OVERVIEW

PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN FOR REJUVENATING LOCAL CITIES

Design and Management to Vitalize Communities

HISASHI SHIBATA
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HISASHI SHIBATA
Consortium building is the process for consolidating diverse ideas and opinions of people, which is the key to improving public spaces and, subsequently, revitalizing a city. Recently, instead of a top-down approach driven by an administrative office, a participatory approach has been widely adopted in Japan to make decisions on the principles of community development, including the directions of facility or public space improvement in an urban master plan. The principles of public space improvement are commonly discussed in councils and workshops in which residents are members. It has been a while since such a consultative process was integrated into a standard procedure of community development endeavors.

To estimate utilization rates or examine an operation and maintenance plan of a facility, detailed improvement principles should be developed not only with a clear understanding of the needs of facility users (or target users) but also by consolidating the views of various stakeholders. Recently, in Japan, a public-private partnership, which is a cooperative arrangement between public and private sectors, has been given considerable attention. In this regard, how much should an administrative office allow and support private entities to be involved in the improvement and utilization of public spaces? An administrative office has the authority to collect taxes from residents, thereby being mandated to provide services for them equally. Conversely, private entities aim to create new opportunities and generate profits by overcoming various rules and regulations. Thus, it is indispensable to have them compromise on their views and plans. It is not only between different attributes or organizations where differences in thoughts and behaviors are observed. Sectionalism within an administrative office is seriously detrimental to the implementation of revitalization policies in a regional city; a construction department focusing on construction works alone and a culture and education department dealing with culture and education aspects alone. It is no exaggeration to say that fostering collaboration and building consensus between departments within the same administrative office is the hardest part when a project is implemented. Public space design and management of an urban revitalization project can’t be successful without the involvement of staff who are properly trained on consensus building.

This paper will discuss first about methodologies and the main points which facilitate collaboration and build consensus among people representing various organizations and with diverse attributes such as administrative offices, residents, private entities, etc. Then, a case study of Kego Park will be presented. It will describe the design process of the restoration project, which has successfully led to the improvement of safety and security in the park and its revitalization.
The term “workshop” has been well adopted in Japanese society. A workshop provides a place where participants engage in group activities to understand the viewpoints of others, share each other’s opinions and learn creatively. Extensive knowledge has already been accumulated concerning the effects of workshops, the methods to facilitate in-depth discussions, relevant technical skills, etc. Although sometimes the terms “workshop” and “explanatory meeting” are used interchangeably, they have completely different meanings. Roughly speaking, in an “explanatory meeting”, explainers who mainly present designs and plans are seated at one side and residents who listen to them are seated at the other side, facing each other. On the other hand, in a workshop, participants are expected to engage in activities creatively under their own initiative. The necessary precondition for a successful workshop is to avoid confrontational seating arrangements such as the one in an explanatory meeting (Figure 1). We must bear in mind that a workshop is not a place where an administrative office and residents confront each other, but a place where an administrative office or a planner and residents, or residents themselves consult each other creatively. In preparation of a workshop, an organizer should make a seating arrangement in a way which participants face different directions with their sight lines intersecting, thereby creating a cooperative atmosphere which will prevent confrontation.

**Figure 1: Spatial differences in seating arrangements in explanatory meeting and workshop**
Professor Randolph T., Jr. Hester (Professor emeritus, University of California, Berkeley) describes in his book 1) 12 steps that are adopted by the Community Development by Design, which he chairs (Figure 2). According to him, the first step is “to listen to the community”, followed by “defining an objective” which, I think, is the most important one among the twelve steps. They are followed by “mapping and categorizing features of the community”, “relearning the own community”, “understanding the overall picture of the community”, and “depicting a series of actions expected to be implemented”, through which participants share and assess the project from its overall picture to details referring to visual images such as diagrams, etc. The succeeding steps are to “envisage a form based on features of the place”, “organize assessment points”, “prepare multiple plans” and “pre-evaluate plans”, through which a project design is developed in detail. The step to “delegate responsibility to residents” comes next. It aims to enhance awareness of residents on how to engage in public spaces, etc. The last step is to “conduct ex-post evaluation”, ensuring the sustainability of activities in future.

