Beijing South's new railway station is a dynamic new landmark station that helped transform Beijing into the global metropolis for the 2008 Olympics Games.

The new Beijing South Station is one of four major railway stations for the new high-speed rail network implemented within PRC. It was a core Olympic project endorsed by the Beijing Government and a critical part of upgrading and extension of the previous existing facility. Situated on a 32 hectare site, approximately half a kilometre from the city’s old station in Fengtai district between the second and third ring roads, the station serves as a high-speed intercity rail link connecting Beijing with the Yangtze River Delta cities of Tianjin and Shanghai, with a catchment area of 270 million people.

Completed in 2008, the Beijing Station is a fully integrated multi-modal transportation hub that serves as a “gateway” to the capital and a vital link in PRC’s new high-speed intercity network. A major urban building and master plan, Beijing Station is one of the largest contemporary railway stations in the world designed for a passenger turnover of 286,500 passengers a day, 105 million passengers annually by 2030. To accommodate these vast numbers a new model in railway station design was developed, integrating the multimodal transport interchange facility with a vertical separation strategy designed to make passenger traffic flows direct, convenient and highly efficient.

The project was designed by the Hong Kong office of TFP Farrells (TFP) in collaboration with the Third Railway Survey and Design Institute. In July 2009, the Beijing South Station project received the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) International Award for its design. It also received the American Institute of Architects Hong Kong Chapter Merit Award for Architecture in 2009. The design is loosely based on the nearby Temple of Heaven and incorporates traditional Chinese architectural motifs.

Similar to a modern airport, arrivals and departures take place on separate levels, allowing for direct and efficient passenger interchanges. The station consists of a central departure and check-in hall with a capacity to handle 6,500 passengers a day. An interchange hall in the basement supports intermodal transport for about 87,000 people a day. The station is connected by two mass transit lines and features 909 car parking spaces, 38 bus bays and 52 taxi bays.

The high-speed rail network is an opportunity for PRC to show that it is a modern, progressive country and open and willing to collaborate with international designers with strong conceptual and international design standards to the nation’s rail stations.