

Article

Proactively Effecting Community Engagement in PPP Projects: Lessons from the Tama Plaza Redevelopment Project, Yokohama

Megumi Khan ^{1,*} and Shahed Khan ²

¹ School of Design and the Built Environment (DBE), Curtin University, Perth, WA 6845, Australia

² Global South Nexus, DBE School, Curtin University, Perth, WA 6845, Australia; s.khan@curtin.edu.au

* Correspondence: m.khan@curtin.edu.au

Abstract: Shrinking revenues and increasing costs of delivery for health and welfare services prompted the City of Yokohama to undertake redevelopment of Tama Plaza as a model public–private partnership (PPP) for next-generation suburban redevelopment, aligned with relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Although the implementation of PPP projects is shaped by locally prevalent socio-political factors and the cultural context, a dearth of case studies describing PPP governance processes from a cultural perspective impede the development of relevant governance theories and praxis. It is contended that contextual factors could be capitalized upon to develop effective project governance mechanisms that ensure community engagement and promote sustainable lifestyles. However, as PPP redevelopment projects are a product of neoliberalization that is manifested differently from place to place due to locally prevalent socio-political contextual factors, theories about good governance of PPP projects remain rudimentary. The Tama Plaza case study thus provides empirical evidence of how the local contextual reality can shape PPP projects. Qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews with project staff revealed some standout governance mechanisms and community-building initiatives, such as the autonomous, jointly resourced ‘core team’ tasked with managing community engagement, and the *jumin sohatsu* project comprising numerous small community-building project grants. The paper describes how these successes benefited from contextual and cultural factors. Lessons drawn from the Japanese case study could have validity in countries in the Global South that share some of the major factors constituting their contextual reality.

Keywords: public–private partnership (PPP); suburban redevelopment; community participation; community building; residents’ associations; *jichikai*; Tama Plaza; Japan private railway; modernization; SDGs



Citation: Khan, M.; Khan, S. Proactively Effecting Community Engagement in PPP Projects: Lessons from the Tama Plaza Redevelopment Project, Yokohama. *Sustainability* **2024**, *16*, 180. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16010180>

Academic Editor: Jianming Cai

Received: 27 October 2023

Revised: 14 December 2023

Accepted: 21 December 2023

Published: 24 December 2023



Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

This paper sets out to explore community engagement and community-building challenges for a local government in Japan undertaking large-scale suburban redevelopment through a private–public partnership (PPP) project, to create sustainable suburban communities.

According to Sager (2011), “the economising of social life, the reformation of the welfare states, and the complex processes of globalisation” occurring over the 1980s and 1990s are closely related to the concept of neoliberalism [1] (p. 148). “The neoliberalization of planning implies a partial retreat by planning as a public institution from its conventional core, namely the improvement of the built and natural environment through some sort of concerted effort” [2] (p. 105). The neoliberalization of urban planning policies has since established a mindset for city governments to reconsider their traditional roles of welfare and service providers, regulators of the built environment, and enforcers of development control. They tend to readily assume the role of facilitator and/or partner in development instead. However, these transformations have occurred to varying extents in each country, depending on the prevalent mix of global and local factors. As Sager points out, “Adequate conceptualizations must be attentive to both local peculiarities and the generic features of neo-liberalism.” [1] (p. 149).

Public–private partnerships (PPP) in urban development “are related to other neo-liberal urban policies that give the private sector more influence” [1] (p. 163). Hearne notes that PPPs are seen as new policy mechanisms developed to facilitate the implementation of neoliberalization “within the key institutions of the welfare state” [3] (p. 158). Despite their widespread adoption over the past half-century, issues involved in the conception, governance mechanisms, and implementation of PPP development projects are not well understood, inhibiting theoretical development or documentation of best practices. There is an absence of any fixed formats or standards for PPP projects due to a great variation in their contextual realities. Furthermore, there are hardly any studies analyzing PPP projects from a contextual or cultural perspective to allow conceptualizations and theory building.

It is contended that the analysis of successful governance mechanisms and processes within their contextual reality could explain their effectiveness, whereas the merit or otherwise of certain contextual factors could be identified to allow generalizations for theory building. A recent review of sustainability-oriented PPP studies reports that although the UN has proposed PPP as a tool for achieving SDGs, there has been little analysis of the literature related to this concept [4]. As such, the scarcity of studies on PPP projects analyzing governance frameworks against their contextual reality stifles the development of theories for want of sufficient empirical studies. This paper thus aims to contribute towards theory building regarding the governance of PPP urban development projects by presenting a case study of Tama Plaza, a model suburban redevelopment in Japan, aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 11 and 17. It analyses aspects of the project’s governance contextually from a local and cultural perspective.

