

## 352 Comprehensiveness of Urban Policies and Grand Design of Cities

### 1. The nature of cities and their universalization

A city is a synthesis of spaces and structures where many heterogeneous and diverse people can gather and live safely, lively, and fulfillingly.

Villages, like cities, are spaces and structures where people gather and live, but what makes cities different from villages is not only that they are densely populated with more people than villages. The essential difference is that cities are open to a wide variety of people, and the large number and heterogeneity of people who gather there build their lives together. Villages, on the other hand, are closed in principle, with a specific group of people living together in a homogeneous manner.

Human civilization has developed through the creation of the open system known as the city. If cities did not exist and society were completely closed, it would not have been possible for people to gather and bring in a wide variety of goods to open markets, nor would they have been able to acquire a wealth of information and wisdom to create new industries, cultures, and lifestyles. The openness of a city to accept a variety of different people is the reason for its existence and its essence.

Western cities in the Middle Ages were established as free cities in opposition to feudal lords, meaning that they were liberated from the restrictions imposed by the feudal lords that prevented mutual exchange. This meant the liberation of cities from the restrictions imposed by feudal lords, which prevented mutual exchanges. The open cities attracted many people from foreign lands, giving birth to the advanced international society that we know today. Internationalization, in a nutshell, is the exchange of people, goods, and information from different countries, and the city is a device that facilitates this exchange. It was not possible for the mura to do this alone, shut up in a closed shell.

The reason cities have been able to become the centers of civilization and culture is based on their very nature of accepting the different and unknown. Cities have been created by people who live in the city and do liberating work based in the city. Unfortunately, however, there have been few cities in Japan where the citizens themselves have sought this kind of openness and engaged in independent activities.

When Japan opened its doors to the rest of the world after a long period of national seclusion, it first opened international ports for foreign trade: Yokohama, Hakodate, and Nagasaki in 1859, and Hyogo in 1867. The ports were not only relay points for the transport of goods, but also information cities in the modern sense, where unknown foreigners visited and new knowledge and information came and went. However, these cities were built and populated by the shogunate, not by citizens.

What further transformed the modern city was the great development of means of transportation, communication, and information. Whereas information used to be available only in certain cities, it is now available nationwide and internationally through the Internet and other means. Information is now available nationwide, and through the Internet and other means, it is also available internationally.

This means that the "urban phenomenon," which is based on the essence of cities as "a phenomenon in which a large number of heterogeneous and diverse people live while interacting with each other," has become common in both urban and rural areas. The exchange of information means the exchange of people, goods, and culture. Nowadays, wherever we are, we have access to resources and energy from all over the world, can access the latest information, eat food and delicacies, and appreciate the cultures of the world. Although we cannot afford to waste resources and energy, there is no doubt that exchanges around the world will continue to increase. Once a city is built, no matter who built it, openness cannot be stopped and will continue to grow.

However, it is not the purpose of this essay to examine the urban phenomenon. What I want to emphasize here is that the essence of the city is becoming increasingly universal and pervasive, while both urban and rural areas are undergoing major transformations. Although some parts of society may be closed, unless we create a fundamentally open urban society, a free, prosperous, and democratic future of human life will not be possible.

## **2. Urban contradictions and the need for urban policy**

The city was a great invention for human civilization. Without this invention, we might still be living in closed societies and refusing to interact with each other.

In the 21st century, most people will live an urban lifestyle without actually being in a city. In an urban-type society, there is no longer room to choose a form of life outside of the city. However, as the urban phenomenon has progressed, along with its advantages, the contradictions rooted in the nature of cities have been exposed, and the problems that lie therein have also expanded.

A city where diverse and heterogeneous people are liberated to live together means that people of various occupations, with different ideas and beliefs, living hours, styles, and thoughts, live in close proximity to each other in a small space. This is the source of the city's charm and imagination, but it is also a natural source of friction and conflict. In addition, roads, waste disposal sites, and sewage treatment plants are necessary to keep the city functioning, but because they are located in specific places, opposition is bound to occur even when people know they are necessary. Cities are inherently contradictory in that as they become more active and more convenient, problems and friction also increase.

