

A study on methods of renewal for mixed working-residential zones
in the Nihonbashi District of Tokyo,
comparing with the North End of Boston, Massachusetts.

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The purpose of this study is to outline future methods of urban planning for the Nihonbashi District by identifying the distinctive features of the area and applying them in the future design of the entire district in an effort to preserve its innate character. The study proposes a future vision for the district based on a comparison of the with Boston's North End neighborhood which has similar characteristics to that of Nihonbashi.

Since the Edo Period the Nihonbashi district has been a bustling center of life for the city of Tokyo, historically used as a center of commerce, politics, and culture. However, over the centuries it has moved from being a vital center of activity for the city to an inactive and quiet business district.

The North End of Boston is also known as Little Italy, due to the increase in the number of Italian emigrants after the late 19th century who came to occupy 90% of the population by 1920. The neighborhood was divided by the Boston Highway which was removed by the Big Dig Project, completed in 2007. The removal of the highway led to the connection of North End with the surrounding neighborhoods and subsequently to gentrification. This gentrification meant the loss of North End's and Little Italy's distinctive Italian culture.

Through comparing Nihonbashi-Ichinobu with North End, where the history and characteristics are similar, the potential of Nihonbashi-Ichinobu is considered with regard to its historical issues. Additionally, after investigating the change of the North End Case of highway removal, the directionality of the future urban planning in Nihonbashi area is determined.

The direction of community development was established based on three perspectives: time, space and the human perspective. Considering time means creating a vision for the future based on the history of the people living there. Space refers to the image of the city and entails the protection of historical buildings and streetscapes. The human perspective means considering who lives in, uses, develops, manages, and creates the area of Nihonbashi.

This research uncovered the potential of Ichinobu, Nihonbashi, in order to conserve and develop Ichinobu as a thriving commercial district. Finally, the directionality of community development hence forth means sharing the three visions approach— time, space and human— with the people of the entire Nihonbashi area.