In addition to these steps of process design and program design, Prof. Hester lists the following four essential techniques and skills which community designers should acquire.

First is a group process method, that refers to how to foster collaboration among people in a project and lead people to collective decision-making by overcoming conflicts of interests. It corresponds to techniques such as workshops, role plays, etc. that have become common recently. For example, in one development project in which I was involved, I carried out training for group facilitators prior to the organization of a resident meeting.

Figure 2: Hester’s twelve steps
In the training, municipal officers learned how to facilitate group discussions which they were going to chair. After coming to a mutual understanding on the agendas and expected outcomes of the meeting, the participants engaged in a role play to gain experience on how to manage discussions as a group facilitator. Each officer was assigned to a specific role to play such as a person who is hesitant to speak out, a person who wants to dominate a discussion, etc. This practice enabled them to visualize how to facilitate group activities, helping them to remove unnecessary worry over their role as a facilitator. As a result, some municipal officers grew more confident.

The second method refers to how to organize community. It is of essence to organize staff and volunteers who accompany field reconnaissance, which is one of the important activities in community design. Team members, including staff in charge and volunteers, should share the same visions and missions before any project or plan to be implemented in cooperation with a community or locality. However, this tends to be overlooked.

In addition, by understanding the power structure in a locality, which encompasses a community, and making use of it, some opportunities may be created to collect useful information and set up a good forum for discussions. Figure 3 is a power map developed by Prof. Hester. He told me that he first visualizes human relationships in a community before working on consensus building. It is not clear if a power map is effective in (or applicable to) all countries but this is a remarkable method when it is used to make a team prepared for a work.

**Figure 3: Hester’s power map**

Thirdly, a clear design should be developed. Community designers are expected to have a wide range of viewpoints from basic understanding of design such as form reading to actual design techniques and skills. They are required to design public spaces by integrating and consolidating opinions and information provided by a community. They are also expected to design spaces by skillfully integrating the unique features and resources of the target locality or area such as landscapes. Community designers should propose a design with both novel appeal and functionalities, paying attention to the memory of citizens for a space including their affections and attachment to the space. To revitalize a space, a designer must propose the design with attractive form and functionalities, thereby building a positive circle (a state of people following the crowd). This is where a designer can demonstrate his/her skill.

The fourth is to establish clear communications. When experts consult residents, it is necessary to translate issues associated with a project into everyday language and express them in a way in which ordinary people can understand. This process is important because it will lead to better understanding of a community on a plan of experts. Communication tools including maps, pictures, models, papers, cards, and pens are of great use at this point. When a
workshop is organized to consult residents on a facility development plan for the revitalization of a community, from my experience, I recommend an organizer to prepare not only blank flip chart papers but maps to be used in the workshop for the purpose of record. Participants will be able to write on a map topographical and spatial information, including the condition of the surroundings, accessibility to the facility, and major traffic flows.

Here, let us understand the effects of facilitation graphic, which is a widely known method of consensus building (Figure 4). It is a method to illustrate the contents, points and flow of discussions in a workshop with diagrams in a structuralized manner instead of taking the minutes. During a discussion, a designated person writes questions, answers, comments, etc., as participants speak, on flip chart papers fixed all over the wall. It does not matter which part of paper s/he starts writing from. S/he can start from the top left side of the paper, or the center if s/he thinks it is the core of the discussion. What is important is that it displays clearly the structure of the discussion. If a person is more experienced, s/he may illustrate discussion points and specific examples by using icons that will contribute to creating a friendly atmosphere in the workshop. There are two pronounced effects of the facilitation graphic when it is applied in discussions and consultations. First, it can prevent an argument from going around in circles. (If a participant is repeating the same statement in a plenary meeting with residents, a facilitator may proceed with the discussion, saying that “We discussed this matter previously. Let’s move on”, by confirming a facilitation graphic together with all participants.) Second, if there are latecomers, it will effectively help them to catch up with the discussion. (They will be able to grasp graphically what has been discussed, thereby facilitating their quick understanding.)

