A Comparative Study on the Cityscape Management Systems of the 23 Wards in Tokyo, Japan

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Abstract

Cityscape identity is developed based on a certain circumstance which determines what it represents to people. Local cities in Japan have recognized the importance of cityscape identity management as a means of creating their own identities, and the 23 wards of Tōkyō have also established various cityscape management systems pertinent to their circumstances. To find out how cityscape management systems of the 23 wards have been developed and what best practices have been employed was the objective of this study; the 23 wards were first divided into 2 groups according to the main management method, one using direct management systems, and the other using indirect systems, with the latter group reclassified into 4 sub-groups. The implementation status of each group differed according to the cityscape characteristics, the speed of change, or the degree of citizens’ interest. In most cases, the wards that have faced more changes have implemented the exclusive management systems with more concrete guidelines, while the wards that have undergone little change have managed through intangible systems with more flexible guidelines. Therefore, it is desired that a local city establishes and applies the most appropriate cityscape management system based on its own circumstance.

Keywords: cityscape management system; the 23 special wards of Tōkyō; citizen participation

1. Introduction

Cityscape identity is formed from certain political, economical, and social circumstances at a specific place and time. Consequently, the cityscape of one city differs from that of another. Various tangible and intangible components of a cityscape, from physical elements to socio-cultural elements, enable us to associate a representative image with each city.

At the advent of the localization era and in a time of economic stability, many local cities and towns in Japan recognized the significance of cityscape management and cityscape planning as a means for developing their own cityscape identities. The issue of cityscape management has become more prominent throughout the country, and local governments in Japan have, therefore, paid more attention to cityscape management plans and policies. The boom in establishing a unique cityscape management system in local cities from the late 1970s to the early 1990s, led mainly by the National Government of Japan, indicates a general concern about cityscape identity management.

However, until recently, these cityscape management systems have been recognized as protective or preservative activities implemented most often in historical and traditional small provincial cities in Japan. Many activities and academic studies of cityscape management have so far concentrated only on old suburban cities. Nevertheless, during the last two decades, a paradigm shift in the definition of cityscape management, from preserving beautiful spots or historic districts and appreciating them, as people might appreciate a museum display, to being interested in the surrounding environment and maintaining it, has occurred as a result of the establishment of various cityscape management tools across the country.

In the capital city of Japan, the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government (TMG) has acknowledged the importance of cityscape management by creating an attractive cityscape to serve as an ecumenopolis and to perpetuate Tōkyō’s identity as the capital, as well as by establishing systems to achieve these goals. Creating such a comprehensive cityscape management system at the prefectural level is, of course, important and indispensable, but managing the giant metropolis Tōkyō en bloc is naturally limited because it contains thousands of cityscapes, each with its own topography, history, and human activity, each of which needs to be handled differently.

To cope with deficiencies in the cityscape management system of Tōkyō, the special 23
autonomous wards have established management systems that consider the identity of their own cityscapes and implement policies suited to their own needs and in conjunction with the policies of the TMG. The socio-cultural circumstances of each ward have influenced the respective management methods of each ward according to the ward's original physical conditions. Differences in managing cityscapes are this study's concern. Each of the 23 wards in Tōkyō will be reviewed and compared with regard to how cityscape management systems have been developed to manage their cityscape identity so as to create appropriate and effective cityscape management systems that fit the individual context of the city. More specifically, the objective of this study is to determine the most appropriate cityscape identity management system as a guide to establishing unique management systems for each ward in metropolitan Tōkyō.

As for methodology, this study first reviews a brief history of the landscape management system of Japan and the TMG, which has had direct and indirect influences on each of the 23 wards' cityscape management systems. The study then reviews the cityscape management systems of the 23 wards of the Tōkyō Metropolitan City; each cityscape management system was reviewed by examining information about relevant projects and citizen activities. In addition, in-depth interviews with top cityscape management officials in each ward were performed to compensate for deficiencies in the documentary record. According to the commonly used system for cityscape management and its features, the 23 wards are categorized into two groups and several subgroups, and the appropriateness and effectiveness of each cityscape management system are discussed. Through this process, this study evaluates and makes conclusions about the efficacy of different cityscape management systems.

