

Chapter 3. Creation of Unique and Beautiful Local Communities and National Land

[Current situation of local communities]

Japan successfully retains its appeal of natural beauty as well as tradition and culture. However, it has such issues as the regional gap and the hollowing-out of central urban areas, and all regions are needed for true revitalization.

69. The problems for the planning of the city and town

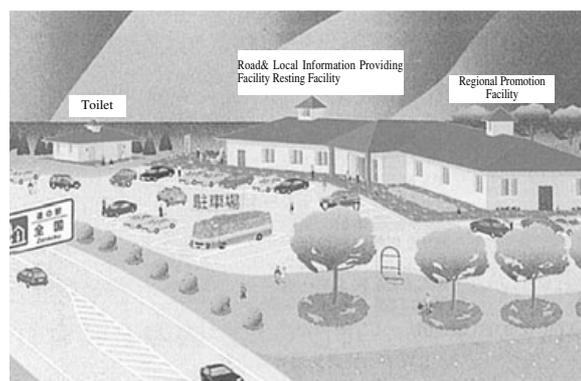


Note : Urban Renaissance Headquarters questioned to nationwide 670 cities and towns.

70. (Michi-no-eki, roadside “station”)

[Creation of vital regions with distinct appeal]

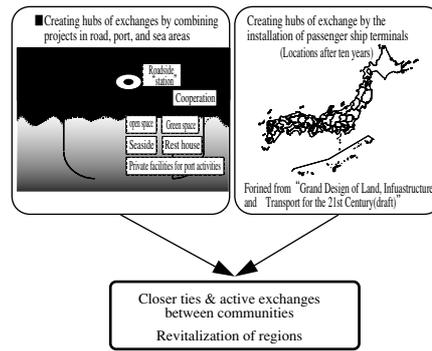
Even as it promotes coherent National Land Planning, ranging from national plan to regional ones, in order to form attractive region, MLIT has been working to revitalize central urban areas so that they will be recognized as the representative of the city, and to develop regions by improving their distinctive nature, history and culture. Other efforts for regional revitalization include formation of a network that links each community and its activities, and establishment of facilities in regions that provide regional information and vitality to the region. In these processes, regional voluntarism, including active participation of residents, is respected.



71. (Waterfront Plaza)



72. Creation of seaside oasis, center of activities



Housing and land policies have been implemented to encourage more settlement in rural areas. Furthermore MLIT has provided active support for development in heavy snowfall regions, peninsular areas and remote islands, including the Amami and Ogasawara. In addition, MLIT has been maintaining bus routes in sparsely populated areas and transportation to remote islands for the maintenance of traffic means that is essential to the daily existence in rural locations.

[Tourism-based regional revitalization]

Japan needs to depart from a bland and unorganized way of development to create a landscape that is more appealing to tourists. Also, it needs core tourism facilities and cooperation among different entities, the national and municipal governments and commercial tourism industries. As tourism in Okinawa saw a large decline after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S, various conferences and seminars have been held aimed at its early recovery.

[Implementing Hokkaido comprehensive development]

Efforts particular to Hokkaido development are as follows:

- (1) Promotion of recovering from disaster of Mt. Usu and formation of safe community life
- (2) Improvement of transport infrastructure for more efficient logistics and creation of an advanced IT society.
- (3) Formation of a regional recycling society, preserving the rich nature of Hokkaido
- (4) Urban development in northern territory full of unique charm and kindness to the elderly
- (5) Creation of new industries for self-supportive Hokkaido

In addition, promotion of Ainu culture has been actively conducted through various programs. Other comprehensive efforts include improvement of infrastructure that will help generate distinct industries utilizing rich nature in Hokkaido, and form a safe and comfortable regional society.

73. (Performing a traditional Ainu dance)