**Figure 4: Facilitation graphic**
4.1 KEGO PARK, WHICH USED TO BE A BREEDING GROUND FOR CRIME

Kego park is a 10,000 m² urban park located in the midst of Tenjin, Chuo ward, Fukuoka City (Figure 5), commercial buildings, including the Solaria Plaza, Mitsukoshi and the Resola Tenjin line along the roads surrounding the park. The Fukuoka (Tenjin) station of Nishi-Nippon Railroad Co., Ltd. is located in the northwest of the park and the Kego shrine is found in the south of the park. It is like a courtyard of the Tenjin district. From the end of November to the beginning of January, the park is illuminated under the sponsorship of We Love Tenjin, a town management organization of Fukuoka City, and is crowded with a large number of visitors. It is also known as the park where obscure young artists who wish to be professional give a live performance. It is consistent with the fact that Fukuoka is famous as the birthplace of many celebrities.

Figure 5: Environment of Kego Park

![Map of Kego Park and surrounding area]
The situation in Kego Park at night, however, was completely different from daytime. In the past, there was a high artificial hill at the northwest side of the park (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Artificial hill**

Some part of the park was covered with many trees and the public lavatory was deteriorating. Many places were dark at night and out of sight (Figure 7). A viewing platform with roofing was situated at the upper part of the artificial hill, overlooking the surroundings. It stood out of sight. One night a tragic incident took place on the platform, where a young woman was sexually assaulted. Crimes were committed also in other areas which were out of sight and dark; sexual offenses such as molestation, rape, etc., intimidating middle-aged men, trading of illegal drugs, etc.

**Figure 7: Map of the Kego Park before the restoration and areas out of sight**
The situation in Kego Park at night was totally different from that of daytime, when many people were around. To make matters worse, on the Kego shrine street along the west side of Kego Park, members of a group called the Hunt-zoku (they forcefully took young women inside a car and drove away) were loitering (Figure 8), and continuously engaging in anti-social behaviors such as making noise by skateboarding in the middle of the night, writing graffiti, etc. (Figure 9). It gradually became known as a dangerous park that was a hotbed of crime. The park was deserted at night.

**Figure 8: Hunt zoku**

![Figure 8: Hunt zoku](image)

**Figure 9: Graffiti in the park**

![Figure 9: Graffiti in the park](image)
4.2 Promoting a Restoration Project and Creating a System for Consultation

To address this grave situation, the Fukuoka Prefectural Police started patrolling the park while citizens and staff of companies in the neighborhood voluntarily started crime prevention activities around 2006. In spite of their vigorous engagement in activities, they were not able to address issues radically. In response to this situation as well as the determination of the then-mayor of Fukuoka City, Soichiro Takashima, to solve the problem, the Department for Promotion of Midorinomachi (Green City) of the Fukuoka municipal office-initiated measures focusing on the improvement of facilities. A full-fledged restoration project was launched in fiscal year (FY) 2012 accordingly. What I would like to point out here is the establishment of Kego Park Council in July 2010. Prior to the start of the project, the council was formed with the participation of nearby residents, the Fukuoka Municipal Office / the Chuo Ward Office, the Fukuoka Prefectural Police / Chuo Police Station and Fukuoka University (myself). Approximately 45 members attended each meeting at which they reviewed a state of crime occurrences in Kego Park and discussed the direction of the restoration project (13 meetings were organized by January 2014) (Figure 10). The Kego Park Council was later developed into the Council for the Promotion of Use of Kego Park under the Chuo Ward Office, in which residents, administrative offices and nearby companies jointly organized meetings and engaged in activities to promote effective use of the park. I was requested to be an advisor on the Kego Park Council. This was because I had engaged in research activities with students under my supervision on the traffic flow of park users and the behaviors of users staying in the park, while being involved in community activities for crime prevention in collaboration with the Fukuoka Prefectural Police. Later, I was involved in the conceptualization of a park improvement plan and the design of a basic plan. After a company was awarded to the detailed design of the park, I assumed the position of supervising the process of detailed design and managing on-site activities (Design Supervisor).