2. Cityscape Management Systems of Two Upper Authorities—the National Government of Japan and the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government (TMG)

1) The National Government of Japan

Cityscape management has been conducted as a city planning method to enhance a city’s physical environment since the early Taisho Period, when the modern city planning system was established. This recognition of a cityscape as an entity to be preserved occurred because of two disasters, the Kanto Great Earthquake and the Second World War. During the high-economic-growth period after World War II, featuring numerous development projects all over the country, people have increasingly recognized that cityscapes should be preserved from the adverse effects of development. Hence, the cityscape management system of the national government increased in size and, since the 1970s, has cooperated with various cityscape management systems at the local level, including more than 500 local landscape ordinances that were established nationwide.

However, these ordinances were limited because they had no legal force. They had only enough power to advise or recommend the prevention of undesirable activities that might affect the cityscape. In order to support local efforts for cityscape management by providing a legal basis, the Landscape Law was passed in 2004, comprising all of the present cityscape management systems of the central government of Japan; the Law empowers local governments to implement their own cityscape management systems with legal power in case management becomes impossible through autonomous ordinances. Local authorities basically have all of the necessary rights and responsibilities with regard to cityscape management through their own Cityscape Planning departments, and the central government supports them legally and financially.

In addition, any local government that obtains consent from its overarching authority can be acknowledged as a Cityscape Administrative Agency according to the Law, and these Agencies can then establish their own system of Cityscape Planning. As of 2010, 433 local authorities are registered in the Cityscape Administrative Agency, and, among them, 214 authorities have their own Cityscape Planning department. This shows the handover of power from the national government to local governments. In addition, the manageability of each Agency's cityscape control system is guaranteed and reinforced through substantial support from the national government so that the local cities can establish more practical and detailed systems of cityscape planning.

Furthermore, other legal plans and systems indirectly related to cityscape management, such as the Cultural Properties Protection Law, the Historic Buildings Preservation District, the Comprehensive Design System, Height Regulation, and District Planning, have emerged. However, all these systems are applied to comparatively small developments on single plots, thereby making it easier for these systems to manage cityscape elements in addition to other factors. These systems are used more frequently when no proper managing system for cityscape exists. Although cityscape management has rarely been the main purpose of these systems, they have been important tools for managing cityscape elements with a view toward establishing urban harmony among the various elements of a city's appearance.

2) The Tōkyō Metropolitan Government

Aiming to create a metropolitan cityscape for the international city of Tōkyō and to preserve the legacy of historically important cityscapes from the Edo Period, the Cityscape Planning of the TMG emphasizes consistency and cooperation among
the wards and between each ward and the TMG, to have the most direct and/or indirect effect on local ordinances and plans for cityscape management. However, the preceding cityscape management-related systems of Tōkyō have not respected the identity of the cityscape. Many of these systems were conceived from the perspective of development rather than that of preservation because of the development-oriented social trend formed in the capital city of Japan; accordingly, the guidelines and regulations were not very specific or strict.

Following the nationwide trend of establishing cityscape management systems from the late 1980s, the TMG committed fully to the preparatory process for establishing its own system; a three-year-preliminary investigation was initiated in 1990, and the Tōkyō-ite Council for Creating a Beautiful Cityscape and Exploratory Committee were formed. Information about the topography and vegetation pattern was gathered using GIS, and representative areas were selected for modeling future cityscapes. From this preliminary work, the TMG officially announced the establishment of the Cityscape Master Plan in 1994; the Master Plan sought to respect the existing cityscape while improving it. To do so, it proposed the development of eight Cityscape Zones, eleven Cityscape Axes, and three Cityscape Points.

Furthermore, the Cityscape Ordinance of the TMG was enacted in 1997 and recently revised in accordance with the new Landscape Law, enabling the authorities to give alteration orders to violators or even to penalize them. At the same time, the TMG released a new Cityscape Planning Guide in 2007, including detailed guidelines that reflected the revised Ordinance. This new cityscape planning system of the TMG is widely considered the first integrated synthesis of all of these systems. Moreover, it seeks to identify and preserve the character of Tōkyō and its surroundings through legal devices. However, it should be noted that the system lacks a clear relationship between the TMG and subordinate authorities in implementing cityscape management systems; it has been said that the existing cityscape management systems of the TMG do not fully account for the identity of each ward because of their top-down understanding of the city and implementation of its measures. No conflicts have arisen between local management systems and the Tōkyō system, because the local systems are based on the Tōkyō system. Nevertheless, it is important to clarify the relationship between the lower administrative units and the TMG in establishing and implementing management systems in order to ensure efficiency by avoiding administrative overlap.

