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Umekita Project

— Osaka City, Osaka Prefecture, Japan
2005-

A large-scale transit-oriented urban development aimed at regenerating Osaka, the largest city in Western Japan

Key Issue

The Umekita area is a prime location north of Osaka Station in the central part of the city. Previously a freight railyard, it now serves as a terminal hub with a daily ridership of 2.5 million. The project was expected to revitalize the economy of the Kansai region by strengthening the function of the district as a transport hub and by making the most of its prime location. Using the existing urban infrastructure to create a distinctive international hub where urban functions are centralized, the project was required to build a center of innovation, serving as a meeting place for entrepreneurs and engineers who endeavor to step into the global market. Currently, further improvement to urban functions is planned, including the operation of an airport rail link and connection to the Superconducting Maglev (SCMaglev) system “Linear Chuo Shinkansen Line” with a new station.

Project Approach

Creation of an innovation hub that connects with the world

In order to create next-generation urban industries and businesses and appeal to the world, the project introduced an innovation hub for intellectual creation called Knowledge Capital. As an advanced element in urban development, it is a hub that enables interaction between researchers, creators, entrepreneurs and businesses, consumers and others from various fields. It is equipped with facilities for social interactions, a multi-purpose theater, and facilities for international conventions in order to support new value creating activities, such as the expansion of human networks and the commercialization of business plans.

(Land utilization plan)
This project is implemented as a two-phase development. In Phase I, commercial and office facilities centered on the Knowledge Capital (1.5 ha) and residential buildings were constructed. In Phase II, development is underway for commercial and MICE facilities centered around the urban park (4.5 ha).

*This is a perspective image during the proposal stage (May 2018) and is subject to change in the future. Courtesy of developer of Second Development Zone in the Umekita Area



(Knowledge Salon)
This is a salon that is open to members and aims to create new value through inter-disciplinary exchange of entrepreneurs, researchers, creators, artists and others. It includes various spaces such as a communication space, a meeting room, work spaces, and a presentation lounge, with coordination service by an exclusive salon manager. Photo courtesy of Grand Front Osaka TMO

Attracting future urban designs through an international concept competition

Originally, the urban development was to be jointly planned by the Osaka City Government, local business circles, the national government, the Urban Renaissance Agency and other entities. However, as the project was expected to generate domestic and international appeal from the planning stage, and to create world class urban spaces with international competitiveness, an international concept competition was held to invite ideas from around the world to initiate its overall conception. It attracted more than 900 proposals from 52 countries. Using them as reference, a grand design for urban development and a basic proposal was formulated and an implementation committee was created. The urban plan was implemented in two phases, and an advanced development zone (Phase I) with dignified and friendly streetscape between the station and the district was created.



(Knowledge Capital)
It is equipped with a café and other facilities, as well as an exhibition space that generates casual human interactions. Photo courtesy of Grand Front Osaka TMO



To the Next Phase

For the Umekita Phase II project that is scheduled to proceed, the construction of a new urban space that integrates greenery with urban functions will commence, beginning with a large urban park approximately covering 4.5ha of the 9.1ha Phase II area. Proposals such as linkage with the Knowledge Capital, the establishment of an operating body by developers, and consistent design between the park and rooftop greenery are being made. The project aims to create a revenue generating structure and an implementation framework for the long-term maintenance and management of the urban park.

Data

Area: Approx. 24 ha (approx. 8.6 ha for Phase I, approx. 9.1 ha for Phase II, and the remainder to be used for an city planning road)
Project implementing bodies: Osaka City Government, Osaka Prefectural Government, West Japan Railway Company (JR-West), Japan Railway Construction, Transport and Technology Agency (JRTT), Urban Renaissance Agency (UR), Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd., ORIX Real Estate Corporation, Takenaka Corporation, Hankyu Corporation and other entities (for Phase I and Phase II)

* Urban Renaissance Agency participates not only in the implementation of base infrastructure such as the land readjustment project, but also in the coordination of the overall development with landowners. Main facilities introduced: Commercial and business facilities, MICE facilities, residential facilities, accommodation facilities, urban park and intellectual creation base

