

Citizen's Use of National Policy : A Case Study of Hakata

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Citizen's Use of National Policy

—A Case Study of Hakata—

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1. Inner-City Problems in Japanese Cities

1.1 Soaring Land Prices and Inner-City Problems

One of the important elements of inner-city problems is the increasing number of inner-city residents moving out, for example, to the suburbs. As a result, once flourishing and densely populated area has been turning into thinly populated and bleak towns. To stem this problem, for example, the Osaka City Government plans early in 1987 to enforce an ordinance stipulating that all space above the second floor in new medium- and high-rise buildings in some areas must be exclusively used for residential housing. The plan is said to be the first of its kind in Japan, and is inspiring the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to also consider similar measures. Masaya Nishio formally presented the plan, which was about one year in the making, at the city assembly's plenary session in March 1994.

The plan is a part of Osaka's efforts to attract more residents to municipal under-populated areas along the JR Osaka Loop Line, as well as along expressways and streets with four or more lanes throughout the city. The measure is patterned after a similar system in Paris that has proven successful — a plan in which space in commercial buildings is shared between businesses and residents to prevent the outflow of residents to suburban areas.

Why then has the population in the central areas of the cities been flowing to their outskirts? One of the commonly agreed causes is soaring land prices. After the so called 'bubble economy' burst, the land-price index of commercial

zones in six of Japan's large cities rose by an average 15.4% in the six months to the end of March 1987, while those of housing and industrial zones increased by 12.7% and 12.1%, respectively. Their average index increase stood at 13.4%. According to the survey held in 1987 by the private research institute on land prices of 1,400 areas in 140 cities throughout Japan, excluding Okinawa, the nation-wide average index increased 3.4% to 140.2 against the 100 level set at the end of March 1980. The index of prices for industrial zone lands in the six cities rose an average 1.6% in the half-year to September 1985, 3.2% during the next half-year period to March 1986, and 4.4% in April-September 1986. The index of the five cities other than Tokyo recorded a single digit, semi-annual increase in March 1987, a fact that indicates Tokyo has contributed much to the most recent sharp average increase of 12.1%, or an annual ratio of 17.1%, of the six large cities. The rise mainly stems from the rocketing prices of coastal areas in Tokyo, the institute says.¹⁾

But, one year later, standard land prices in Japanese cities surged by an average 23.8%, which was the sharpest year-to-year jump since 1972 according to the National Land Agency. Furthermore, the average year-to-year increases for 10 cities across the nation with the top land-price gains, stood at 59.9%.²⁾

Surging land prices have significantly contributed to hollowing a central city by pushing up prospective profits which landowners could gain as well as such land tax as property tax, inheritance tax, landholding tax, land-gift tax, and urban-planning tax. Increasingly higher land prices and taxes would affect the attitudes of the people who otherwise wanted to keep living in their residence unfortunately — for some, fortunately — located in the central city. Because of the high level of capital gains taxes, owner-occupiers currently have little incentive to sell these enormous areas of inefficiently used land.

Their willingness or incentive to sell the land can be classified into at least three parts, as follows, although it should be realized that these incentives practically tend to fuse together:

- 1) They simply can not afford to clear such economic burdens on their land-ownership as tax or ordinary rates and charges.

¹ The Japan Economic Journal Jul. 18, 1987, p.18.

² Kokudocho, White Paper on the Land (*Tochi Hakusho*), 1990.

- 2) They would like to enjoy more comfortable living conditions available in outer-suburbs.
- 3) They would like to gain a considerable amount of money, say, to start a new business.

National tax policies have been spurring these incentives by an exemption from taxes on land sales profits in the case where an owner-occupier sells a house to buy a new dwelling. Incidentally, these policies were intended to curb incredible rises of land prices in the downtown parts of metropolitan areas. But, they also had a negative effect; people selling inner city dwelling land for vast sums were forcing up suburban land prices as they sought new dwellings of equal value. The result of this new policy is a natural reluctance by inner city dwellers to sell land badly needed for office or high-rise residential development. Consequently the land price spiral is forced up a few more notches.

1.2 What's Wrong with the Inner-City ?

Among Japanese Cities it is probably in Tokyo that the inner-city problems are getting most serious. For example, in Chiyoda-ku, where the headquarters of Japanese top companies and governmental organizations are concentrated, the nighttime population is only about 50 thousand, whereas the daytime population is more than ten-time larger. The number of students in almost every primary and secondary school in Chiyoda-ku keeps declining so as to make it difficult to maintain more than two classes in the same grade.

So then, what is wrong with the inner-city problem ? As it is often called "a doughnut phenomenon," depopulation is the core of the problem. Depopulation in the downtown area is in a sense an ironical phenomenon because it seems to occur in the shadow of flamboyant urban development. Increasing depopulation impacted on the various aspects of lives of the local community and urban activities. Let us list up few:

- 1) Declining local community (= *machi*) consciousness and weakening of the local community itself; depopulation may mean alienation of the community.
- 2) Resulting unbalanced demographical structure in the local community;

often younger generations leave and older generations remain.