Furthermore, in an urban society, the position of the individual is respected to the fullest extent. While this is desirable, it also makes communal living less visible and less perceived. In a homogeneous, closed village community, communality was always visible and each individual was aware of it. An urban society, freed from this hassle, is just the opposite: individuals can enjoy their freedom, but the sense of community is diminished. In reality, however, the city is a community with more cooperative relationships than a village. This is because in a village-type society, one can live a self-sufficient life to some extent on one's own, but in an urban-type society, one cannot be self-sufficient in water, food, energy, or waste disposal by oneself. Urban life is possible only through various communal urban devices and communal services.

In a city where many diverse and heterogeneous people coexist, but where the individual is grandfathered in to maintain community, contradictions are inevitable, but leaving contradictions as they are could lead to the collapse of the community. Many people who can only live in cities now have no room to return to rural communities and lose their permanent homes. Therefore, it is necessary to implement policies to minimize the problems that arise in cities and make them viable as communities. This is "urban policy.

The problem is not simple. It used to be a dream to have a car. The dream came true and people were happy. Today, people in local cities cannot live without a car, but the elderly and others who cannot drive are inhibited. They need roads for smooth driving, but they do not want roads running through their land. Air pollution, noise, and traffic accidents will increase. When a road is built, a large shopping center will be built, and existing shopping areas will suffer. The private car has made it possible to settle people in far-flung areas, but it also causes sprawl and makes buses unfeasible. Urban policy is to consider these issues as a whole in the context of a moralist.

In order for residents to work and live comfortably in a city, necessary urban spaces must be developed, urban devices and systems must be properly operated, and effective services must be provided. Various devices and services are needed, including housing, community, recreation, disaster prevention, health, distribution, water, sewage, waste, parks, education, medical care, welfare, culture, industry (commercial, industrial, and agricultural), roads, rivers, ports, railroads, communications, and policy. Since these are interrelated, urban policies are needed to ensure that the whole is properly located and functions, not just pieces of it.

If cities are inevitable, it is important how well they are created and managed. Individuals living in cities seek freedom and opportunity, but they also need rules and order. In order to manage the complex and contradictory existence of a city, maintain it as a community, and make it function, it is necessary to have a policy that takes a holistic viewpoint. This will

guarantee the livelihood of residents and make an urban society effective.

### **3. Comprehensiveness of urban policy**

Many urban devices and services are provided by public organizations such as municipalities, prefectures, the national government, and public corporations, but they are not the only ones. They are provided by many entities, including electric power companies, NTT, electric railway companies, various corporations (medical corporations, social welfare corporations, school corporations), companies, and organizations.

Although these entities provide the products that are widely used by citizens, each has its own principles of action and is bound by laws and regulations, making their activities vertical. Especially during the high-growth period, the supreme objective was economic growth, which led to an emphasis on efficiency. The government failed to address the serious problem of pollution, which was solved through the efforts of local residents and advanced local governments, which had not been the main policy actors in the past. Policies that gave a total sense of urban life, taking into account history, tradition, environment, nature, beauty, and quality of life, were implemented not by the central government, but by the local governments. In order to make a city a place where citizens can engage in high-quality activities, it is necessary to consider the city as a whole, rather than leaving it to businesses, whether public or private organizations, to form and operate the city piecemeal. Urban policy is not about lining up individual administrative projects and measures and implementing temporary measures. It is to take a long-term perspective with a total value system, to foresee problems that may arise in the future even if they are currently good, and to take steps in advance to make the city as a whole more favorable.

Urban policy is not only a passive solution to problems, but also a proactive way to improve urban space and quality of life. Each city has its own unique climate, history, and character. Making them beautiful and unique through the activities and culture of the people who live in them will not only be attractive to visitors, but will also arouse affection and pride in the people who live in them, and create a sense of unity among them.

There is also the issue of the wider area beyond the city. As the scope of activities becomes wider and wider, as is the case today, a single city cannot handle the problem in a self-solving manner. However, this does not mean that related areas should be merged one after another. If a city becomes too large, it loses its individuality and it becomes difficult to ensure its comprehensiveness. In 1893, the Tama region was forcibly merged into Tokyo on the grounds that Kanagawa Prefecture was the water source for Tokyo Prefecture at the time. Using this logic, Gunma Prefecture, which is the source of Tokyo's water supply, and Fukushima and Niigata Prefectures, which have their own power sources, would also have to be merged into

Tokyo, but this would not maintain cohesion as a city. However, this would not maintain the city's cohesiveness as a whole.

