

Minato Mirai 21

REVITALISING THE CITY

Yokohama's liveability, competitiveness and identity declined historically as it became an extension of Tokyo and waterfront industries divided, polluted and congested the city-centre. Mayor **Fumiko Hayashi** explains how "Minato Mirai 21" revitalised the area, resulting in Yokohama receiving a LEE KUAN YEW WORLD CITY PRIZE Special Mention in 2014.



01 Yokohama's industrial waterfront, 1962.



Yokohama, Japan

The Challenge

During the 1950s and '60s, when Tokyo experienced a strong inflow of population, neighbouring Yokohama became a target of its metropolitan expansion. The city became an extension of Tokyo, functioning as its commuter town and industrial zone. Consequently, pollution worsened, greenery and farmlands diminished in size and importance, and the city fragmented, losing its identity. This trend continued throughout the 1970s. Even as the city grew, its urban centre remained weak and uncompetitive, while its suburban areas became less liveable.

Yokohama's Central Business District (CBD) had its own issues. The Coastal Zone of the CBD was occupied by a shipyard and industries, which prohibited public access to the waterfront. The traditional business districts of Kannai and Kangai and the active transportation hub of Yokohama Station were divided into two segregated areas. Worsening the situation was the large volume of traffic going through the CBD to the port. A multi-objective solution was required to enhance the business function of the CBD, reunite the two districts to create new business opportunities, revitalise the city, and mitigate traffic congestion and pollution.

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The Solution

The project “Minato Mirai 21 (MM21)”, which means “Future Port for the 21st Century”, commenced in 1983 to redevelop 186 hectares (1.86 square kilometres) of waterfront and reclaim 74 hectares (0.74 square kilometres) of land. In redeveloping this area, the aim was to establish a business, commercial and cultural hub for the city. A rejuvenation of the waterfront would also restore Yokohama’s cultural identity. A shipyard, which used to divide Yokohama’s two main business districts, was relocated to the Kanazawa reclamation area along the coast of Yokohama City. This controversial yet historic decision to relocate the shipyard significantly

helped in realising the development plan for this coastal city centre.

Designed as an integrated package of projects, MM21 was implemented with full coordination between the city’s stakeholders. Infrastructure and public facilities were constructed mainly by the public sector. Specific project activities included the following:

Transportation and Infrastructure Development

The expressway which had been originally planned by the central government as an elevated structure was built underground to avoid creating an urban blight in the landscape. In addition, a new urban railway line was constructed to connect MM21 with other areas in the city and with the Tokyo Metropolitan Area.

Heritage, Greenery and Urban Design

The Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse, which, in 2010, was the first in Japan to receive the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Award of Distinction; the Dockyard Garden, which is the oldest commercial dockyard in the country; and the training ship Nippon Maru, which was launched in 1930, are three of the historic monuments at MM21, serving as witnesses to the city’s glorious past.

01 People enjoying Red Brick Warehouse park, with MM21 skyline behind.





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In addition, a pedestrian network, comprising streets, malls, parks and waterways, was developed to create a safe and pleasant space for pedestrians. Efforts at urban design were made as well, with the creation of MM21's skyline, unification of colours for structures, and restrictions on advertisements.

Living Environment

Environmentally friendly housing with a good living environment was developed, along with the introduction of new technologies such as community air-conditioning, a multipurpose underground utility conduit, Comprehensive Assessment System for Built Environment Efficiency (CASBEE), etc.

Multifunctional Urban Activities

This new urban centre attracted new investments, including by Japan's leading firms, allowing workplaces and residences to be located close together. International MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions) events such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) were held at Pacifico Yokohama, a multifunctional convention complex, further attracting business activities from overseas.

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01 The MM21 project included the restoration of the Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse and Nippon Maru.

03 This landscaped pedestrian network was a result of the MM21 project.

04 The new Minato Mirai 21 (MM21) area, after redevelopment.



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Sharing the Financial Burden

The total amount spent on MM21 up to 2012 was JPY517.3 billion (US\$5.05 billion). The city shared the financial cost with various sectors, including the national government and the public agency which undertook land readjustment programmes. So far, the city has borne only 16% of the total cost of this urban redevelopment project.

Urban Management

The private company MM21 Co. Ltd. (currently Yokohama Minato Mirai 21 Corporation) was established and undertook planning, promoting, marketing and coordination for locations of investments and their activities. The “Basic Agreement on Machizukuri (community planning)” under MM21 Co. Ltd. was formulated, and this agreement, which indicates the rules for a coordinated and harmonised development, was voluntarily signed in 1988 by both landowners of MM21 and Yokohama Minato Mirai 21 Co. Ltd. The agreement is enforced by the MM21 Town Building Council.



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The Outcome

MM21 revitalised Yokohama’s CBD, becoming an engine of growth and enhancing the city’s image. As of 2013, 93,000 were working at MM21, and annual tourists (business and recreational) to the area totalled 72 million. About 1,720 firms have their offices at MM21. The city earned about JPY14.6 billion (US\$140 million) worth of taxes from the area in 2012, and the estimated cumulative economic effect is as large as JPY2.7 trillion (US\$30 billion)



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for construction activities and JPY1.8 trillion (US\$20 billion) for business activities annually. Ultimately, the project aims to create a district where 190,000 people work and 10,000 people live.

Today, MM21 has become a readily recognisable CBD and cultural centre, attracting businesses, museums, MICE events and tourists from all over the world. The area is also disaster-resilient, utilising various disaster-proof technologies such as quake-resilient quays, underground utility tunnels, etc. The success of MM21 can be attributed to various factors. The city government remained committed to its long-term vision and policy, which stakeholders also understood. In response to changes in socio-economic contexts, urban planning and management was

strategic and integrated. There was effective coordination between the city and central governments, among developers, and between MM21 and all stakeholders. The partnership between the private sector and city government resulted in innovative funding mechanisms. Finally, the value added by MM21 attracted investments and associated activities.

Now the city has set a new long-term goal to make MM21 a showcase for the future city. The city has launched various new urban development measures under the scope of the Minato Mirai 2050 Project, with the aim to realise the smartest future environmental city in the world, the centrepiece of global attention.



Fumiko Hayashi

has been Mayor of Yokohama since 2009. Before assuming office as Mayor, she served as President of BMW Tokyo Corp., Chairperson and CEO of The Daiiei, Inc., Operating Officer of Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. In 2005, she was selected as one of *Forbes Magazine's* “The World’s 100 Most Powerful Women” and received the Harvard Business School Businesswoman Award in 2006.