

Report of the Council for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations

December 20, 1999

Chapter 2: Selection of Candidate Sites

1. Candidate sites

The selected candidate sites are the Tochigi-Fukushima area in the Hokuto region and the Gifu-Aichi area in the Tokai region.

The Ibaraki area has a number of advantages, including safety from natural disasters. For this reason, the Ibaraki area is expected to link with the Tochigi-Fukushima area to support and supplement it.

The Mie-Kio area has advantages that neither of the other two candidate areas has. If an infrastructure consisting of a high-speed transportation network were to be built here, this area could be added as a third candidate site.

Capital functions would not operate very well from the beginning without a wide-range of cooperative efforts, not only from large cities, such as Tokyo, Sendai, Nagoya, Kyoto, and Osaka, but also from other areas in the same regions for investigation.

2. Process of selecting candidate sites

When making inquiries and deliberating to select the candidate sites, the Council emphasized objectiveness and fairness.

In Phase 1, the Council conducted a broad general survey based on the selection criteria presented in the Investigating Committee Report and chose three regions, the Hokuto, Tokai, and Mie-Kio regions, as regions requiring more detailed study.

The Hokuto region begins in southern Miyagi prefecture, includes Fukushima prefecture, and extends to the middle and northern parts of Tochigi prefecture and the middle and northern parts of Ibaraki prefecture. This area extends along the route of the Tohoku Shinkansen and other major transportation lines.

The Tokai region begins in southeastern Gifu prefecture, includes the Nishimikawa area of Aichi prefecture, and extends to western Shizuoka prefecture.

The Mie-Kio region consists of the central Ise plain in Mie prefecture and extends across the area to the boundaries of Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, and Nara prefectures.

In Phase 2, the Council asked many experts to closely examine the above regions in terms of 16 characteristics. The Council also conducted hearings from representatives of the prefectures involved and dispatched Council members for on-site surveys, holding public hearings at nine locations.

In Phase 3, to proceed with a closer examination of the candidate sites, the Council considered the locations of available airports, roads, railroads, and other transportation facilities, and the extent to which these transportation facilities had been improved. The attitudes of the people of each of the prefecture involved were also considered. For regions that span more than one prefecture, also considered were the historical, cultural, and topographical factors of each area and how people in each area related with people in other areas. From these three regions, the Council finally chose ten areas to be subjected to comprehensive evaluation for the selection of an area where the new city could be built.

The ten areas selected for comprehensive evaluation are:

Hokuto region

- Miyagi area: southern Miyagi prefecture
- Tochigi-Fukushima area: Nasu area in Tochigi prefecture and Abukuma area in Fukushima prefecture
- Tochigi area: Nasu area in Tochigi prefecture
- Fukushima area: Abukuma area in Fukushima prefecture
- Ibaraki area: middle northern area of Ibaraki prefecture

Tokai region

- Gifu-Aichi area: Tono area in Gifu prefecture and northern Nishimikawa area in Aichi prefecture
- Shizuoka-Aichi area: western Shizuoka prefecture and southern Higashimikawa area in Aichi prefecture

Mie-Kio region

- Mie-Kio area: area around base of Mt. Suzuka in Mie prefecture and area near boundaries of Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, and Nara prefectures
- Mie area: area around base of Mt. Suzuka in Mie prefecture
- Kio area: area near boundaries of Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, and Nara prefectures

According to the results of the detailed investigations conducted for each of the characteristics during Phase 2, some of the characteristics were divided or combined. The result was the selection of 16 characteristics as comprehensive evaluation items. At the same time, the Council compared the features required for the relocation of the capital functions with the features of each of the three target regions.

In conducting the comprehensive evaluation of the regions, the Council made great efforts to apply multiple techniques with an emphasis on objectivity. The Council also decided to use a weighting method, which is beneficial in that it respects global judgments made by the Council members, combines this global judgment with the results of the evaluations of the characteristics by many experts, and also clearly explains the process used to reach a conclusion.