Figure 10: The Kego Park Council meeting with the participation of residents, administrative offices and the police
4.3 FIVE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE RESTORATION PROJECT

Reflecting the outcomes of discussions in the Council as well as the intentions of the municipal office, the principles of the Kego Park restoration project can be largely summarized into the following five points. The first was to secure good visibility inside the park. Removing blind spots and dark areas in the park was the fundamental objective of the project. The secondly was to increase the number of people in the park and the surroundings by ensuring the traffic flow in both directions. The third was to meet the request for actions to control inappropriate use of the park, which was a nuisance to the public, such as skateboarding using the benches as mentioned above. The fourth was to widen the sidewalk along the front side of the park by setting back the park. The last one is to demolish the deteriorating lavatory situated out of sight and build a new one in a place where people can see it easily. Based on the above five points, the implementation of the park restoration project was carried out, focusing on the improvement of visibility and traffic flow. In the process, the artificial hill, which had been a hotbed of crime as mentioned above, was demolished and a path was built in the center of the park. I will discuss further the details about this path later.

Throughout the design process of the restoration project, the stakeholder meetings were frequently organized to discuss how to make crime prevention measures effective taking into account the five points above. To assess the state of park use at night, we carried out the interview surveys of a chair of a neighborhood association in the Tenjin school district who had been engaging in voluntary activities for crime prevention in the park over many years, members of the Fukuoka branch of the non-profit organization Japan Guardian Angeles, which works for crime prevention in the community, and park users (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Interview survey
Further, the traffic flow in the park and places where people stayed, and reasons thereof were studied, and the results were summarized in a diagram (Figure 12). To understand the spatial characteristics of the park, we made a 1/100 scale model of the entire Kego Park (Figure 13) and a 1/5 scale model of the area surrounding benches, etc., and examined the views of the park as well as its inclination inside from upper floors of commercial buildings surrounding the park.

Figure 12: Results of study on traffic flow and users' behaviors in the park before the restoration
In the latter half of the project period, council meetings for in-depth discussions about the draft plan were held at the site whenever possible. The width of the path in the center of the park was finalized after we assessed the easiness to walk on it and visibility from the surroundings by comparing several draft plans at the site. I will discuss this further below. During the site visit, which was joined by the Fukuoka Municipal Office and the contractor, we made a thorough examination of stone for the pavements and benches, including size, color and finishing on the surface with samples (Figure 14). The restoration project of the park progressed satisfactorily through the continuous review of the plan as described above. It was completed in December 2012, and the park was opened to the public again.

Figure 13: Examining visibility in the park by using models

Figure 14: Examining stone for the pavement at the site
4.4 CRIME PREVENTION AND LANDSCAPE: MAKING THEM COMPATIBLE

A Design Guide for Crime Prevention in Urban Developments\(^2\) prepared in Japan outlined the Five basic principles of community development for crime prevention as follows: (1) Securing visibility (to keep public spaces visible by securing visibility and brightness), (2) Promoting the implementation of activities (to reduce the risk of crime and make people feel safe by implementing activities in a modest manner), (3) Stratification of areas (to create quasi-public (quasi-private) spaces as a buffer between public and private spaces and to clarify each space), (4) Sentimental attachment of residents to their community: to enhance the sentimental attachment and sense of responsibility and belongingness of residents to their community, (5) Reinforcement of targets and prevention (to remove elements to induce crimes and to reinforce objects which could be the target of crimes). The guide recommends crime prevention by openness, which stresses a multi-faceted approach with the focus on establishing connection with the outside.

The restoration project of Kego Park was initiated as a response to the worsening security situation in the park. It is no wonder that discussions in the aforementioned Kego park council initially focused on how to improve the effects of crime prevention measures. The initial objective of the project was to enhance safety and security in the park by removing blind spots and improving visibility. It was surely the most important task assigned to the council.

