

Reorganization of Housing & Urban Development Corporation and some Innovative Approaches Adopted by Japan

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1. Reorganization of the Housing & Urban Development Corporation from October 1: One of the main areas of the Administrative Reform

At present the most important and imminent agenda in Japan is the Administrative Reform.

Since 1955, the Housing & Urban Development Corporation has produced 1.5 million housing units. It has always been playing a pioneering role in creating new looks and ideal dwellings for the new age.

As part of the Administrative Reform, the Housing & Urban Development Corporation was reorganized to become the Urban Development Corporation from October 1.

After the reorganization exercise, although the core mission of the Urban Development Corporation is to work on urban infrastructure, it continues to be developing and supplying housing units to the general public. While it is commonly agreed that the Urban Development Corporation should be working in areas such as housing, lands, roads and parks, it is hoped that in five to ten years time, the development of private housing commodities will be taken over by the private sector.

2. SKELETON - INFILL system to meet the needs of various life styles and work demands

We shall supply the SKELETON in the first stage. The SKELETON includes frames, beams, floor slabs and utilities such as water supply, drainage and electricity which involve works outside the housing unit.

When the SKELETON is ready, the inhabitants or tenants will proceed to construct part of the INFILL. The INFILL includes windows, door, floors, partition panels, bath units, kitchen and other indoor furnishing.

Here we would like to introduce a model of the SKELETON-INFILL system. This is a Flat-floor-space type. The utility zone is located at one side of the housing unit in order to gain maximum volume of the 3-dimensional free space. (Some OHPs will be shown to illustrate the ways to obtain different types of free space.)

Many kinds of tools are used to provide living space which can accommodate various styles of urban dwelling.

The floor level is completely flat as a result of the barrier-free-concept.

3. Mid-depth Flat-beam structure to allow more light into rooms by making wide openings for full height from the floor to the ceiling

This structure is developed on the basis of the conventional wall box frame structure.

In the conventional structure, beam heights are usually from 600 to 700mm; but in this Flat-beam structure, beam heights are only 350mm.

Without the restriction caused by beam height, there is enormous flexibility for interior and facade design, and even in future changes in room arrangement.

4. Effective land-use by Land Activation Project to promote the optimal utilization of unused or vacant land such as fragmented lots that are difficult to develop because they scattered in urban areas

Urban Development Corporation has been working with local governments and private companies in promoting urban redevelopment or community development of some low-density or unused land.

The criteria for such projects are: 1) fragmented land lots in an existing urban area that are extremely difficult to be utilized by individuals; 2) the possibility of utilizing these lots can be enhanced by factors such as changing legal conditions (thus increasing floor area ratio) or changing the shape of the lot by using the surrounding area (thus increasing the size of the lot)

Furthermore, in areas where development is circumvented by the shape and size of a certain plot of land because individuals are limited in the ability to acquire land, the Urban Development Corporation will contribute its efforts in facilitating the smooth acquisition of such land.

After these land lots are reshaped or reformed and the infrastructure are provided with the technology and know-how of the Urban Development Corporation, these lots will then be sold to private companies or local government for development.

5. Redevelopment project along the coastal areas in Tokyo Bay which are modeled after the Enterprise Zone Project in England

The KEIHIN coastal industrial area in Tokyo Bay is developed with the Enterprise Zone project in England as its prototype. The area is about 6000ha which is almost the same size of the Manhattan island in New York.

Last year we established a regular meeting for research and study of redevelopment. The members of this meeting include National Land Agency, Ministry of Construction, Kanagawa Prefecture, Yokohama City, Kawasaki City and the Urban Development Corporation.

And a part of this area is already renovated by land readjustment. It is in the south-end of this area, named MM21.

The name "Minato Mirai 21", meaning "Future Port", was chosen to create a 21st Century image.

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