- 3) Decaying of traditional activities which formerly joined residents together such as festivals (*matsuri*).
- 4) More unused public services, facilities, and utilities in the community.
- 5) Declining capacity of the community to cope with disasters and crimes.
- 6) Increasing costs for commuters who have moved to the suburb from inner city where they are still working.

Factors causing these problems can be classified into the following three categories:

- 1) Social and economic factors generating depopulation.
- 2) Factors concerning (housing and) housing environment, and (the land and) land use.
- 3) Factors concerning population and communities.

Let us look into each category in detail. We may find that in each category causes and effects of inner-city depopulation are closely connected.

1.3 General Factors Causing Inner City Problems

1.3.1 Social and Economic Factors

- 1) Soaring land prices tend to make housing cost and rent too expensive to afford especially for younger families.
- 2) Discordance may arise between “one room” apartments — which is similar to a studio apartment — and the local community.
- 3) Changing use of apartments can causes worsening neighborhood relations.
- 4) Mixed land uses, sometimes brought about by poorly conceived planning of business offices in residential areas, tend to worsen living conditions in the neighborhood.
- 5) People tend to move out to the suburbs because they prefer to own their house and to live in a single dwelling, or because of higher mobility.
- 6) Buildings other than residential ones tend to be built after residents move out as a result of *jiage*³⁾ or sale of land.

³ *Jiage* means an endeavor of unrights on or among the lots sometimes using such illegal means as intimidation.

- 7) Being forced to move out and/or to sell land from pressure of higher property tax and/or inheritance tax.
- 8) Small shops selling daily necessities are moving out or changing their business since their business is less profitable.

1.3.2 Factors Concerning Housing Environment and Land Use

A) Housing Environment

- 1) Increase of disorderly mixed usage of land, e.g. a noisy karaoke bar in the same block as family homes, which may cause sunlight shortage, noise, vibrations etc.
- 2) Less small shops selling daily necessities brings inconvenience to daily life.
- 3) Less parking lots and higher charges for parking.
- 4) Incoming traffic may put residential areas in danger.

B) Standards for housing and building

- 1) Building standards stipulated by the Building Standards Act are inadequate to prevent the construction of overly small houses on overly narrow sites.
- 2) Older wooden and small houses crowded in a narrow block seem to be one of the obstacles both to adequately protecting people from disasters and to urban renewal.
- 3) Existence of houses which contravene minimum standards of building construction.

C) Land Use

- 1) Less effective land use because there are some unused or underutilized land.
- 2) No more space for further building and unused upper space owing to underutilized land.
- 3) Densely inhabited communities with insufficient infrastructures and narrow streets.
- 4) Shortage of comfortable and extra open spaces.

1.3.3 Factors Concerning Population and Communities

A) Population

- 1) Decrease of the residential population in the area.
- 2) An unbalanced demographical and generation structure.

- 3) Declining educational and nurturing environment for children caused by decrease of school children and almost unused school facilities.
 - 4) Increase of aged and/or single person households.
- B) Community
- 1) Moving out of younger families has brought about a slowdown of communal activities such as traditional festivals (*matsuri*).
 - 2) Increasing indifference between neighbors brought about by growing prevalence of single person households and shorter cycle of moving-in and moving-out.
 - 3) Lowering capability of the community to protect its residents from crime.
 - 4) Management problem of vacant lands and houses.

1.4 National Policies to Cope with Inner City Problems

As we have seen, an inner-city problem is caused by many factors, the most important of which is undoubtedly soaring land prices. A deserted town may be the image of the rundown, inner-city. To prevent this image from becoming a reality, national government, especially the Ministry of Construction (MOC), has provided local governments with an array of policies——most of them are called *jigyo*, and, “program” or “project” may be better than “policy” to put the word into English —— supposedly effective for inner-city problems. These policies are selective and usually coupled with a grant (*hojyokin*). A Local government can apply for the policy it thinks suitable. Since all the application may not be approved by MOC, heads of the local governments usually have to appeal to MOC bureaucrats concerned for the approval by explaining at MOC in Tokyo how much their community needs the policy. This appeal process is called *chinjyo*. The Japanese word *chinjyo* literally doesn't mean to explain logically and concisely but instead to demonstrate a pleader's sentiments. The more passionate you are, the more responsive MOC bureaucrats are likely to be to your requests. That's why some say that in Japanese bureaucratic politics it is not logic but sensitivity that matters.

MOC's policies to cope with inner-city problem can be divided into the following three sets:

- 1) Housing supply by motivating private sector
- 2) Housing supply through a regional renewal project by cooperation between government and private sector
- 3) Housing supply by a public organization

Here we briefly look at the first two sets:

1.4.1 Housing Supply by Motivating Private Sector

In this policy sets are included a number of *seido* (system) and *jigyo* (project). As it is probably not in the scope of this paper to delineate them, we focus on two policy sets: one is housing supply inducement by deregulating volume ratio (*yosekiritsu*), and another is public support of housing supply and management by private sector

Yosekiritsu is one of the fundamental regulatory measures stipulated by Articles 52 and 53 of Building Standards Act, which means that, for example, when the volume ratio in a district is 200 percent and there is a lot of 200 square meter (sm), you can build a house of which total floor area must be less than 400sm (that is $200\text{sm} \times 200\% = 400\text{sm}$). Incidentally, *Kenpeiritsu* (a plot ratio) is also a key standard; when *kenpeiritsu* is, for example, 60 percent and your building site is 200sm in total, you can build a house of which plot must be less than 120sm (that is $200\text{sm} \times 60\% = 120\text{sm}$). So the more *yosekiritsu* and *Kenpeiritsu* are permitted by public agency, the taller and wider house, apartment, or office building you can build, and consequently the more profit you can make from renting them. Both *yosekiritsu* and *kenpeiritsu* are different depending on districts specified by the City Plan of each municipality.