### **Municipalities as the Actors of Urban Policy**

Who will be in charge of formulating and implementing urban policy? From the perspective of the emergence of Western cities, cities were originally formed by the citizens who needed them. These people gathered together, established rules, created communities, and developed the functions, lifestyles, and culture of cities while overcoming the contradictions that arose. They formed free cities and city-states. The same is true of the United States, which created cities in the New World, where municipalities were literally LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. These city governments have developed and implemented comprehensive urban policies. Unfortunately, Japanese cities lack this history of citizens creating city governments. Cities have been under the uniform guidance of the shogunate, feudal lords, and, since the Meiji era, the central government, and citizens have had little autonomy. This is a major reason why urban policies have not been fostered.

However, in the modern age of complex cities, it has become necessary to develop urban policies that are appropriate to each city. The only entity with the potential to formulate and implement such policies is the municipal government. According to the postwar Constitution, municipalities are the most closely associated with citizens, and they should be the first government created by the citizens. They are the kings of their departments and are in a position to keep various policies from falling apart because of their limited area.

In reality, municipal governments have been limited to conducting what is called "administrative business" and then, when problems arise, conducting "countermeasure administration" here, such as measures against garbage, pollution, traffic safety, women's issues, and so on. Local governments have been deeply embedded in the central government's system of "vertical integration," and have been content to accept the policies of the central government, abandoning the task of creating their own policies from a comprehensive standpoint and refusing to take responsibility for local problems. The agency mandate is a typical example of this, where "policy" was monopolized by the central ministries, and local governments had no initiative, and no one was suspicious of what policies were being made. It is only recently that local governments have begun to use the word "policy."

Has the national government ever made an urban policy? Certainly, there has been a wide range of "policies related to cities," including roads, rivers, ports, railroads, communications, water and sewerage, parks, education, health care, welfare, industry (commercial, industrial, and agricultural), housing, waste, and community policies in each of the various ministries and departments. These are policies that also have an important bearing on the city, but they

are not urban measures in totality, but rather are partial policies of the vertical. It would be necessary for the national government to implement land measures that need to ensure fairness and uniformity from a nationwide standpoint, a nationwide transportation system, and welfare policies that maintain national standards. However, since this is necessarily uniform throughout the country and cannot be considered together with citizens, the national government agencies cannot be in a position to make comprehensive urban policies that are adapted to their cities.

In contrast, municipalities have worked as the implementing arm of the government, creating, operating, and providing services such as water, sewage, roads, parks, elementary and junior high schools, nursery schools, and other familiar urban amenities necessary for city life. But the creation of devices and the provision of services are also carried out by non-municipalities. Privately operated railroads, medical facilities, welfare facilities, etc., as well as department stores, hotels, theaters, etc., are all fine urban devices. Without them, it would be impossible to lead an affluent urban life. In terms of urban devices and service provision, both municipalities and other entities, including the private sector, are paralleled. In terms of the effectiveness of services, more and more departments will be in charge from a more private side in the future. If public services are inefficient, they will be outsourced or transferred to the private sector.

What is expected of local governments as governments created by citizens is not only the creation of devices and the execution of services, but also to play a role that cannot be played by others. This is the formulation and implementation of urban policies. The city government is in the best position to formulate and implement urban policies that overcome contradictions and conflicts, set rules, and take necessary measures from a long-term, sustainable standpoint. In the case of municipal governments, the head of the municipality is directly elected by the citizens, and the city council is a device that takes in many opinions and allows direct citizen participation, making it an institution close to the citizens that can minimize contradictions and enable new creation. It is in the most appropriate position as an entity for urban policy.

In the case of corporations, their activities take precedence and they are not in a position to treat the entire region fairly. There have been exceptions, such as mining cities, where the corporation considers everything from the operation of the entire city to the services provided to its citizens, but these are groups of people brought together for a uniform purpose rather than a city, and in principle they are more like villages.

