

Creating a Compact Community with Effective Public Transport

Kumamoto City



Background

In the city, urban areas had continued expanding on the back of population growth and progress in motorisation. As the population is starting to fall and the society is aging more and more, the city now faces myriad issues such as an increase in elderly people with difficulties driving cars and the scaling down of the bus network reflecting a decrease in users. Against this background, concerns have emerged that commercial, medical and financial services, as well as public transport services and other functions needed for daily life could become inaccessible, and the current convenience of living could be lost as a result. In response to these concerns, the city decided to work on creating a multinucleated interlocking community.

Purpose of Project

The Kumamoto municipal government aims to utilise the urban foundations already established and convert the city into a "multinucleated interlocking" community that can cope with a decrease in population and rapid aging of society and is also sustainable. Under the multinucleated interlocking community concept, the city government assumes three types of core areas:

1. The central urban area where Kumamoto Castle, a symbol of the city, and advanced city functions, such as commercial districts, financial institutions and broadcasting bases, are concentrated.

2. Some local hubs where service functions needed for daily life, such as commercial and medical functions, are concentrated.

3. Many living hubs where housing is mainly located.

The local hubs and the living hubs will form "local living centres," with the central urban area and local hubs connected by public transport networks such as streetcars and buses.

Through the initiative, the municipal government will maintain the convenience of citizens' lives and promote exchanges between citizens, thereby increasing the attraction and liveliness of the city, and fostering Kumamoto as a hub for international exchange in the East Asian region.

Outline of Project

To realise the multinucleated interlocking community, the city government drew up a master plan in March 2014. The plan calls for creating a compact community where daily life and transportation are easy for everyone, by connecting the central urban area and the local hubs by highly convenient public transport services, consolidating commercial and medical functions at the local hubs, and encouraging citizens to live in areas with easy access to highly convenient public transport systems.

In fiscal 2015, a council for promoting the establishment of a multinucleated interlocking community was set up so that the municipal government, citizens, private-sector companies and other parties can share a vision for

community-building in response to a decrease in population and the rapid aging of society. Members of the council include representatives from private-sector organisations and citizens. The city government is working to compile a location optimisation programme under the special law on urban redevelopment by the end of fiscal 2015.

Features and Advanced Aspects

The municipal government aims to create a community interlocked with public transport systems, and is working with residents and the private sector to realise this.

The city released basic ideas on the multinucleated interlocking community in its master plan, even before the urban redevelopment special law was revised in August 2014.

Effects of Project

The promotion of community building combined with public transport systems will help improve accessibility to services necessary for daily life and increase day-to-day convenience.

As services necessary for daily life are available near residential areas and a community that enables the elderly and other residents to go everywhere on foot will be built, the number of healthy elderly people will increase, social security costs will be reduced, and local communities will be revitalised.

Through the formation of a city environment for convenient living, the attraction of Kumamoto will increase, more companies will open business operations in the city and new jobs will be created. The number of tourists and other visitors from other parts of Kumamoto Prefecture and from outside the prefecture will increase, as sufficient city functions are offered in the central urban area and other districts, and the unique attractions of Kumamoto will improve as a result.

A certain level of quality will be secured in administrative services through more efficient operations of public facilities.

Problems and Responses

◆Before Project Implementation

It is necessary to obtain understanding from citizens and private-sector organisations, and to expedite cooperation among the municipal government, citizens and private-sector organisations. The city will work on these issues through the council for promoting the establishment of a multinucleated interlocking community.

◆After Start of Project

As it will take a long time to create a compact city, the municipal government needs to consider what measures it should take to maintain city functions and prevent population density from falling, as well as appropriate timings for implementing these measures.

Outlook

Concrete measures will be studied in fiscal 2016 and later.

Reference URL

https://www.city.kumamoto.jp/hpKiji/pub/detail.aspx?c_id=5&id=2477&e_id=9 *Japanese
http://www.city.kumamoto.jp/hpKiji/pub/detail.aspx?c_id=5&id=9398&e_id=9 *Japanese

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Concept map for multinucleated interlocking city building