Private sector, more specifically landowners or developers, will be motivated to build a new building if they are given the incentive of deregulating *yosekiritsu*. To achieve this aim, MOC has the following two policies:

- 1) Volume-incentive type area planning for specified land-use

A depopulating inner-city area can be designated to the settlement policy development district following an application by the local government or an association of the residents in the area. In the district, different *yosekiritsu* (volume ratio) apply, to housing part for family use of the same building compared to office part respectively. That is, if you build a new building

with apartments for family use for example, 120 percent of normal *yosekiritsu* will be permitted to the apartment part of the building under the condition that the minimum area of each room shall be over 65sm and the site of the building shall be more than 300sm.

2) Urban housing comprehensive design system

To encourage efficient floor planning such as providing public open space and apartments of which total floor area is more than 25 percent of that of the whole building, extra *yosekiritsu* is admitted to all the building, that is, to not only the residential parts but also to other parts which are non-residential. Extra volume ratio is either 175 percent larger than basic ratio or less than 300 percent plus basic ratio.

Public support to housing supply and management by private sector consist of policies like Public Lease Housing Supply Program formulated by MOC. In the program a public agency like a housing supply public corporation of a local government leases newly built private apartments in the inner-city area, and in turn leases them to a family who wants to live in the area, bearing half of the rent. An owner of the apartments can secure the rent income and the family tenants have only to pay half of the rent which is otherwise too expensive to pay to live in the inner-city area. This may be one of the most typically economic-incentive providing policies.

1.4.2 Housing Supply through a Regional Renewal Project by Cooperation of Government and Private Sector

Comprehensive Housing Condition Improvement Program may represent these sets of policy. This program is not limited to an inner-city area, but exists mainly to effect the improvement of an inner city area. In this project MOC can allow a subsidy to those projects that are undertaken by a local government and the residents to improve the area where houses are too old and/or sites are obviously too narrow. To acquire the subsidy, a local government has to demolish some of the derelict buildings and construct public facilities such as roads and parks, and to build apartments both for sale and rent, part of which are for the former residents; the residents are required to make a collective effort to rebuild their houses jointly and to reorganize their property rights so as to create public space for roads and parks and to have their own sites wide

enough to build a multistory building where their new apartments may be located. This is why close cooperation between local government and the residents is required.

2. A Case Study of Hakata

2.1 Where and What is Hakata ?

Fukuoka-shi is the eighth largest city in Japan with a population of about 1.26 million (as of 1994). As Fukuoka is often called "central management city of Kyushu", most of the headquarters of large corporations covering Kyushu and national government departments are located there. Some people are critical of "Fukuoka Uni-polar Concentration." Mayor Koichi Kuwahara — an ex-CEO of Ministry of Labor and the president of Mayors Association — claims that Fukuoka should establish itself as a leading Asian city to get out of the shadows of the more internationally well known Tokyo and Osaka. As a matter of fact, after successfully hosting the Asia Pacific Exposition in 1989, Fukuoka launched the annual "Asia Month" in 1990, and recently hosted the 1995 Universiade athletic games.

Fukuoka has two downtown areas: one is Tenjin and the other is Hakata, both of which are adjacent to each other and divided by Naka-River. Whereas Tenjin area has developed as a commercial and business center since World War II, Hakata has a long history ranging over 2000 years.

Hakata has undergone great changes every four centuries due to its position as Japan's main gateway to the outside world. In the 8th century, a guest palace called Korokan was built in the area to receive foreign visitors and the government office in charge of foreign diplomacy was located about 15 kilometers southeast of what is now Fukuoka.

In the 12th century, Japan's first national dictator, Taira no Kiyomori, built in the area the port Sode no Minato, believed to be Japan's first artificially constructed harbor. It served as the center of Japanese-Sung trade.

In the 16th century, Kamiya Sotan and other great traders appeared in the Fukuoka area, developing Hakata as the country's most powerful free trade district.

In 1587, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who had almost succeeded in unifying the

fragmented states, enforced a drastic renewal plan for war shattered Hakata. This renewal plan called *machiwari* (city zoning) and even nowadays has much to do with the inner city problems of modern Hakata. First of all Hideyoshi designated a large square block of 100 ha (about 40 square mile), and then, laid four streets running from north to south and three streets running from east to west. Finally he established seven districts partitioned by those seven streets. This new city created by Hideyoshi is now called Old Hakata.