With an emphasis on objectivity, the comprehensive evaluation was conducted as follows. Experts in each field evaluated each area for suitability as the new city in terms of each of the 16 characteristics and assigned a numeric value representing the results of the evaluation. The Council members assigned a weight (degree of importance) to each characteristic. These two methods were integrated to yield numeric scores for each of the ten candidate areas.

Based on these results, the Council continued to review the selected candidate sites through further multilateral investigations from several angles.

The 16 characteristics that were used for evaluation are:

- Geographical conditions for building construction (alleviation of excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo as evaluated by companies invited to cities other than Tokyo)
- Suitability for cultural activities
- Ease of response to building new information networks (as reflected in next generation)
- Information exchange and transportation between new city and major cities in the event of major disaster
- Accessibility from foreign countries
- Accessibility from Tokyo
- Accessibility from/throughout Japan
- Scenic beauty
- Possibility of earthquakes
- Possibility of volcanic disasters
- Ease of land acquisition
- Topographical advantages
- Possibility of floods and/or landslides
- Stability of water supply
- Good relationships with existing cities (probability of avoiding urban sprawl and ease of tying up with regional core cities)
- Harmony with the environment (probability of achieving harmony with natural environment in terms of environmental conservation and preservation and possibility of reducing environmental load)

3. Selection results

(1) Features of the relocation of capital functions to the three regions

The Hokuto, Tokai, and Mie-Kio regions have their own distinct historical, cultural, and topographical features. The nature of the new city would vary considerably depending on which region is selected.

Hokuto region

The Hokuto region is advantageous in its links with Tokyo because of the Tohoku Shinkansen, the Tohoku Expressway, and other access routes. The relocation of capital functions to this region would proceed in close cooperation with Tokyo and through the exploitation of a concentration of urban functions that has already reached

a high level. A stepwise relocation with a relatively high degree of flexibility could be achieved. The new city and Tokyo could have close ties and relationships and could be assigned respective roles under various conditions, including the occurrence of a major disaster.

People both inside and outside the country would be impressed with the efforts for the national revitalization characterized by cities and lifestyles that are in harmony with the natural environment.

Tokai region

The Tokai region is located near the center of Japan and is easily accessible from all over the country. The relocation of the capital functions to this region and the building of the new city would proceed in close cooperation with Nagoya together with efforts to improve functions for conducting international activities. The new city would be centered on an urban area that is relatively independent of Tokyo. This characteristic would give rise to multiple centers of activity and encourage people in many locations to increase their relationships with people in other locations.

People inside and outside Japan would be impressed with the efforts at building an active nation that is advancing toward further development against a background of the existing combination of state-of-the-art industrial technology and traditional crafts.

Mie-Kio region

The Mie-Kio region includes part of the Kansai and Chukyo areas. This means that its location is advantageous with its links with Kyoto, Osaka, and other major cities in the area. The relocation of capital functions to this region would proceed through efforts for restoring capital functions near the Kinai area, which has long played a central role in creating and inheriting traditional Japanese culture, while acting to rejuvenate the Kansai area. The new city would be centered on an urban area that is relatively independent of Tokyo. This would add to the number of centers of activity and help change the existing social structure that is dependent on Tokyo.

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(2) Advantages and disadvantages of ten candidate areas

As previously stated, to accelerate the process of selecting candidate sites, the Council chose ten areas to be subjected to comprehensive evaluation from within the three candidate regions. During this task, the Council considered how and to what extent the transportation systems have been improved in each area, what features each area has, and what potential each area has for the spreading of urban areas. Through the hearings in the prefectures concerned during Phase 2, the advantages and disadvantages of each area were identified from the on-site surveys and detailed investigations in terms of the 16 characteristics, and through the evaluation of the 16 characteristics during Phase 3.

Miyagi area

The Miyagi area is on the key Tohoku axis—the Tohoku Shinkansen and Tohoku Expressway—enabling it to connect with areas on the Sea of Japan via the Yamagata Expressway. It can easily have wide-area links with Sendai, Fukushima, Yamagata, and other large cities.