3. Cityscape Management Systems of the 23 Wards

In Japan, institutional cityscape management, in practice, has been implemented at the local level rather than at the national level. From the late 1980s, the number of local governments introducing cityscape management systems increased drastically, and the special 23 wards of the TMG established and implemented unique management systems to create various kinds of cityscapes.

These wards can be divided, as follows, into two groups according to the primary cityscape management method: one group of twelve wards implementing exclusive cityscape management systems on a legal basis of their own landscape ordinances and the other group of the remaining eleven wards controlling cityscapes under urban planning systems or adopting the TMG's landscape ordinance and cityscape management system.

1) Cityscape management of wards using the exclusive system

As of 2010, twelve wards (Adachi, Bunkyō, Chiyoda, Kita, Kōtō, Meguro, Minato, Setagaya, Shinjuku, Sumida, Taitō, and Toshima), in alphabetic order, implemented exclusive cityscape management systems based on their own cityscape ordinances. All twelve wards are implementing the preliminary notification/consultation system by instituting a cityscape committee, although such a committee has little legal power. In addition, each ward divides its entire area into 5 to 19 districts according to each region's cityscape characteristics, suggests guidelines to manage the identity of each place, and adopts a designation system in the cityscape formation district when the cityscape of a district needs to be managed more intensively.

The details showing how to utilize these systems differ according to selectively strengthened management tools. Some wards have prioritized the prior notification system, while others have focused on strict guidelines. Wards decide which tools to use by considering the interests and circumstances of each ward, as follows. Managed with well-planned policies and systems as the center of Tōkyō from the early stage, the Bunkyō ward and Chiyoda wards have seen relatively few changes to their original cityscapes, which, since the Edo period, were generally occupied by high-class residences and by administrative districts, respectively. Thus, they established the landscape ordinance and cityscape planning in the early stage and have implemented top-down cityscape management systems with well-planned and specific guidelines for preserving favored environments, with relatively low interest and participation among the residents.

On the other hand, the Kōtō, Minato, Shinjuku and Sumida wards have lost many of their original cityscapes and created new ones through several large-scale development projects and high-rise constructions. Hence, the Kōtō ward introduced a notification system earlier than all of the other wards, and the Shinjuku ward established the earliest cityscape ordinances to
manage its identity effectively by organizing active educational activities to attract citizens' attention.

With regard to wards located relatively far from the center of Tōkyō—the Adachi, Kita, Meguro, Setagaya, and Toshima wards have seen few changes to their cityscapes, which are occupied mainly by low-rise residential areas and face little development pressure. Accordingly, the guidelines of these three wards consist of general and abstract expressions that allow citizens to decide what kind of cityscape should be preserved or created, although they introduced the cityscape ordinance and planning, more or less, for form's sake.

In addition, the Taitō ward has preserved old cityscapes and images, which draw tourists to the ward, as places for the common people in a large part of the ward. Therefore, it has "adapted" cityscapes created by its residents—through market forces in most cases—throughout the ward. From decision-making to planning, retailers and residents play a leading role in cityscape management with the full support of the ward, guided by the ward's landscape ordinance and cityscape planning.

1) Cityscape management of wards using other management systems

It is not true that the remaining eleven wards have no systems for managing the cityscape; rather, they have different types of systems, and these systems are sometimes more concerned with the ward's cityscape management than instituting a "manifest" cityscape management system. These eleven wards with "concealed" cityscape management systems are the Arakawa, Chūō, Edogawa, Itabashi, Katsushika, Nakano, Nerima, Ōta, Shibuya, Shinagawa and Suginami wards.

