The Handbook of Historic Preservation

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1. Background and purposes

The Law on the Maintenance and Improvement of Historic Landscapes in a Community (also, "Historic Preservation Law") was enacted in May, 2008, to promote historic preservation linked with city planning administration and cultural properties administration. As of December 6, 2011, 27 cities throughout Japan had received approval for historic preservation plans based on the Historic Preservation Law, and have begun historic preservation projects taking advantage of their own region's history and culture.

To carry out a historic preservation project, it is vital to appropriately preserve, utilize and restore buildings which are the major elements of historical scenery in line with regional historical characteristics (Fig. 1). But many regional governments have neither appointed employees with specialized technical knowledge or skills, nor been given adequate information concerning preservation, utilization, and restoration procedures or methods which accord with conditions of buildings etc.

So in order to support initiatives taken by regional governments to carry out historic preservation projects and to appropriately enforce the Historic Preservation Law, we have prepared the Handbook including specific methods and implementation processes to implement preservation, utilization, and restoration suitable to each region's historical characteristics of buildings etc. which contribute to maintenance and improvement of their historic environment accompanied by sample cases of advanced historic preservation.

2. Outline of the Handbook (Draft)

Figure 2 shows the structure of the Handbook.

First, "1. Historic Preservation in Japan", organizes the genealogy of past measures related to historic preservation in Japan, to organize the significance of and problems with initiatives for historic preservation.

Next, "2. Perspectives and Investigation Methods", presents perspectives of and methods of investigating the historical characteristics—origins of the town, historical resources etc.—of the region, which are the premise for historic preservation.

Then "3. Examples of Initiatives, Methods Etc. for Historic Preservation" organizes historic preservation initiatives and methods accompanied by specific examples for each constituent element of historical



Figure 1. Major Constituent Elements of Historical Scenery in a Castle Town

scenery.

3. Using the Handbook

The Handbook will be released as a Technical Note of NILIM.

(http://www.nilim.go.jp/lab/ddg/seika.html)

The Handbook is counted on to support historic preservation initiatives taken by regional governments.

1. City Planning Using History"

2. Perspectives and Investigation Methods

- 2-1. The start of Japan's unique towns and the structure of its cities
- 2-2. History of the transformation and change of towns up to the present
- 2-3. Trends in regional planning and contents of regulations and incentives
- 2-4. Organizing cultural properties and other historical resources of a region
- 2-5. Setting directions for historic preservation based on the regional context and resources

3. Examples of Initiatives, Methods Etc. for Historic Preservation

- 3-1. Using the structure of a city which is a historical characteristic
- 3-2. Repairing and restoring landmarks and symbols and ensuring their visibility
- 3-3. Maintaining, preserving and restoring elements which are resources for historic preservation.
- 3-4. Precautions concerning the harmony, forms, work methods etc. of materials and structures to improve the scenery
- 3-5. Preserving cultural bonds between the town and its people: festivals and other unique regional events.