



Source: "Reconstruction Work," published in 1930 by the City of Tokyo. From the collection of the Goto Shinpei Memorial Museum. View of the reconstructed city of Tokyo following the Great Kanto Earthquake: Showa-dori Avenue in the area of Edobashi Bridge. Shinpei Goto's reconstruction plan was a colossal project, which saw a century ahead into Japan's future.

Chapter 2

Evolution of the City Planning System

Reconstruction following the Great Kanto Earthquake and World War II (1910s-1950s)

In Tokyo, which continued to modernize throughout the Meiji era, along with the rapid advance of industry caused by the impact of World War I, population growth and expansion of urban areas progressed.

Although a city planning system that would allow Tokyo to systematically address growth of urban areas and guide development to desirable standards was established, the Great Kanto Earthquake struck Tokyo soon after, causing extensive damage.

During the process of reconstruction following the quake, Edo's old town plans were renewed to create the framework of today's Tokyo.

Years later, Tokyo was again nearly destroyed by the Great Tokyo Air Raids of World War II. Reconstruction of the city was achieved over a period of about ten years, and signs indicating the gravitation of the population and industry to the city center, as well as the expansion of urban areas, became apparent.

[Highlights of the mid-Taisho era to prior to and after World War II]

1919 ▶

- Promulgation of the City Planning Act and Urban Building Act

1923 ▶

- Great Kanto Earthquake occurs
- Plan for Reconstruction of the Imperial Capital finalized

1927 ▶

- Showa Financial Crisis of 1927
- Tokyo's first subway line opens

1939 ▶

- Formulation of the "Tokyo Green Space Plan"

1940 ▶

- Germany, Italy, and Japan sign the Tripartite Pact
- Revision of the City Planning Act (City planning for the purpose of air defense added)

1941 ▶

- War breaks out between Japan and the U.S. (the Pacific War)

1943 ▶

- Tokyo Metropolis formed

1945 ▶

- The Great Tokyo Air Raids
- World War II ends
- National government issues the Basic Policy for Reconstruction of War-Affected Areas

1946 ▶

- Tokyo Metropolitan City Plan for Postwar Reconstruction finalized
- Promulgation of the Constitution of Japan