Kego Park is located in the midst of Tenjin, which is the urban center of Fukuoka City. In light of this, I was convinced that the project should not be regarded simply as a crime prevention project of the park. It was the key to the success of the project, I believed, that the park increases its presence and becomes bustling again with life as a symbol of townscape of Fukuoka. Subsequently, I proposed the integration of crime prevention aspects into landscape development as a design concept of the Kego Park restoration project. In addition to the improvement of visibility for crime prevention, I exerted the utmost effort to make the park attractive by creating the “to see and to be seen relationship” between the inside and outside of the park, envisaging the traffic flow of users, places where they stay and their behaviors in their daily use of the park.
4.5 Design which Takes into Account Sight Lines and Traffic Flow of Park Users as Well as Park Scenery

I am going to elaborate step by step on my ideas and initiatives on the design (Figure 15). As indicated above, Kego Park is surrounded with buildings and a shrine. Better visibility would make it possible for park users to see the façade of modern and stylish buildings and pedestrians on the sidewalk and to sense the atmosphere of the neighboring shrine. I was thinking that they could be elements to enhance park’s attractiveness. (It is a concept similar to “shakkei (borrowing scenery)”, a gardening technique used in Japanese gardens.) At the same time, I examined thoroughly how the park would be viewed by the people around it; if park users enjoying activities, or resting, look attractive or how well the people around could see inside the park. I intended to improve crime prevention effects by increasing the number of park visitors and public attention, which would be the results of better visibility between inside and outside the park and good reputations of park’s attractiveness to be developed after the restoration.

Figure 15: Design concept diagram for the restoration of Kego Park
Specifically, the aforementioned artificial hill, that had been a hotbed of crime, was demolished. Entrances from the sidewalks were widened, leading to the improvement of visibility from the park; the neighboring Resola building and Kego Shrine street can be seen better from the park (Figures 16 and 17). Park users can view the façade of Resola building and the pedestrians on the Kego Shrine street, and vice versa. It has made possible to have people inside and outside of the park better connected visually. Simultaneously, I intended to facilitate the mobility of visitors and improve visibility by building a new path in the center of the park. Further, a central square was set up on the path. It is an open space which can be used by citizens, companies, etc. when organizing an event (Figure 18).

Figure 16: The park before the restoration

Figure 17: The park immediately after the restoration

Figure 18: Event at the Central Square
Next, I would like to mention about a plant arrangement, which is important to landscape design. As discussed above, trees in the park had caused poor visibility and taken many areas out of sight, which were considered issues to be addressed. It was known that the Resola building shades the Central Square from the west from the afternoon to early evening (Figure 19).

**Figure 19: Shadow of Resola Building cast over the park**

A café on the second floor of the Solaria Plaza had been hardly visible from the park owing to the artificial hill. Therefore, it was decided not to plant a tall tree in front of the café. As a result, it has become possible to see the café from the park, and vice versa. It motivates people in the café or the park to visit the other by letting them consider visiting there later (Figures 20 and 21).

**Figure 20: View of the park from a café in the Solaria Plaza (before the restoration)**  
**Figure 21: View of the park from a café in the Solaria Plaza (after the restoration)**
The aforementioned lavatory, which had deteriorated and had stood out of sight was demolished and a new one was constructed at the east side of the park, which is in front of Fukuoka (Tenjin) Station of Nishi-Nippon Railway, Co., Ltd. Now the lavatory is easily visible. In conjunction with it, one tree was cut down to make the inside of the park visible from a train station platform which is located on the second floor of the Plaza (Figures 22 and 23).

Figure 22: View of the park from Fukuoka Tenjin Station of the Nishi-Nippon Railway (before the restoration)  
Figure 23: View of the park from Fukuoka Tenjin Station of the Nishi-Nippon Railway (immediately after the restoration)

There was a parking lot underground in Kego Park. The west side of the park where the entrance to the parking lot was located was three meters higher in elevation than the other areas of the park. To take advantage of the differences, the draft restoration plan proposed to make a small hill called Miharashi no Oka (Viewing hill) on the west side of the park. With stone benches installed, the hill provides a space to sit down and enjoy the views of the Central Square and the whole park. The benches have lighting devices inside to illuminate the area around it. (They are placed in a circle in the lawn to prevent nuisances such as skateboarding, which caused a noise disturbance in the past (Figure 24).) This micro-topographic design is now known as the ground served as a plate where people collect. A hollow space created by utilizing a mild slope going down to the Central Square produces the effect of promoting the centrality of the Central Square and its feature as a stage in the park. It also strengthens the “to see and to be seen” relationship.