These districts were called *nagare* and were permitted by Hideyoshi to be self-autonomous in government and trade activities. In each district the shape of a residential allotment was very oblong and its size was 3.6m in width and 27m in depth. Even now in some parts of Hakata, we can find a site with the same shape and size as we can in other ancient cities like Kyoto. Then, how did such a peculiar shaped site come to exist? The main reason was to evade a tax. Because Hideyoshi and his successors decided the amount of property tax according to the width of a (taxpayer's) property, property owners tried to make the width of a building lot as narrow as possible to pay only a minimum amount of the tax.

In the winter and early summer of 1945, carpet-bombing by the U.S. Air Force reduced major Japanese cities to rubble. The city of Fukuoka was bombed on June 19th. Though the western part of Hakata was completely destroyed and renewed after war, the eastern part survived the bombs, and consequently, the legacy, that is, the historical land use, remained almost untouched as it was 400 years ago. In the northeastern part of Hakata, you can find narrow streets lined on both sides with oblong-shaped traditional houses, although some of them are being replaced by studio apartments, office buildings, and parking lots.

Most of the houses of that district have a wide and open entrance hall into which neighbors can casually enter. Children can safely play on the narrow streets because of traffic restrictions. People know each other well. For example, a naughty boy may be scolded by his neighbor and mother can feel free to leave her baby in a neighbor's care. When you find soy sauce is short while cooking, you would just ask your neighbors to lend it. It is a community in the traditional sense.

2.2 Yamakasa Festival and Community Autonomy

Old Hakata now consists of four primary school districts: Oohama, Naraya, Reisen, and Gokusyo. (See, figure 4) Though Naraya and Reisen were bombed and destroyed by the carpet-bombing by B-29 in 1945, the community mentioned above has remained. This is mainly because old Hakata has retained a traditional festival called *Hakata gion yamakasa* (or *yamakasa* for short).

Yamakasa Festival is a big sacred event of Kushida shrine in honor of the guardian god of Hakata. The festival has been held almost every year since about 1240. On the last day of the festival held, annually on July 15th, seven groups of young men in happi-coats carry seven gorgeously decorated floats called *yamakasa*, each weighing about one ton (2,204 pounds) and zigzag through the town on a fixed course. The group that runs fastest wins the honor (but no prize).

Every year *yamakasa* is prepared and organized by the semiformal organization called *nagare*. *Nagare* used to be an autonomous district created by Hideyoshi's urban renewal project. But it had functioned not only as a local government institution but also a festival preparation organization. Now *nagare* has lost its governmental functions and operates as a festival preparation organization.

Preparing and participating in *yamakasa* is a vital part of people's life in Old Hakata. They would seriously say, "*Yamakasa* exists, therefore Hakata exists."

What is characteristic of *yamakasa* festival is that the preparation and organizing process is quite autonomous and self-supported, whereas nowadays many traditional festivals tend to be sponsored in many ways, or even organized, by local government itself. This autonomy and self-organization may be based on the community characteristic to Old Hakata. If it were not for the community, there would be no *yamakasa* festival.

2.3 Inner City Problems in Hakata

There are at least three important inner city problems in Old Hakata. The first is a demographical one. As Table 1 shows, the population in the four school districts has continued declining in the last three decades. In three of the districts the population was reduced to almost one third while that of Fukuoka

	Reisen	Gokusyo	Oohama	Naraya	Fukuoka City
Year 1960	10,817	11,120	8,716	11,031	647,122
Year 1993	3,335	2,523	3,294	5,728	1,214,122
1960/1993	31.0%	23.0%	38.0%	52.0%	188.0%

School District	Number of Households		Ratio of 1980 to 1990	Average Number of Household Members		Ratio of Single Person Households
	1980	1990	(%)	1980	1990	(%)
Reisen	1,878	1,826	-2.8%	2.30	1.95	51.50%
Gokusho	1,149	1,057	-8.0%	2.45	2.04	51.10%
Oohama	1,255	1,439	14.7%	2.47	2.01	53.20%
Naraya	2,124	2,298	8.2%	2.44	2.15	47.60%
Fukuoka City	397,013	490,785	23.6%	2.74	2.52	36.20%

School District	Children Population Ratio (%)		Aged Population Ratio (%)	
	1980	1990	1980	1990
Reisen	15.7	11.5	11.3	14.4
Gokusho	17.8	10.6	17.3	18.2
Oohama	15.1	9.2	14.2	15.4
Naraya	16.8	13.4	11.8	14.9
Fukuoka City	23.2	18.7	6.9	9.1

School District	1972	1977	1982	1987	1992	1977/ 1992 (%)
Reisen	12 367	12 350	11 311	9 267	6 156	-50
Gokusho	12 357	12 316	7 226	6 177	6 113	-50
Oohama	12 436	12 306	11 177	9 137	6 125	-30
Naraya	18 436	12 306	12 177	12 137	12 125	-31
Fukuoka City	75,641	92,205	105,979	98,483	90,855	-14

City as a whole has almost doubled.