It is easy to make good use of the urban functions already present in Sendai. In this area, transportation facilities exist and/or are being improved. The combination of these urban functions and transportation facilities would help build a networked group of cities, including the new city, Fukushima, and Yamagata, covering a wide area through which the key Tohoku axis passes. The area also has a pastoral setting that faces the Zao Mountains, the Abukuma River, and other natural features. People in this area could develop a lifestyle that makes use of the activities and convenience of the city, Sendai, in harmony with the relaxing atmosphere produced by the pastoral environment.

The water supply is stable. Even if a major disaster were to occur, it would be easy to keep traffic and information flowing between the new city and other major cities.

Conversely, a disadvantage of this area may be that it is situated at a greater distance from the Pacific Belt, where the population and many existing functions have already accumulated. It is also necessary to improve international airline services at Sendai Airport and pay special consideration to the topographical and other conditions of certain nearby areas. This area contains a few conspicuous active earthquake faults.

Tochigi-Fukushima area

The Tochigi-Fukushima area is located on the key Tohoku axis—the Tohoku Shinkansen and Tohoku Expressway—and between the Kitakanto and Ban-etsu

Expressways, which run across the country. For this reason, the area is tied not only with Tokyo and Sendai, but also with areas on the Sea of Japan and western areas of the country. A noteworthy advantage is that it has a strong link with Tokyo. During the period of relocation, when some capital functions are assigned to the new city while others remain in Tokyo, satisfactory cooperation between the two cities could easily be achieved in a flexible manner.

This area combines the Tochigi area, centered on the Nasunogahara plain, and the Fukushima area, home of Fukushima Airport. It thus has the advantages of these two areas.

The area features a high degree of harmony with the natural environment, superior scenic and topographical conditions, and the possibility of utilizing public land. The area is virtually free of earthquakes. Should a major earthquake occur in the Tokyo area, the Tochigi-Fukushima area could quickly prepare a first-aid system.

Conversely, the use of New Tokyo International Airport at Narita would be required for international air traffic, although Fukushima Airport is near the area. In addition, since the current accumulation of urban functions in this area is inadequate, building and improving life- and business-related functions supporting the new city would be required.

Tochigi area

The Tochigi area is located to the south of the Tochigi-Fukushima area on the key Tohoku axis.

This area includes a broad, flat plain, Nasunogahara, with the grand Nasu Mountains in the background; the picturesque scenery would make a wonderful setting for the new city. Efforts for assuring harmony with the natural environment and conditions for agricultural conservation would form a new city that is a blend of urban and idyllic elements, creating a lifestyle that emphasizes an exemplary relationship between humans and nature.

This area has essentially the same advantages and disadvantages as the Tochigi-Fukushima area. The building of protection against volcanic disasters would be required. This area contains a few conspicuous active earthquake faults. At present, it has no airport.

Fukushima area

The Fukushima area is located to the northeast of the Tochigi-Fukushima area. It is near the intersection of the key Tohoku axis and the Banetsu Expressway, which is a key route running across the country.

The new city would be a combination of small cities in a topographical area that is characterized by intricate small ridges and valleys and includes Fukushima Airport at its center. Such an area is expected to promote a lifestyle that respects forest resources and emphasizes a harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

This area has essentially the same advantages and disadvantages as the Tochigi-Fukushima area. It includes a great deal of privately owned land, which would cause problems in land acquisition. Also, the ridges in the area around Fukushima Airport are relatively narrow, adding to any expenses involved in attempting to change the surrounding topography.

Ibaraki area

The Ibaraki area is located on the key Joban axis that runs from Tokyo to Sendai. It is relatively near the Tokyo area and includes Hitachinaka Seaport, which provides access from the Pacific Ocean. It is located at the intersection of the Kitakanto and Higashikanto Expressways, which are ring-like routes interconnecting the cities surrounding the metropolitan area, and radial routes that run from Tokyo and pass through Tsukuba. The area is advantageous in its links with Tokyo. During the period of relocation, when some capital functions are assigned to the new city while others remain in Tokyo, satisfactory cooperation between the two cities can easily be achieved in a flexible manner.