Figure 24: New stone benches with lighting device inside
All the benches in the park are installed in such a way that the people sitting on them face the Central Square, hence their sight lines are not intersecting. The distance between benches across the Square is approximately 30 meters, which is more than the 12 meters that is the maximum visual distance to recognize the facial expression of a person, and 24 meters that is the maximum visual distance to identify a person (Figure 25).4

Figure 25: Visual distance

Sufficient distance is maintained for the people sitting across the Square not to bother about the sight lines of others. Each bench is sufficiently distanced from each other, taking into account the concept of proxemics. On the other hand, in some areas, benches made of natural stone are placed triangularly so that people in a group can converse comfortably. Various needs and interests of users are accommodated (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Space with natural stone benches, which facilitates communications in a group
The path in the south side of the park, which used to be dark, with few people walking along it, was straightened, stretching from west to east, to improve visibility. The lavatory on the path was relocated as described above (Figures 27 and 28). Double fences which had been erected along the boundary with the Kego Shrine to prevent trespassing were replaced by simpler ones in a dark brown color, reflecting that of the shrine. A back entrance was also constructed to allow people to go back and forth between the park and the shrine. A green space was set up along the boundary with the shrine. Taking into account the body size of humans, it was elevated by 40 cm on average to allow people to sit comfortably and view the park turning their back on the shrine. The space was designed reflecting J. Appleton’s theory of “prospect-refuge”. I believe that the integration of ideas and initiatives that were developed based on these design theories into the project plan has successfully contributed to the revitalization of the whole park.

Figure 27: Path in the south side of the park (before the restoration)  
Figure 28: Path in the south side of the park (after the restoration)
4.6 MAKING THE BEST USE OF PEOPLE’S ATTACHMENT TO THE PARK

Before a space, including parks, is refurbished, it is vital that the shape, structure, atmosphere, etc. of space is closely examined. If a space is totally redesigned, what would the people who have memories of and attachment to the space or place feel about it, no matter how well the refurbishment is done? It would be fortunate if they are able to make new memories of the space. But it is highly probable that they would feel sad and it would weaken their attachment to it. The Kego Park project paid close attention to the attachment of people to the park. The area with natural stone benches installed was frequented by many people before the restoration. In light of this, after renovating the whole park with barrier-free design integrated, we placed benches in the same shape as before (Figure 29). An interview survey\(^6\) carried out by the University of Tokyo reported about a respondent who used to visit Kego Park at night weekly to ride on a track bike. According to the report, he still visits the park once in a while with the friends that he enjoyed riding on a bike together with and has a chat with them looking at the stone steps. Honestly speaking, I had a difficult time to decide on how to integrate a new design into the draft plan and ensure the integrity of the park while keeping the area with natural stone benches untouched. In the end, as mentioned above, we adopted the design which took into account the history of the space. It has successfully attracted both previous users and new users who find it comfortable being in the new park. When designing public spaces for revitalization, we should consider how to connect the feelings of users and citizens before and after the renovation. If such feelings are well connected, a positive circle will be developed to create a state of people following others, thereby contributing to the revitalization of space. We should keep this in mind.

Figure 29: Area with natural stone benches placed and Central Square
4.7 PARK REVITALIZATION AND CRIME PREVENTION EFFECTS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE RESTORATION PROJECT

I will report in this section on the positive effects generated by the implementation of the restoration project. One is the revitalization of the park. My office conducted a study on the traffic flow in the park, park use, users’ behaviors and users’ attitudes in January 2013, one month after the park was reopened to the public. It aimed to explore any changes in users’ behaviors after the reopening. Figure 30 demonstrates the study results concerning the traffic flow and behaviors of visitors after the reopening. The results of a similar study conducted before the restoration (Figure 12) revealed that while people frequented the area with natural stone benches placed in semi-circle and the central part of the park, few people were in the area around the artificial hill in the northwest side of the park and on the path in the south side of the park, both of which had many places out of sight. Conversely, as indicated in Figure 30, after the project, the traffic flow expanded throughout the park, and the number of people remarkably increased on the path located in the south part of the park, which used to be dark and have few people around. Many people were walking on the central path which had been newly constructed in the project. In spite of the fact that the study was undertaken in January, which was the winter, there were many people visiting the park, and the number of women and children notably increased.