Furthermore, as Table 2 shows, the average number of household members has declined while figures for single-person-households are larger than that of Fukuoka City all together. Thus, Table 3 clearly shows that in Old Hakata the population under the age of 15 has declined while the population over the age of 65 has increased. This means that in the four school districts families have less children and members of the households are getting fewer and older. As a matter of fact a downtown is more bearable for the aged and younger single people because they do not need more rooms but do need more inexpensive housing and easy access to urban conveniences and recreational outlets.

On the other hand, families with younger children may feel adversely affected by rising housing costs and fewer and narrower rooms in the downtown area. It is no wonder that some of them have made up their minds to move out to the suburbs to have a more spacious house. Table 4 demonstrates this tendency : students of each district are getting fewer and fewer every year. According to Nishinippon Shinbun dated 1993. 1. 26, at Reisen Primary School new first grade students were only 11 in 1993, which is 20 less than in 1992, and at Gokusho Primary School only 10 in 1993, which is 10 less than in 1992. Only 10 or 11 students make up one class at the primary schools in the downtown of a prospering metropolitan city ! This is not a story of a small school in the really depopulated boondocks.

The second problem concerns *yamakasa*. Only a couple of decades ago, the festival was prepared and practiced almost exclusively by the groups of residents in Old Hakata itself. Recently, however, nearly 70 percent of the participants in the festival (annually from July 10th to 15th) are coming from outside of Old Hakata. But preparations for the festival are still made mainly by the residents. As the residents are getting fewer, the preparations are likely to be more difficult to make. Especially, if the youth population keeps declining, there will be so fewer younger and active participating residents (called *akatenoggui*) traditionally when a youth's contributions to the festival preparation are admitted to be good enough, he is allowed to wear a red towel (*tenugui*) around his head — that the festival itself will become no more viable.

The third problem is an economic one. In Hakata area, retail and wholesale trade used to prosper. But as another commercial center, Tenjin, was on the rise and the land prices soared, traders in Hakata were forced to move to Tenjin or suburb on distribution centers. Now the economy in Hakata is stagnant. There are very few people in the evening whereas neighboring Tenjin area is busy and crowded even past midnight.

2.4 Revitalizing Hakata

2.4.1 A Hakata Renaissance Plan

In March 1992 a voluntary group published a plan entitled 'Hakata Renaissance Plan 1992.' This group was mostly comprised of housewives and dedicated *yamakasa* organizers from such various occupations as a rice shop owner, a president of a small construction company, an architect, a university professor, etc. most of who were in their forties. They formed two formal group ; one is Hakata Brand Council and the other is Common Workshop for Study of Hakata. The main purpose of the former is to make policies for revitalization and implement them while the function of the latter is to hold a monthly workshop in which anyone who is interested in Old Hakata can participate, present opinions and discuss them. As a matter of fact, the workshop involves bureaucrats of Fukuoka City, Fukuoka Prefecture, and Kyushu Branch of MOC who otherwise rarely met together.

Their concern was that *yamakasa* might not survive drastic depopulation and this time-honored festival may have to be discontinued. Obviously it was this

concern that highly motivated their endeavor to revitalize the community (= *machidukuri*) in Old Hakata. Some of them were appointed as members of Downtown Settlement Planning Committee of Fukuoka City in May 1992 and their opinions strongly influenced the final report of the Committee published in May 1993 entitled *Plan for Downtown Settlement in Fukuoka*. Consequently this plan and their activities became a substantial base of following policy development to cope with inner city problems in Hakata.

In Renaissance Plan a number of proposals were made including founding Hakata Corridor running through four school districts, Asian Bazaar, Water-front Zone and so on. Among the proposals, however, what is most striking is (1) the two models of Hakata-type Urban Housing to halt depopulation and (2) the establishment of a Revitalization Council in each district as follows.

2.4.2 Models of Hakata-type Urban Housing

A) Low Building Type (See Figure 1)

As in the sites fronting a narrower street Building Standards Act permits a building of less than 3 or 4 stories, either single or cooperative (or joint) housing is feasible. In either case it is desirable to create as much communal space as possible by uniting open spaces in designing a new building.

B) Middle Building Type (See Figure 2)

As in the sites fronting a wider street of 10 to 15 meters wide Building Standards Act permits a building of less than 7 or 8 stories, it is inevitable to unite more than two sites, that is, to coalesce more than two property rights in to one right (= *gappitsu*). These larger buildings can accommodate apartments for family use. Even for those apartments otherwise possibly independent, isolated, and indifferent to each other, the good-old-days neighborhood can be created by joining buildings with a bridge built every several stories.

2.4.3 Making a Supporting System for Revitalizing Hakata

A) Establishing a Revitalization Council (*machidukuri-kyogikai*)

In each school district, as in other districts of Fukuoka City, there are Residents Association for each block (*cyonaikai*), the Aged People Association (*rojinkai*), PTA, Woman's Association (*fujinkai*), Voluntary Firefighters Corps (*shobodan*), etc. Among them *chonaikai* are supposed to represent all the residents, they are actually the lower reaches of city government, but

what it does is merely to carry instructions, documents and information of the city government to the individual household. The group thought that the *chonaikai* would not be able to play an important and active part in the revitalization movement, therefore they proposed that a new voluntary organization, a Revitalization Council (*machidukuri-kyogikai*), should be made by involving existing various organizations including *chonaikai*. The main reason for this proposal is that the existing community organizations tend to be under a seniority system in which younger and active leaders may feel awkward in expressing their candid opinions. The proposal also calls for a liaison committee among the revitalization councils which inherit the legacy of residents self-government.

