

Urban Design Studio: Visions for Central Tokyo

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The Marunouchi/Otemachi area, across from the Imperial Palace, plays a critical role in Tokyo, and in Japan. As the preeminent district for the headquarters of banks and multinational corporations, it is an important component of the economic power of Japan. At present the area is developed to about 84% of its permissible floor area which is set at an FAR of 10. The Urban Design Studio was asked to examine a proposal that the area be doubled in density to an FAR of 20 and five student teams set out to examine what the environment could be like at this density. To accomplish

PROJECTS

1: Park City

Park City encourages incremental development that respects existing street patterns and creates a large new public open space over the railway tracks of Tokyo Station to offset the effects of increased density. Three new activity nodes

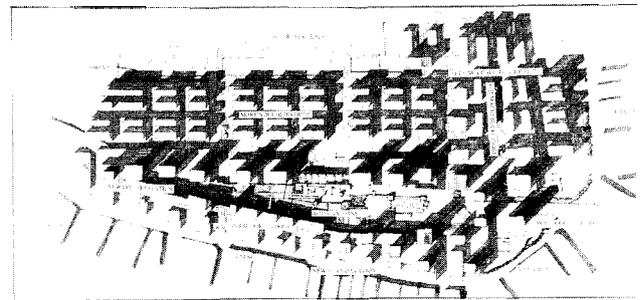
- in the Hibiya area, the west forecourt of Tokyo Station, and the Otemachi area
- provide a new image and identity for central Tokyo.

These nodes, each with a unique form related to the block pattern, establish a physical link between multiple levels of transportation facilities and development below and above ground, and are the centerpieces of redevelopment efforts. In addition, Park City provides new form of office space to meet

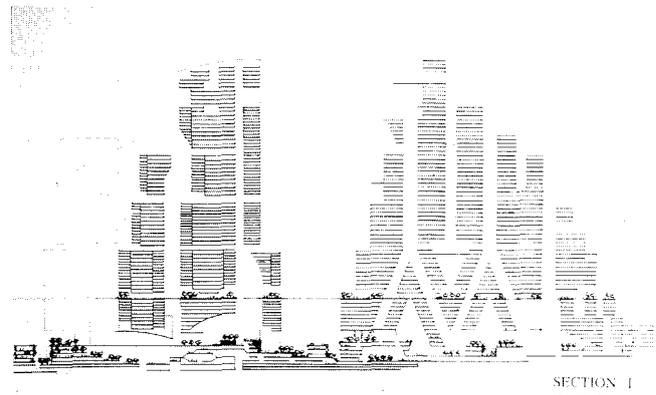
2: Superblock City

Superblock City aggregates current blocks into development blocks which are typically four blocks in size. Replanning the district as superblocks provides flexibility in redeveloping the area, and offers the opportunity to create substantial vehicle-free that include amenities integrated with commercial and office areas. The strategy envisions a relatively even FAR over the site, although densities have been shifted within blocks to create a low Imperial Palace edge along Hibiya-dori. The eastern side of Tokyo Station is developed at a lower density to mark a transition to the buildings in the Yaesu area. Activity zones - distinguished by alterations to the street grid and by building forms which depart from the predominant orientation - punctuate the superblock pattern.

this, they had to take account of the following: the optimum unit of redevelopment; the mix of future uses; the disposition of densities; the vertical organization of uses; common infrastructure and amenities; the form, image and the environmental quality of the area; and in general terms, the economic implications of increasing density. (In terms of the latter, the studies showed that a Development Impact Fund created from a portion of the increment in land value could accumulate as much as 100 billion yen per year, which could be available for new public amenities in the area.)

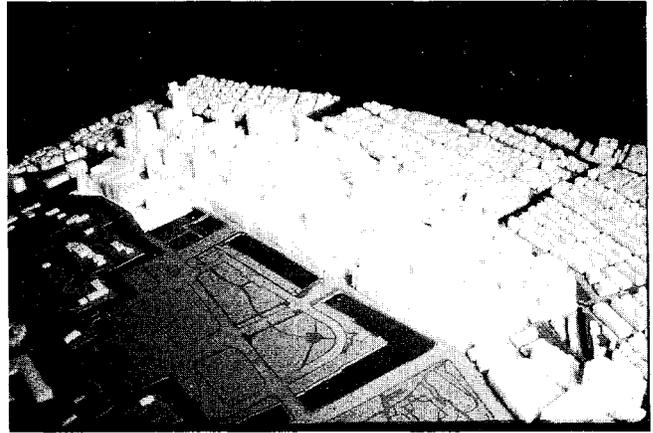


the changing needs of the workplace, and creates expanded opportunities for business and personal services, retail, restaurants and housing.



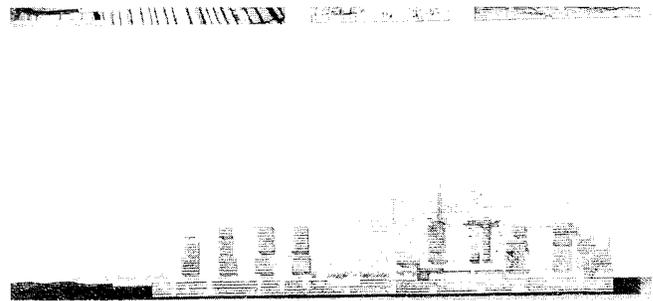
3: High City/Low City

High City/Low City creates a substantial new office concentration - with Tokyo's tallest buildings - around Otemachi Station, and limits the height and intensity of development along the edge of the Imperial Palace, to respect the traditional scale of this important frontage. A spine of new corporate headquarters buildings line an expanded north-south boulevard which parallels a rebuilt Tokyo Station. A band of cultural and educational facilities runs along the face of the Imperial Palace edge over a depressed Hibiya-dori, and a "high-touch hotel and entertainment district surrounds the proposed Tokyo International Forum. Creating High City/Low City requires an innovative system of transferring development rights.



4: Rail Corridor City

Rail Corridor City creates a new linear office core on the air-rights above the railway tracks and Tokyo Station. By concentrating development along the rail corridor, building heights and development can be controlled in sensitive areas, especially adjacent to the Imperial Palace and Yaesu. The new core - a dense network of office and residential buildings each with individual profile and identity - frames a large public space built on a deck above a restructured rail terminal. A second concentration of development occurs in the Otemachi area, aligning a below-grade commercial boulevard connected to the underground network of walkways and subway stations. The traditional Marunouchi area



is redeveloped as a lower-scaled, thin-slab office district, designed to accommodate the headquarters office needs of the future.

5: Network City

Network City offers a three dimensional city of vertically layered uses and interconnected blocks that creates a network of opportunities unparalleled in current city development. While requiring considerable coordination of development at the district scale, Network City represents a process for rebuilding the Marunouchi/Otemachi area, rather than a blueprint based on a fixed plan. The scheme allows existing uses to remain, even while redevelopment occurs above, and suggests how new building forms could be custom tailored to the circumstances of individual blocks and sites. The notion of a ground level is replaced in Network City by a "ground zone" of levels above and below current datum, containing a mixture of services and facilities required to support the office area of the future. Similarly the tops of buildings become sites of business oriented housing and institutions, with landscaped open areas as amenities. Between are new forms of offices, with sky lobbies and atria admitting light to every level.

