

Part I: Various Initiatives toward Vibrant Communities or Business and MLIT Policies to Support These Initiatives

Chapter 1: Vibrant Communities and Business Activities on the Rise

Section 1. Initiatives by local governments, communities and businesses

As Japan is undergoing major socioeconomic changes, it is increasingly irrelevant for local governments, communities and businesses to set uniform goals. In fact, a growing number of these entities are exploring their own ways, rather than sticking to “average” or “standard” way of life.

We have decided to gather and analyze these cases to make overall assessment of initiatives toward vibrant communities or business.

To that end, we have first gathered information from prefectures, examined various databases on community development and business activities, and took notice of good practice awards in related fields. Second, we have identified successful cases of local revitalization, business strategies, and technical or product development. Then we have sent questionnaires to the municipalities and businesses associated with these cases. We have screened the respondents and selected those committed or to be committed to developing vibrant communities or business and those whose experience may serve as reference to formulate MLIT policies in the future. We have tried to carry as many of these cases as possible in this chapter.

We have also identified contributing factors commonly found in these initiatives in Chapter 2.

MLIT, for its part, needs to clear the stumbling blocks out of the way of these local governments, communities and businesses and work together with other stakeholders concerned to support the initiatives they are taking with their creativity, ingenuity and wisdom. In doing so, it is important to keep in mind that every local government and community—whether it is in a metropolitan or rural area—and every business of any sector have vast potential to become an engine for growth in the region or sector concerned.