The new city would have several advantages, including close cooperation with urban functions of Tokyo; easy access to New Tokyo International Airport at Narita; the use of Hyakuri Airport, which is now a military airport, but will become a commercial airport as well; Hitachinaka Seaport; and Tsukuba Science City, with its world-renowned scientific research facilities. These advantages would give the new city a highly international flavor. In addition, since the new city would be at the east end of the ring route that runs at a distance of 100 kilometers from the metropolitan area, it is expected to function as the base for reforming the structure of the metropolitan area.

The area has encountered few major disasters from earthquakes or volcanoes. It includes a relatively large amount of public land. It is also topographically suitable for building a city. If a major earthquake occurs in the Tokyo area, the Ibaraki area could quickly prepare a first-aid system.

Conversely, of all the candidate areas, this area is the closest to Tokyo. This means it is much more likely to be under the influence of Tokyo and to simply add to the expansion of the Tokyo area, counteracting any attempts to solve the problem of excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo. An adequate water supply and other utilities are also a problem in this area. In some of the southern areas, consideration would have to be given to the water quality of Lake Kasumigaura.

Gifu-Aichi area

The Gifu-Aichi area is located near the center of Japan. Multiple key axes pass through this area. The area can easily link with Tokyo, Kansai, and areas on the Sea of Japan via key transportation routes including the Tomei Expressway, Second Tomei Expressway, Tokai-Hokuriku Expressway, Chuo Expressway, and Tokaido Shinkansen.

The new city would have strong ties with Nagoya via the Tokai Loop Expressway, which runs in a loop around Nagoya. Its advantages include the accumulation of advanced industrial technology and traditional crafts of the Chukyo area. Against these advantages, the new city is expected to create a lifestyle that can make good use of the urban activity and convenience of Nagoya and that is in harmony with the natural environment. The 2005 World Exposition will be held near this area. Because of that, even greater efforts would be made to build a new city that places high importance on ecology.

The area has satisfactory facilities for transportation to other areas both in Japan and overseas. It is free from the threats of floods, landslides, and volcanic eruptions. The utilization of large areas of public land is expected.

Conversely, the local vegetation is weak, and extraordinary efforts would be required for environmental protection. The transportation system to Tokyo would also require a great deal of improvement. A major earthquake would cause considerable shaking in some locations, if not significant damage. The area also includes many relatively conspicuous active earthquake faults.

Shizuoka-Aichi area

The Shizuoka-Aichi area is located on the key Tokyo-Nagoya axis—the Tokaido Shinkansen, Tomei Expressway, and Second Tomei Expressway. It is near the Chukyo area and could relatively easily be linked with Tokyo and Nagoya. The western end of the area is at the intersection of the Tokyo-Nagoya axis and the Sanen-Nanshin Expressway, which is part of the axis running across the country.

This area is expected to include a graceful new city that is enriched by the scenery of the Enshu Sea and Lake Hamana and that is adequately equipped to avoid misfortunes caused by disasters such as Tokai earthquakes. The urban functions of Hamamatsu and Toyohashi could easily be utilized. People in the new city would enjoy many different lifestyles enabling them to have abundant opportunities to make direct contact with nature.

The climate is mild. The area has superior access to areas throughout Japan and to overseas points because of its proximity to a high-speed transportation network as well as Shizuoka Airport in the east and Chubu International Airport in the west.

Conversely, the area is near a tectonic plate subduction boundary necessitating the resolutions of problems concerning safety in the event of an earthquake and how to protect and maintain traffic and information routes between the new city and major cities. In addition, there is already a high percentage of land use, adversely affecting land acquisition. Consideration would also have to be given to the quality of the water in Lake Hamana.

Mie-Kio area

The Mie-Kio area is located near the center of Japan. Multiple key axes (including the Meishin and Second Meishin Expressways) pass through the area for relatively easy links with the Kansai area, Chukyo area, areas on the Sea of Japan, and areas in west Japan. The area also has good access to two international airports—Chubu International Airport and Kansai International Airport.

This area combines the Mie and Kio areas and thus has the advantages of both areas.