The cityscape identities of these eleven wards were developed with fewer discernible characteristics than those of the twelve wards reviewed above, and they had neither been prioritized nor managed by exclusive management systems because they faced a lesser threat of drastic cityscape changes on account of their locations—usually a long way away from central Tōkyō—and a relatively uniform land-use pattern. Therefore, with respect to cityscape management systems, the eleven certainly implemented fewer cityscape management tools using the word 'cityscape or landscape' in their title. However, the specifics of each ward varied; not only did some wards give low priority to cityscape management, but some wards actively used other tools in managing their cityscapes, even some that did not realize that these activities might be considered formal and official "cityscape management." These eleven wards accordingly can be categorized into four sub-groups according to the type of management method being utilized, as follows: wards managing the cityscape through District Planning, wards managing only the limited district's cityscape with a specific management system, wards managing the cityscape through the active participation of citizens without any specified systems, and wards with no cityscape management activities.

With respect to the first group, which used mainly District Planning to manage their respective cityscapes, the wards such as Chūō, Itabashi and Ōta in this group underwent rapid transitions from being rural landscapes to cityscapes with newly-built roads and collective apartment complexes in some parts of the ward, mostly occupied with residential cityscapes, none of which caused drastic changes to the rest of the ward. Hence, District Planning managed cityscapes only for designated areas that were expecting a radical change, even if most of the District Plans were not designated for the purpose of managing cityscapes but rather for controlling cityscape elements. The most noticeable feature of this group is that the focus of cityscape management is on creating a favorable cityscape in the expected-redevelopment area in the future, resulting in an arranged cityscape that comprises mainly tall and new buildings. In addition, the wards in the group tended to operate such that the public sector initiated cityscape management activities and asked for people's cooperation. However, citizen participation in cityscape management is lower in this group than in others.

The wards in the second group designated a special district to manage the cityscape exclusively but did not have cityscape management systems in the rest of the ward. Edogawa and Katsushika wards in this group even set up an exclusive section in the concerned department for managing their special cityscape management districts, but that was the only form of cityscape management in each ward. Cityscape management activities were initiated only in special districts through the establishment of specific guidelines. Recently, however, there has been a move to expand the applications of cityscape management in limited areas to each ward in their entirety. Wards are now preparing to set up a comprehensive cityscape management system ward-wide according to the experiences and implications of the cityscape management district's management system.

The third group of wards such as Arakawa, Nakano and Suginami, which managed the cityscape mainly through citizen participation, emphasizes each resident's small but voluntary and conscientious contribution more than official or formal management tools. The awarding system that was temporarily popular in Japan has remained so and progressed even further through various efforts to educate people and heighten their awareness about cityscape management, such as by holding seminars and symposiums and by issuing monthly publications depicting the surrounding cityscapes to make people realize the importance of their environment and give them a practical opportunity.
to participate in managing the cityscape by themselves. In this group, a relatively large portion of the budget and staff are allocated for educational activities. The primary reason for its success in managing the cityscape through citizen activities is that the ratio of the residential area is high in the wards in this group, and this configuration seldom generates an enormous amount of development pressure on the cityscape. If development pressure is not negligible, wards use the Cityscape Formation Outline to bolster citizens' activities, and wards in which large-scale development has recently been promoted are seeking to establish a new cityscape management plan and ordinance.

The last group of Nerima, Shibuya and Shinagawa has not implemented a system for managing the cityscape until recently, either because the cityscapes in these wards, most of which consist of residential areas, have not changed significantly; or conversely, the changes in the cityscape have occurred too rapidly to preserve or manage them. Wards in this category have devoted themselves to affairs other than cityscape management and, for the most part, have felt little need to address it, but these wards are now in a period of transition with regard to cityscape management, as a consequence of the Landscape Law and the resulting activities of other local authorities.

4. General Tendency of Cityscape Management Systems

In general, wards whose cityscapes have changed because of large development projects have established and implemented stricter cityscape management systems than wards whose cityscapes have not changed as significantly; most of these wards are operating under the specified guidelines designated for each sub-region and utilizing the preliminary consultation/notification system, which is based on individual cityscape ordinances. Among them, wards such as Adachi, Minato, Meguro and Sumida recently (all in 2009) established cityscape ordinances together with cityscape planning to deal with the rapid changes in their cityscapes caused by recent developments; these three wards managed the cityscapes of several concerned areas that needed to be managed, utilizing District Planning before new management systems were established.