Thus, it was precisely in urban municipalities that comprehensive urban policies should be implemented. Even before World War II, there were cases in which city governments actually had a theory of urban policy and took the initiative in implementing it. In municipalities with outstanding and pioneering leaders, urban policy by the municipality was possible and was

implemented, regardless of the system.

The strength of a municipality's ability to implement urban policy is that it is limited to a certain area, but this is often a weakness. This is because the development of transportation has lowered the barriers between regions. That is why it is necessary for local governments to cooperate with each other over a wide area that transcends regional boundaries. In the U.S. region centered on New York City, METROPREX, an organization formed by citizen experts, has presented plans for this metropolitan area on an as-needed basis. The region, which spans the states of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, is a metropolitan area that is substantively a single metropolitan area, but is administratively complicated by the power of the states. Therefore, a group of private-sector intellectuals have proposed a plan in a free-wheeling capacity. Because this group is composed of top-notch experts, local governments respect their ideas. In the future, these private NPOs are expected to play a role in comprehensive planning in areas that are difficult for local governments to handle.

##### **5. Comprehensive urban planning and its effectiveness as urban policy**

Even before the term "urban policy" was coined, it was recognized that urban planning under the City Planning Law was too narrowly focused on physical infrastructure, and that a single annual budget was not sufficient to manage a city. Therefore, the need for comprehensive, long-term planning began to be recognized around 1960. The rapid economic growth of that time brought about drastic changes in the regional environment, and a comprehensive vision for the future became necessary to cope with these changes. Prefectural governments, as well as most municipalities, developed long-term comprehensive plans. At first, these plans focused mainly on hardware construction projects, but they gradually added soft welfare, cultural, and other plans to make them even more comprehensive.

Later, the national government also amended the Local Autonomy Law, requiring municipalities to formulate a "basic plan" that must be approved by the local assembly. Subsequently, each ministry and agency was required to formulate various plans. In 1992, the revision of the City Planning Law mandated the formulation of so-called "urban master plans." The revision of the City Planning Law in 1992 mandated the formulation of so-called "urban master plans," and these plans are now the subject of study in each city.

As you can see, a wide variety of "comprehensive" plans have been formulated and are in existence. plans have been formulated and have been in existence. However, it is questionable whether these plans have been truly urban policies, and whether they have been that effective. This is because of a number of problems.

First, the various plans were created one after another in a multilayered manner without a clear understanding of their interrelationships and positioning. While I understand the need

for a long-term policy in some sense, a city only needs one comprehensive urban policy, and the rest should be clearly positioned as subplans of that policy. The rest should be clearly positioned as partial plans. The current situation is that each ministry and bureau of the national government is claiming its own position, and true region-based comprehensiveness has not been realized.

Secondly, cities are being guided by a system created by the national government and are not taking the initiative. In the case of the current Urban Master Plan, while the autonomy of cities and citizen participation are the prerequisites, the guidance from above is being strengthened as usual. Comprehensive urban policies should be carried out on the initiative of cities. Otherwise, it would be impossible to alleviate the city's inherent contradictions and unite citizens' feelings in one direction for the future. The "long-term comprehensive plans" of the 1960s were flawed, but many of them were formulated without specific legislation. The various plans that have been required by the central ministries and bureaus and their respective divisions since then have only served to increase the confusion and confusion within the city, and have resulted in a loss of autonomy and comprehensiveness.

Third, each city's urban policy must be based on its own personality and characteristics. This cannot be done if city governments are bound by the government's mandate to execute agency affairs or by subsidies and manuals to conduct uniform administration. Each city has its own history, climate, and human activities. It is necessary to respect these factors and create unique policies from the standpoint of citizens and local communities.

Fourth, citizens, who are the protagonists of cities and must bear the duties and responsibilities of cities, have at best participated only formally in the process of formulating policies. It is difficult to solve urban contradictions and create urban rules without the active involvement of citizens. Until now, local governments have been like national government agencies, and the citizens' voices have been merely "listened to."

Fifth, the plans lacked effectiveness against reality. The reality will not change even if the local government creates a drafty plan without the will, ability, and system to implement the policy. Individual project plans are instruments of policy. The effectiveness of urban policy is not to be driven by the pursuit of ten projects alone, but to have the practical wisdom to realize the overall philosophy beyond long-term economic and social changes.