B) Forming a Task Force

As the building sites in Old Hakata have a very oblong shape, an agreement is required before any redevelopment can be undertaken among the owners or between the owners and their neighbors. The agreement can be reached only when all interested parties have a clear understanding about the prospects for business, measures to counter inheritance tax, or the mortgage value of the rebuilt assets as well as the legal and architectural methods used, financial supports by the city government, and so on. To facilitate understanding, the proposal says, a task force comprised of various professional members should be formed to discuss, to devise, and to save effective policies for revitalization with the residents groups.

A line of policies set forth here by the group called “machidukuri mafia” was to become a criterion for formulating its own policies or for selecting national policies supposedly adequate to the inner city problems in Hakata. (See Figure 3)

2.5 Selection and Application of National Policies

Fukuoka City Government has not shown much interest in revitalizing Old Hakata. Fukuoka City and its metropolitan area have enjoyed a considerable increase in population. The city economy has been prospering as a whole. Its new business and commercial center, Tenjin, continues growing. It is no wonder that these factors have made the city government less interested in

problem of depopulation and policies to cope with inner city difficulties in Old Hakata.

But the group succeeded in persuading the senior officers of Bureau of City Building of Fukuoka City into adopting the following policies :

- 1) Sponsoring a consultant dispatched to Revitalization Council (*machidukuri-kyogikai*) set up in each school district. Incidentally, a program to sponsor a consultant dispatched to the residents organizations already exists in local government urban areas.
- 2) Establishing the Downtown Settlement Planning Committee of Fukuoka City in May 1992 (as mentioned before). The committee's official report effectively legitimized and authorized the line of policy proposed by the the group.
- 3) Employing a national policy to cope with depopulation in Old Hakata : Public Lease Housing Supply Program formulated by MOC. As explained before, by employing this program, Fukuoka City Housing Supply Corporation can lease newly built private apartments in Old Hakata, and in turn the corporation leases them at the half the normal rent to *families* who want to live there but otherwise cannot afford to pay the full rent. The cost of the rent-subsidy program is shared by MOC and Fukuoka City on a fifty-fifty basis.

The third program's goal is to give an incentive to a landowner to construct a building with apartments for families with young children. The mafias expected that by having those families live in Old Hakata in this way the population, especially that of school children, may increase and some of them may participate in *yamakasa* festival. They even wish they could require the Corporation to request tenant families to participate in *yamakasa* festival in exchange for the apartments. The first public lease apartments have been completed in November 1994.

It is interesting that it was not the city government (specifically the Division of City Planning) that initiated the selection of national policies but the group members. Fukuoka City Government was rather unwilling to give financial support to the schemes for revitalizing Hakata. So to entice its financial

support some of the mafia members even visited MOC in Tokyo to meet the Minister of Construction and the bureaucrats of Bureau of Housing and to persuade them that Old Hakata urgently needed revitalization.

In Japan's intergovernmental policy-making process, local government officials still tend to be susceptible to policies initiated, supported, or financed by the national government. The group capitalized on this tendency. This tactic may be characterized as "citizen's use of national policy."

Conclusion

Akio Hidaka demonstrates that over these decades both policy initiation and formulation have been transferred from the national government to the local governments. (See Table 5) It may be a general trend. But we should note that the extent of transfer varies depending on policy area as well as on the amount of budget and the extent of authority which the national government wants to reserve. A policy-making power would not be transferred to the local governments if the policy involves budget almost freely controlled by national bureaucrats in the form of subsidy (*hojyokin*). That is to say, whenever national budget and national policy are inseparably related, the policy is almost always initiated by the national bureaucrats. The Hometown Revitalization Fund Program (*furusato sosei shikin*) was quite exceptional.

MOC has long been one of the typical departments that have clearly projected this sort of attitude. For *machidukuri* (community revitalization) policy, MOC has an abundant menu to serve to local governments; it devises and cooks dishes by itself, and even gives money to local governments that do not mind coming to Tokyo to request them. This has been how "National Policy and Subsidy Restaurant" has been working.

Recently there occurred a small change in the management style of "the restaurant." Substantially revised in 1994, City Planning Act has allowed local governments to formulate their own city master plans. But the master plan should abide by the basic guidelines set forth by the Act. It is as if local governments had been allowed to cook for the first time by themselves according to the recipe MOC prepared.

In my short report, I have tried to show how *machidukuri* efforts were seriously and assiduously made in Old Hakata by the citizens groups. They

know the policy-making mechanism of MOC well, so they even appealed to the MOC bureaucrats to acquire “policy plus budget menu” by way of Fukuoka City government.

This case clearly shows that governments are not a sole policy developer. Citizens or their groups can even become a chief policy developer, especially when they are roused to act on a problem such as *machidukuri*.