The area is independent of Tokyo and would be expected to alleviate the problems caused by the excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo. It has satisfactory facilities for transportation to many major areas of Japan. Assuming the addition of facilities for marine transportation to Chubu International Airport, the area at the base of Mt. Suzuka would offer good access to countries outside Japan. The area is considered free of volcanic eruptions.

Conversely, one of the disadvantages of this area that would have to be resolved is the amount of time required to travel to Tokyo. If a major earthquake occurs in the area, some parts could be severely affected. The area also includes many relatively conspicuous active faults. Consideration would also have to be given to other factors, including protection of the natural environmental.

Mie area

The Mie area consists of the eastern half of the Mie-Kio area and is located to the west of the Chukyo area.

The area is near Nagoya, Tsu, Yokkaichi, and other cities, is between the Suzuka Mountains and Ise Bay, and is open to the ocean. These conditions would help in the creation of a new city that would have few environmental loads by making good use of nearby facilities for global environmental protection. In addition, the new city would promote lifestyles in which the populace would be able to enjoy the benefits of both advanced industrial technology and the traditional crafts of the Chukyo area as well as from nature including the sea and mountains.

The Mie area has almost the same advantages and disadvantages as the Mie-Kio area. The climate is mild and the water supply is stable. The topographical conditions are good. There would be some difficulty in land acquisition.

Kio area

The Kio area consists of the western half of the Mie-Kio area and is located to the east of the Kansai area. The building of a new city here would be combined with rejuvenation of the Kansai area.

The area is adjacent to Kinai, thought to be the source of Japanese traditional culture. This area is assumed to be suitable in helping create a new culture for the 21st century. The new city would have few environmental loads by making good use of nearby facilities for global environmental protection. The area would promote lifestyles in which the populace would be able to enjoy the benefits of nature by visiting a number of natural parks and appreciating traditional culture.

The Kio area has almost the same advantages and disadvantages as the Mie-Kio area. There is a great amount of public land near the boundaries among the prefectures. The water supply would have to be upgraded.

(3) Results of comprehensive evaluation using weighting method

For its comprehensive evaluation, the Council held meetings so that experts in the specific relevant fields could conduct detailed quantitative examinations of the ten candidate areas in terms of the 16 characteristics initially decided upon. At some meetings, more than one characteristic was discussed. A total of more than 70 experts attended 14 such meetings.

The Council members had conducted a separate study to work out a plan for weighting each characteristic. Three meetings were held for designing the weighting plan as discussions at the evaluation meetings proceeded. During this process, the Council members were able to increase their shared understanding of the characteristics.

The results from these two types of studies were integrated to obtain a comprehensive evaluation score for each area. During this process, the Council respected the variety of members' judgments and summarized the rating data by using several methods instead of only relying on the averages of all the members.

It was revealed that the ranking of the evaluations of the areas that had relatively high scores did not vary with the method used for summarization. The Council has concluded that the scores were objective and should be highly respected.

The results of the comprehensive evaluation using the weighting method indicated that there was no significant difference in the absolute values of the scores of the areas. Nonetheless, the Tochigi-Fukushima area in the Hokuto region had the highest score, followed by the Gifu-Aichi area in the Tokai region. These two areas have different features. The Ibaraki area ranked third.

(4) Multilateral investigation

By a conducting comprehensive evaluation using a weighting method, the Council obtained valuable information that represented the numeric scores gained by the candidate areas. However, before final candidate sites for the new city can be selected, multilateral investigations must be conducted to rate, among others, the wide-ranging features of each area, links of the new city with other areas, ability to withstand earthquakes and other natural disasters, future improvement of transportation facilities, and problems involved in building a new city.

From the point of view discussed above, the Council conducted a multilateral investigation of the Tochigi-Fukushima area and the Gifu-Aichi area, both of which had high scores in the comprehensive evaluation. The Council also attempted to learn whether other candidate sites exist.