The so-called urban master plan is also confusing because it is called a master plan, but it is legally defined as "the basic policy of urban planning of a municipality in accordance with the basic concept of construction of the municipality and the policy of maintenance, development, or conservation of urbanized areas and urbanization control areas," and is not the basis of comprehensive urban policy, but rather a part of it. The term "master plan" is a preoccupation, but it is not the basis of a comprehensive urban policy. The term "master plan" is a



preoccupation, but it has a limited position.

Urban policy is about making the quality of urban community life favorable in total for the future. If the five points listed here are not cleared, it cannot truly be called a comprehensive urban policy. It is necessary for cities to take the initiative and establish a practical, comprehensive, and feasible urban policy that citizens agree with and share responsibility for, rather than being dictated by others.

#### 6. practicality and grand design of urban policies

Urban policy to improve a complex city is not a simple list of projects that respond to various individual needs. It must solve the contradictions of the city, improve the quality of the city, and reduce anxiety, while considering the city as a whole and its future. If individual "plans" and "projects" are implemented without a total "urban policy," the focus will be on the realization of the project itself, and the true role of the project in the future of the city as a whole will not be understood. This may lead to the expansion of contradictions in the city, even if the projects are realized.

Urban policy must first be based on the ideal philosophy of the city. The prewar mayor of Osaka, Seki Hajime, set "a comfortable city to live in" as his philosophy. This was a criticism of the business-oriented approach, which focused only on building visible urban facilities. However, this does not mean that Seki did not engage in business. On the contrary, he built Midosuji Boulevard, a magnificent subway system, and unified the city's transportation system. He built a port and laid a sewerage system at a time when even Tokyo had hardly developed any. Although he realized a series of fundamental projects, he was never a business-oriented person who prioritized projects. He preached that the first priority was to decide how to use the land rather than to build streets. Everything was done as part of an urban policy to create a comfortable city to live in. He did not stop at the ideological stage, but presented his ideas as a grand design. A grand design is an abstract idea presented in a practical way that can be understood by citizens.

Shinpei Goto, the mayor of Tokyo, presented a grand grand design to the citizens, which was called a "big bath". However, because of his method of relying entirely on public funds, the project was financially stalled and went bankrupt early on. The Great Kanto Earthquake that immediately followed only partially realized his vision. Nevertheless, Goto's grand design remained in the memories of the citizens for a long time and became the starting point for their subsequent thinking about Tokyo.

In 1964, after the war, I was commissioned by the City of Yokohama to propose six strategic core projects as a comprehensive grand design for the revitalization of Yokohama, which had been in decline, based on the free ideas of the private sector. The proposal was accepted as a city policy, and I joined the newly created Planning and Coordination Bureau to put the grand

design, which was said to be an empty theory, into practice. In addition, in order to curb overdevelopment, I implemented what is now called growth management policies and initiated urban design, in which many entities collaborate to realize a humanistic and high quality urban space. Such grand designs have changed Yokohama in practice.

The town of Manazuru in Kanagawa Prefecture, which created a "town development ordinance" in 1993, created a kind of grand design, including "beauty standards. This time, the town has created a "town development plan," which is both a so-called urban master plan and a total urban policy that goes beyond it. Its vision is to "revive the 'noctiluca' in the sea in the town of Manazuru and create a beautiful and rich view of the city. The vision sets forth a philosophy that the citizens of Manazuru can identify with at a glance, and then develops a grand design as a detailed standard of beauty with the following eight goals: to "promote independent development as a small town with a population of approximately 10,000 people. The Grand Design differs from the conventional enumerated long-term comprehensive plans in that it proposes comprehensive urban policies in an easy-to-understand manner. It is not just a dream. Without a basic philosophy and a roadmap for citizens to grasp the overall picture and implement it, the grand design will end up as an illusion rather than a true grand design.

## **7. Comprehensive Urban Policies and the Practice of Grand Designs**

It is impossible to create a grand design if one is constrained by the status quo and cannot step out of it. If the status quo is extended, there is no need for a grand design. A grand design seeks to eliminate uncertainties and problems that exist in the future and to create a direction for a better city. Many cities are now in a period of change. When the status quo needs to be changed, a grand design is needed to show what it will look like.