Table 5 : Pattern of Centralization-Decentralization in Policy-Making Process
(Source : Akio Hidaka, “Decentralization and Policy-Making of Local Governments,” *Kikan Gyoseikanrikenkyuu*, Vol.67 (1994), p.25)

	National		Local		Examples of Policy
	Policy For- mulation	Policy Initiation	Policy For- mulation	Policy Initiation	
Pattern 1	●	●			Hokkaido Development Act
Pattern 2	●	●		●	Under-developed Area Industrial Improvement Act
Pattern 3	●	●	●		Industrial Building Special Area Development Act
Pattern 4	●	●	●	●	New Industrial City Building Promotion Act
Pattern 5	●		●	●	Techno-Polis Act, Resort Act
Pattern 6		●	●	●	Hometown Revitalizaion Program
Pattern 7			●	●	Original Policies made by Local Government

Figure 1

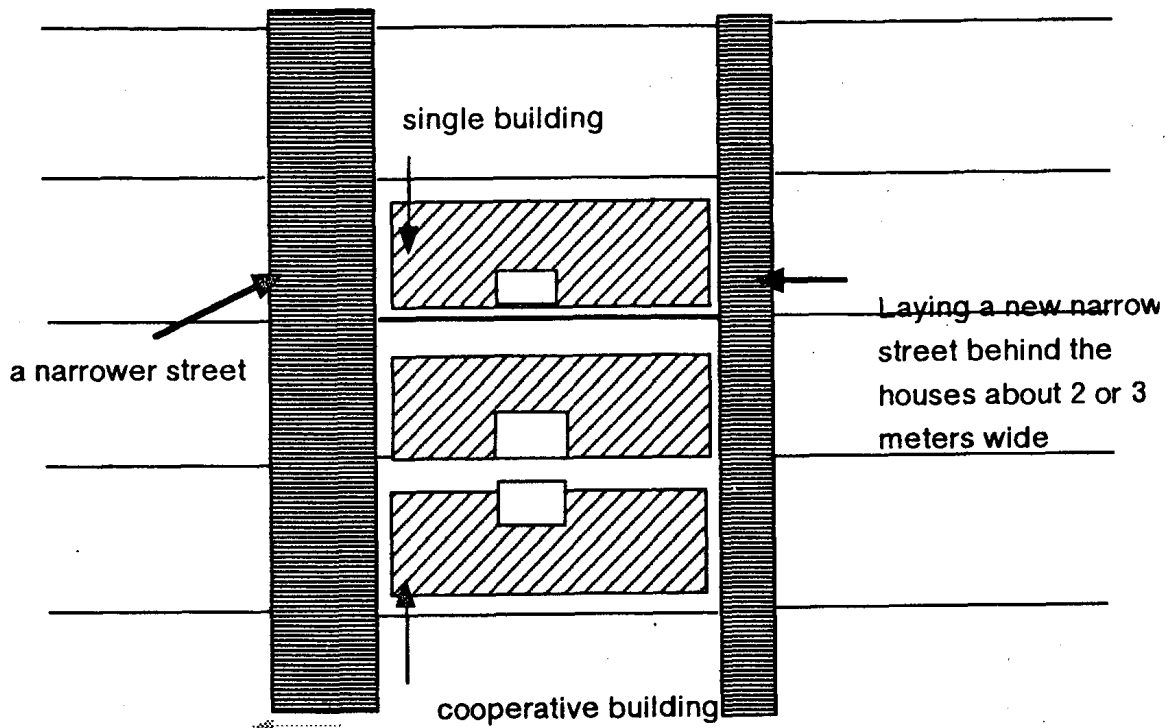


Figure 2

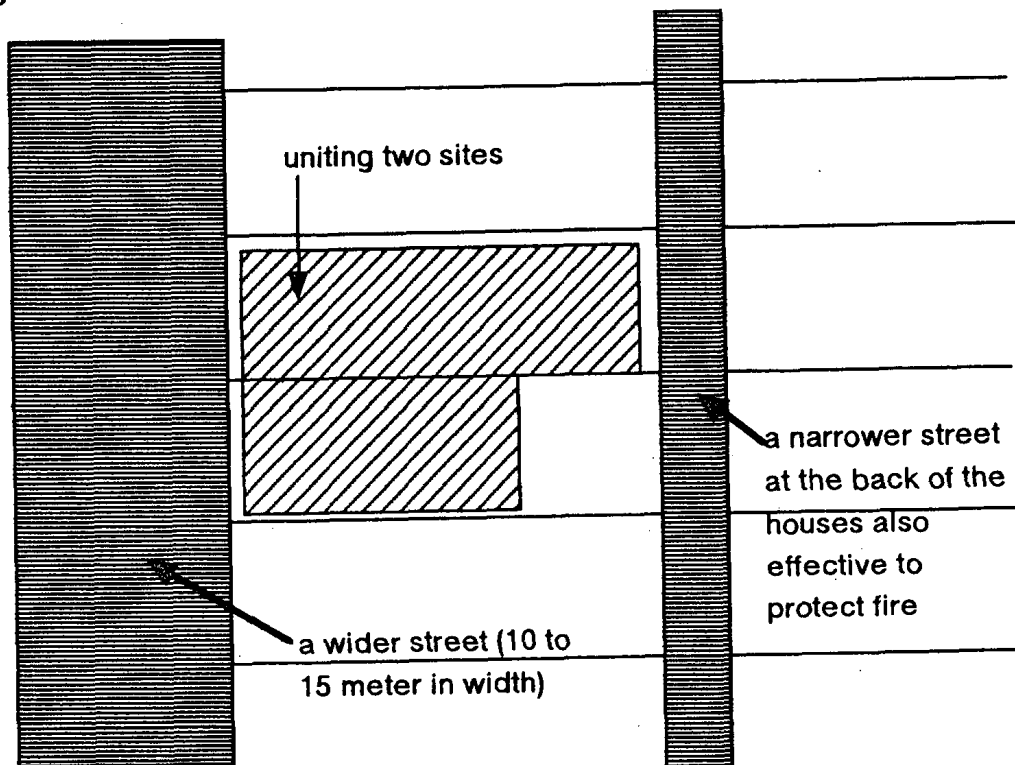


Figure 3

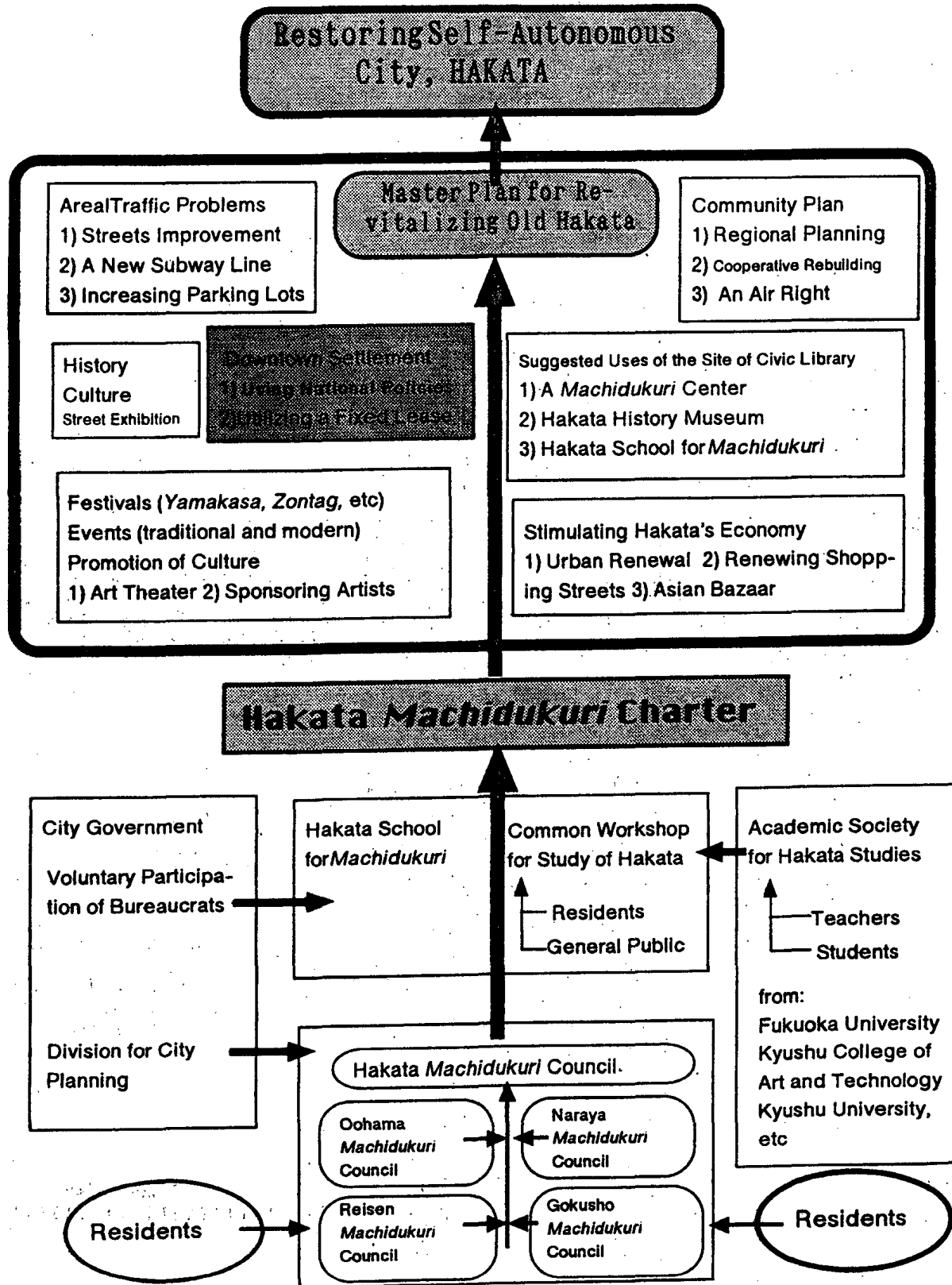


Figure 4 Outline of Hakata