Figure 30: Results of study on traffic flow and users’ behaviors in the park after the restoration
The next is about crime prevention aspects. We conducted interview surveys of park users twice; the aforementioned survey in January 2013 and the other survey in November 2013, approximately one year after reopening. (The number of interviewees was 105 for the first survey and 120 for the second survey.) In the first survey, being asked about the impressions of the park after the restoration, they responded, “visibility is improved”, “it is brighter”, “I feel safe and comfortable”, etc. They also stated that “I want an event to be organized in the open space”, “It is good because this park is the only place in this city which has a vast open space”, etc. Many people were around in the child space where few people had been found in the past. Parents who let their children play in the space said, “Because of good visibility, I feel comfortable to let my child play here. Now I come here frequently”. In the second survey, being asked about their impressions on the safety and security of the park, 46% of the respondents agreed to the “improved safety and security” in the park while 54% considered that it had “improved to some extent”. No respondent chose the other preset choices that were “no change”, “worsened to some extent” and “worsened” (Figure 31).

**Figure 31: Results of survey of users concerning their perception about the safety and security of the park**

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>54%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
4.8 RIPPLE EFFECTS

Concerning the effects of the restoration project on crime prevention, crime situations in one year before and after the project was reported in the 13th Kego Park Council meeting on January 22, 2014. (The restoration period was included in the year before the project.) The report confirmed the improved safety and security in the park in reference to the data including the decrease in the number of minors who were taken into custody by the police in the park and reported disappearances by the notorious “Hunt-zoku”. The report corresponded with the perception of people.

What is worth mentioning is that the Solaria Plaza neighboring the park renovated the exterior wall facing the park, and newly opened on November 29, 2013, one year after the reopening of the park (Figures 32 and 33).

The public relation office of the Nishi-Nippon Railway Co., Ltd. which owns and manages the building made an announcement, “To maximize the effects of beautiful scenery of Kego Park, that was rehabilitated in FY 2012, we will glass in the exterior wall of the building from 1st to 6th floors (the south side of the building)”. Newly opened cafés facing the park include the one which has remained on the second floor and the others which were relocated from other places in the Plaza to become a café overlooking the Kego park. I was told that the sales of café on the third floor increased by approximately 50% after the relocation. I contacted the then-Plaza director to ask about the reason for the renovation. He responded, “Our entrance used to be on the side which is not facing the park. Taking the renovation of Kego Park as an opportunity, we wished to relocate it facing the park”. A chief priest of Kego Shrine, Mr. Maeda, informed us, “the number of visitors to the shrine has increased since the completion of renovation works”. In summary, it has been confirmed that the restoration project of Kego Park has led to the improved safety and security in the park and has had ripple effects on the surroundings both economically and spatially.
4.9 DESIGN TO VITALIZE THE COMMUNITY: ITS POTENTIAL

It is a great honor for us that the renovated Kego Park has been highly appreciated, being called the "Japanese Bryant Park". It has won many awards, including the Good Design Award 2014, the first prize of the Civil Engineering Design Prize, JSCE 2014, the top prize of the Fukuoka Urban Beautification Award, and the first prize of the Consultant of Landscape Architecture Award 2015, among others (Figure 34). The proposed design was developed incorporating knowledge and skills associated with public spaces and landscape design such as borrowed landscape, the prospect-refuge theory, visual distance and proxemics. They provided me with clues to improving the design in various aspects throughout the project. I will be very happy if my experience of Kego Park, which is that these design theories and their practices led to community revitalization, is of any help as a case study for other countries in the improvement of an urban park. We did not undertake a complete renovation of the whole park. We managed to develop what you might call a design which establishes a connection, by taking into account the history of space7) such as the attachment and memories of previous users to the park. As a result, we have created the pleasant relationship of “to see and to be seen” and achieved revitalization of the park successfully. Kego Park was born again by the efforts of and collaboration among many people. I sincerely hope that the park will be a place which citizen have an attachment to and frequent for many years to come.

Figure 34: Kego Park at night
BIBLIOGRAPHY


