

Tokyo Metropolis is home to Japan’s financial markets, the headquarters of many leading Japanese multinationals and the national government. The population of Tokyo is about 13.23 million (as of August, 2012). The Tokyo Megalopolis Region, or Greater Tokyo Area, is made up of Tokyo and the three neighboring prefectures of Chiba, Kanagawa and Saitama. The area is home to about 28% of Japan’s overall population.



Fig 1. Map of Japan (left)

Fig 2. Tokyo Metropolis and Surrounding Prefectures (right)

► Administrative arrangement and planning fabric

Tokyo consists of 23 special wards, 26 cities, 5 towns and 8 villages. In the ward area, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) takes on part of the functions usually assigned to the municipalities to maintain integrated administration and control over the whole area. While other municipalities are ordinary local public entities. The government and its individual municipalities work together in performing their respective functions: the former handling the broader administrative work and the latter providing services closer to the everyday lives of local residents. The City Planning Act of 1968 forms the basis for urban planning in Japan and stipulates the basic provisions for appropriate land use and of ensuring orderly development of urban facilities. Building and development activities must be in conformity with the therein provided rules and regulations of urban planning and building standards: Urbanization Promotion Area and Urbanization Control Area, Zoning, Urban Facilities and Urban Development Projects. In 2004, the TMG stipulated the four policies in its city plans: Master plan for city planning areas, Policy for urban redevelopment, Policy for development and improvement of residential districts and Policy for improvement of disaster reduction blocks (Fig 3).

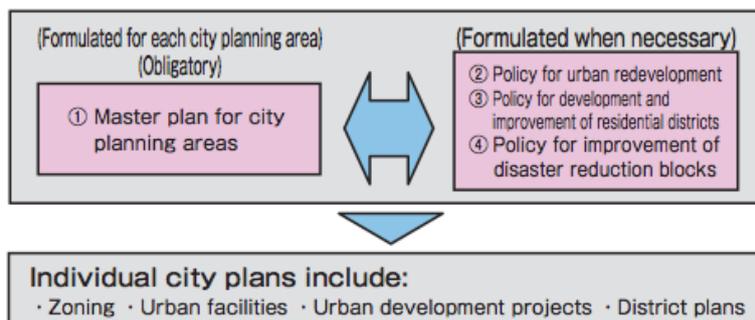


Fig 3. Conceptual chart of the master plan for city planning

► **Urban identity and some critical issues**

Commercial and business facilities are heavily concentrated in the ward area, which has a well-developed public transportation network. However there are many challenges that must be addressed: an increase in offices and other business facilities has led to a decline in its residential land use. Great concerns exist about earthquake disasters in close-set wooden housing areas. In response to substantial changes in socio-economic situations, the TMG revised the Tokyo Metropolitan Basic Ordinance for Housing in 2006 and three basic directions were determined: “building good quality housing stock and good housing environment,” “improving housing market conditions,” and “securing housing for the residents of Tokyo”.

Tokyo hosts a concentration of finance functions, and the market value of the Tokyo Stock Exchange ranks among the world's greatest. According to the National Census of 2005, 0.5% of the people were employed in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; 22.7% in manufacturing and transportation-related occupations; 29.0% in sales and services; and 44.5% in clerical, technical, and management occupations. Also characterizing Tokyo is the high percentage of employed persons in information and communications industries. Other characteristic is that Tokyo’s large economic infrastructure exists in context with the progress in its greying population, with over one-quarter of the labor force aged 55 or older.

► **Urban evolution and growth story**

The city planning vision was revised in 2009 in order to reflect the current circumstances surrounding Tokyo. Along with the basic concept “creating an attractive and prosperous, environmentally-leading city that will serve as a model for the world,” policy directions are indicated as seven basic strategies that include “improving regional transportation infrastructure,” “becoming a low-carbon city” and “Formation of network of water and green.” The urban vision is clarified through the urban structure and local community vision. As a regional urban structure, the region comes together both socially and economically to pursue construction of the “circular megalopolis structure” so that the functions of the entire region can be fully exhibited (Fig 4). Along with this, local areas are reorganized to become more compact, with essential urban functions concentrated around trains stations or other central locations in the community. The vision also divides Tokyo into five zones and sets out the function each zone, which hold in the Greater Tokyo Area as well as the urban image that will be pursued (Fig 5).

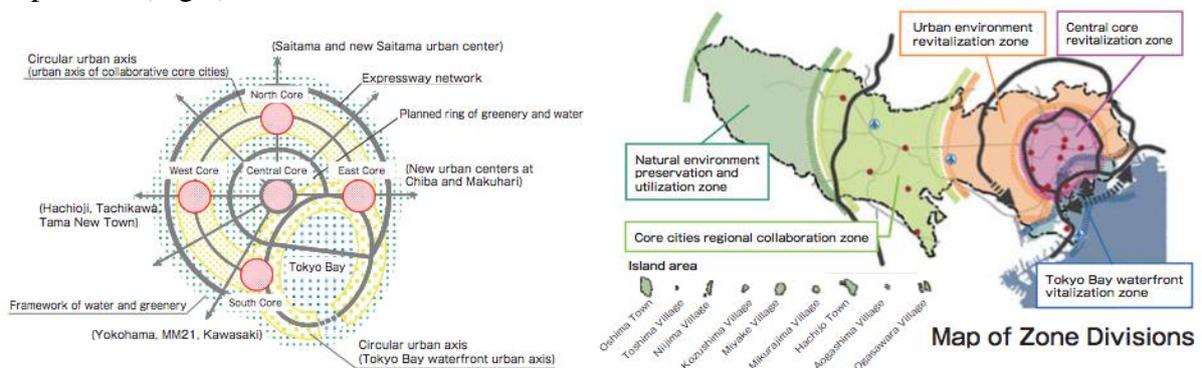


Fig 4. Conceptual chart of the Circular Megalopolis Structure (left)

Fig 5. Map of Zone Divisions (right)



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