In contrast, the cityscape management systems of the wards that have undergone few changes to their cityscape tend to be less strict and more adaptable, depending on the circumstances, allowing the residents to create unique cityscape identities. In particular, these wards consist of detached housing areas where drastic changes seldom occur, allowing residents to manage their cityscape with relatively abstract guidelines so that more local residents can participate in cityscape management activities.

In the case of Chūō and Katsushika, which have certain areas where cityscapes have to be preserved, the wards have implemented cityscape management systems with specific guidelines applicable only to designated areas. The cityscapes of the rest of the wards are not closely managed, and only the neighboring residents and retailers near the designated areas are concerned with managing the cityscape and participate in management activities.

The remaining wards have utilized District Planning to manage their cityscapes, regulating minimum items, such as height, and some of them have realized the

![Fig.1. Relationship between the Possibility to be Changed in Cityscape and the Concreteness of Cityscape Management System](image-url)
necessity of more integrated cityscape management systems in order to preserve their cityscape identity from drastic changes caused by recent development projects. In particular, large-scale development projects are underway in wards, such as Arakawa, Edogawa, and Shibuya, which have managed their cityscapes mainly through citizen participation and management activities. As of 2010, these wards are preparing to establish new cityscape ordinances and cityscape planning on the basis of heightened citizen awareness of cityscape management.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

The findings of this review of cityscape identity and how management systems have developed indicate that social and historical circumstances have influenced not only the creation of each ward's cityscape identity, but also decisions about which management tools should be utilized for managing it; for example, the cityscapes of historically or naturally significant places in danger of being damaged had previously been managed directly by the central government or the TMG; however, the managerial role has recently been transferred from upper government levels to the local government, and the wards have established institutional and concrete frameworks to use cityscape management systems more pro-actively. In contrast, wards farther from the center of Tōkyō have been relatively late in preparing cityscape management systems because they have been developed as (or still are) cities, most of which consist of low-rise residential areas or agricultural lands, where radical changes requiring a prompt management system seldom occur. These wards have established more general cityscape management systems, or have none, and these management systems are guided by citizens' voluntary activities as determined by a local consensus for creating their own cityscape identities. In addition, wards in which changes in the cityscape occurred sporadically or partially have adopted District Planning by adding an article about cityscape management. The 23 wards of the Tōkyō Metropolitan City eventually adopted and applied the most appropriate system for preserving their cityscape identity to suit the unique circumstances of the moment.

This study shows that not every ward must establish an exclusive cityscape management system; in other words, an exclusive cityscape management system, involving ordinances or cityscape planning, for example, is not the only way to deal with cityscapes, because most of the wards have their own methods of managing their cityscapes. More importantly, an indirect cityscape management system can sometimes be the most appropriate and the most effective tool for preserving a ward's cityscape, which has been formed to protect and define a ward's identity according to a thorough understanding of the ward's unique development process. However, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that wards without exclusive cityscape management systems were denied consistency or integrity in implementing their indirect cityscape management tools from the legal perspective, because unofficial policies were easily affected by changes of the ward mayor or his/her political line and/or interests and even by the residents' whims. Even the wards that have managed their cityscapes with relative success through an indirect management system, therefore, experience a degree of insecurity or insufficiency about their current systems and feel the need to establish more concrete and exclusive cityscape management systems; some of these wards are actually eager to create their own systems.

Thus, it is recommended that each ward of Tōkyō and other local-level governments seek the most adequate way of managing their cityscapes and introduce and implement phased-in cityscape
management systems adapted to their current situation. Wards dealing with unintentional changes to their cityscapes that, at present, lack an exclusive management system need first to establish a district-level cityscape management for districts where changes are expected and to implement educational programs only for the people concerned, not for the entire area. Expanding the management area gradually to the entire ward according to the know-how acquired from the pre-managed district and attracting the interests of residents are the next steps. With a comprehensive cityscape management system established with continuous activities to educate people about the importance of their participation, a local city can ultimately create and implement the most appropriate guidelines and policies for each individual district in the ward. In this way, any method can be temporarily employed as the cityscape management system most suitable to effective management of the ward's cityscape identity, allowing the city to have a variety of cityscapes with various management systems; consequently, a carefully considered and integrated cityscape management system for the entire ward can finally be established and implemented.

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