Tochigi-Fukushima area

The Tochigi-Fukushima area is located on the key Tohoku axis, where the main routes in the Hokuto region can be accessed. Therefore, it can easily link with Tokyo and Sendai and is expected to have close social and business relationships for support

and cooperation with Utsunomiya, Koriyama, and other cities. It can also easily link with areas on the Sea of Japan. By maintaining smooth links with the Ibaraki area on the key Joban axis, the Tochigi-Fukushima area would become even more suitable as the location of the new city. The results of the multilateral investigation did not affect the superior rating of this area.

The Miyagi area, located on the key Tohoku axis, together with Sendai, is expected to function as a link and support base for the new city.

If Mt. Nasudake were to erupt, considerable damage would be inflicted on the Nasu area along the Naka River. Therefore, the design of the new city would have to include consideration of the arrangement of urban functions and preparations for handling major disasters.

Gifu-Aichi area

The new city would be part of the Chukyo area, which can easily link with Tokyo and Nagoya. Functions necessary to support the city are expected to be built not only on the Tomei axis, but also on the axis leading to Chubu International Airport. The Tokai and Hokuriku Expressways would considerably strengthen the links to areas on the Sea of Japan. The results of the multilateral investigation did not affect the superior rating of this area.

In the future, when Chubu International Airport opens and a high-speed transportation network is completed to include this area, the travel time to Tokyo and Osaka will be significantly reduced. With these links, the new city and Nagoya would greatly expand its scope, including international activities.

The Shizuoka-Aichi area would function as the link and support base for the new city by making use of its convenient traffic situation.

This area could be subject to interplate earthquakes. If a major earthquake were to occur, certain areas would be considerably affected. It is therefore urgent to study the layout of urban functions, the means of disaster preparedness, and the methods for maintaining traffic and information paths.

Ibaraki area

The Ibaraki area is located on the key Joban axis, which runs from Tokyo to Sendai, passing through Tsukuba and Mito. The area is near Hitachinaka Seaport, which would be a base for marine transportation. It also offers good access to New Tokyo

International Airport via the Higashi-Kanto Expressway. The topographical conditions are favorable and highly immune to natural disasters.

Considering the conditions of the high-speed transportation networks, the key Tohoku axis in the Hokuto region remains superior. The Ibaraki area should link with the Tochigi-Fukushima area to support and supplement this area in terms of international functions by making use of the benefits provided by the key Tohoku axis.

Mie-Kio area

The comprehensive evaluation score of the Mie-Kio area is not very high.

Nevertheless, this area includes part of the Kansai and Chukyo areas and is located near Kinai, which has played a central role in creating and passing on Japanese traditional culture. It also has a long history. Since it is located on the narrow portion of Japan's Honshu Island, it can easily link with areas on the Sea of Japan. Many functions and cultural resources are present in Kyoto, Nara, and Osaka. The Kansai National Diet Library and the Kyoto Japanese-Style Guesthouse would contribute their own special effects. These features make this area unique.

If a new high-speed transportation network were to be built through this area, time taken to reach Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, and other large cities would be shortened. This would also facilitate use of Chubu International Airport and Kansai International Airport, linking to large cities in the Chukyo and Kansai areas. If this condition is met and the Kansai area is rejuvenated, the rank of this area would increase, making it a likely candidate for the new city.

This area could be subject to interplate earthquakes. If a major earthquake occurs, certain areas would be considerably affected. It is therefore urgent to study the layout of urban functions, the means of disaster preparedness, and the methods for maintaining traffic and information paths.

(5) Results of selection process

Respecting the results of the above inquiries and deliberations, the Council selected the Tochigi-Fukushima area and the Gifu-Aichi area as candidate sites for the new city. The Ibaraki area has the advantage of being relatively safe in terms of natural disasters. This area is expected to link with the Tochigi-Fukushima area for support and supplementary functions. The Mie-Kio area has features that the other areas do not have. If it were to have easy access to a high-speed transportation network, it could also become a candidate site.

Initially, it would be difficult for any area to adequately operate the functions of the capital by itself. Wide-ranging links would be required with not only Tokyo, Sendai, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, and/or other major cities, but also with areas within the same region.