A grand design is an attempt to change the status quo, and since it seeks to control the existence of the city, which has many contradictions, it is natural that it will be difficult to achieve. Therefore, a mechanism and power to overcome these difficulties are necessary.

First, it is necessary for urban local governments to act as governments that are rooted in their local communities and stand by their citizens, and to have the ability to formulate and implement urban policies. The central government can provide the ingredients for urban policies, but it cannot process, cook, and serve them on site. Therefore, we cannot rely on them. Local governments need to be able to formulate and implement urban policies in advance. The "decentralization" being discussed today is not about how to divide the authority of the central government, but about fundamentally reforming urban local governments so that they suffer as governments of citizens. In the position of citizens' government, local governments can exert unprecedented power.

Second, citizens must have the interest and ability to create their own grand design. Without the ability to envision the future of their own "town," they will have no choice but to be carried along by the status quo. Of course, each citizen has different ideas, but it is necessary to overcome these differences and work together to create an overall policy. No matter what the grand design is, if it is not adopted by the majority of citizens, it will end up as a mere composition. It is necessary to have citizens who are interested in, knowledgeable about, and willing to participate, and in some cases, to create the policies on their own. Citizens not only participate in the creation of urban policies, but also organize themselves and take the initiative in the creation of urban policy taints.

In order to make urban policies and grand designs a reality, a powerful mechanism is needed. A grand design created by the local government, which is the secretariat of the citizens and the government of the citizens, can convince the various actors in the city and mobilize their power. We need a professional and practical mechanism that can solve urban contradictions on the side of citizens.

As the central organization for such a mechanism, local governments need a planning and coordination department. This should be an organization that is not directly connected to any central government agency, but is on the side of the citizens and the community. If it functions effectively, the municipality will be able for the first time to have a comprehensive, practical, and down-to-earth policy-making capacity that is rooted in the local community, and not just the brainchild or idea of the mayor.

Of course, the mere creation of an organization does not immediately make possible comprehensive urban policies and grand designs, but first of all, the creation of such an organization in the public eye is a statement that the city is oriented toward comprehensive urban policies. On the other hand, there are cases where a city does not have a planning and coordination department or where it is vaguely positioned as a planning and finance department, which is evidence that the city itself denies or disregards its proactive comprehensive nature. According to the Japan Urban Center's "Survey on New Administrative Styles in Cities," released in March 1997, the "planning and finance type," which was once popular, has decreased to 11.1%, and the planning and coordination type is the overwhelming majority at 65.4%, and when other similar types are added, nearly 80% of the departments are in fact of the planning and coordination type. It is safe to assume that awareness of the need for and importance of comprehensive urban policy has increased among urban municipalities.

The most significant problem with the creation of an organization lies in the actions taken by the qualities of the people in it. Today's municipalities contain potentially quite capable people. The right people are needed to make sure that these people can work not only in the

planning and coordination departments, but also in each department with a proactive orientation, and to make the system open enough to allow citizens to be involved on their own initiative.

Whether it is a comprehensive urban policy or a grand design, it will be nothing more than a piece of paper if the municipality is only concerned with creating it and does not have the ability to put it into practice. The implementation of such policies should not be carried out by the local government alone, but rather, it is necessary to mobilize, coordinate, and collaborate with outside forces to fulfill the overall objective. This requires the ability to be a producer. The city must not passively follow the central government or lobby it, but must make good use of it from the city's side as an equal partner. The same applies to relationships with the private sector, which must be leveraged from the standpoint of the community. Of course, it is also important to build a community with the cooperation of its citizens. This requires a completely different set of skills from the traditional interpretation and application of laws and regulations required of public administration. It is necessary to improve the structure of local governments from a bureaucratic type to a citizen type.

In conclusion, it is not easy for a municipality to change the status quo and become more civic and comprehensive, but even if this is achieved, it will not be without problems. Any organization becomes rigid over time. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that both the systems and actions of the organization are always as transparent as possible to the citizens. The essence of a city is openness. Its government must also be open. This will prevent it from deviating from its true nature and allow it to operate as a citizens' government forever.

Democracy means that the exercise of power is always done in an open forum, not by releasing information only when necessary.