast service that informs in real-time basis, issue mobile surfing lesson certificate, and provide lesson information as the target for “*Surfy Beach Road*”.

With the theme of tea, **Hadong** will transform the area utilizing the green tea industry special zone in Hwagae-myeon into a place where you can enjoy your own customized tea and experience different experiences such as immersive content.