It is also contended that a case study from Japan may have more relevance to countries in the Global South than would case studies from other Global North countries. Kidokoro et al. (2022) for example, note their common approach towards government roles in development [5]. Japan also shares with many countries in the Global South the cultural tradition of neighborhood residents’ associations for mutual help that have historically served as control mechanisms for centralized governments.

In a super-aging society like Japan, the adoption of PPPs is often justified by shrinking government revenues and the increasing costs of health and welfare services delivery along with the urgent need to upgrade obsolete suburban infrastructure to cater to changing demographics and lifestyles to create sustainable communities. With a neoliberal mindset, Japanese cities tend to offer relaxation of building-control regulations to attract private-sector developers to form PPPs [5]. This case study focuses its analysis on the PPP project’s soft infrastructure and community-engagement issues, providing a commentary on the contextual and cultural reality within which governance-related decision-making has occurred.

Addressing the Research Gap

Tasan-Kok and Baeten (2012) pointed out the gap in the literature caused by overlooking the ‘neoliberalization’ of planning in planning theory and planning practice analysis, thereby allowing an “uneasy cohabitation” of ‘planning’ and ‘neoliberalism’ [6]. This paper seeks to reduce this gap and contribute to theory development by reporting empirical evidence from a case study wherein a PPP, a product of neoliberalism, is applied to develop a model of suburban redevelopment.

It seeks to add to the little empirical research on how PPP projects are carried out in various socio-cultural and politico-economic contexts to promote mutual learning. A major reason preventing documentation of the execution of PPP projects related to urban development from across the world could be the absence of any fixed standards or protocols to follow, as each PPP is negotiated according to various contextual factors that prevail. Market conditions, the nature of existing planning frameworks, institutional structures, the extent of neoliberalization of the policy environment, and public sentiments, make standardization difficult. Furthermore, once a PPP is conceived, any community representation or involvement is often curtailed, making way for professionals and specialists to get on

with the project's execution with a narrowed focus on the technical and financial aspects of the product delivered.

A recent systematic review concludes that PPPs in housing tend to be “unjust and exclude local actors from collaborations,” and it recommends the inclusion of “resident participation and inclusion” to ensure that PPPs could deliver a sustainable city in the future. To move in that direction, however, it emphasizes the need to first address the “major differences in the character of issues that connect the global model of sustainability to the harsh reality of the local context” [7].

This case study does not seek to find common standard practices or procedures in conceiving and implementing PPP projects. Instead, it focuses on the contextual reality of a particular case to describe how contextual factors could be worked with rather than worked around. It seeks to contribute towards reducing the uneasy cohabitation of planning and neoliberalism by highlighting how public agency planners face the challenge of delivering public good and protecting community interest, working with private developers, within their contextual reality. Rather than rating the success of certain community engagement or community development initiatives, this research seeks to highlight how the cultural context shapes PPP partners' approach to community engagement. Lessons could be drawn from this example by planners, especially those operating in other similar contexts.

The paper is divided into seven sections. Following the introductory section, Section 2 provides an overview and the historical and contextual background defining the wider contextual reality of the Tama Plaza PPP project for suburban redevelopment. It includes a brief discussion of how Japan's urban planning agenda has been shaped, with reference to the role played by residents' associations (*jichikai*), post-war suburbanization led by private railway companies, and the impacts of globalization. Section 3 provides a discussion on relevant conceptual issues and theories, describing PPPs in relation to the neoliberalization of the planning agenda and the influences of globalization. It identifies the research gap this paper seeks to deal with and describes the methodology adopted. Section 4 introduces the case study of the Tama Plaza redevelopment, a PPP project driven by a progressive future-oriented city and its partner, a major private rail company and developer of high-quality suburbs. Section 5 presents findings from interviews with relevant project staff tasked with managing community engagement for the PPP project. These findings are discussed against the contextual reality of the project in Section 6. Finally, Section 7 draws conclusions based on findings from the Japanese experience about community engagement in suburban redevelopment PPP and the possibility of lessons learned from the Tama Plaza case study.

2. Contextual Background

2.1. Challenges Currently Faced by Japanese Suburbs

Historically, community engagement and community building in newly established suburbs shaped up as major challenges for local governments in Japan faced with rapid post-war urbanization and the government's push for modernization on its way to becoming a post-industrial advanced economy. These challenges seem to have reappeared as local governments look for ways to redevelop those now old suburbs under a neoliberal development agenda while facing the social and economic challenges of a super-aging society and sharing a concern for sustainability.

Many suburbs established decades ago need to have their dated hard and soft infrastructure, including train stations, community facilities, and services, updated and/or retrofitted. Those nuclear families who migrated from all over Japan and settled into these suburbs when they were first established around the 1950s and 1960s, largely belonged to the same age group. With little turnover of residents, they have all 'aged in place' in those suburbs while their grown-up children have moved out. This has created concentrations of the aging population in suburbs whose residents have lost ties with their hometown social networks and have higher demands for social welfare and health support services.

Local governments in aging Japan also find their tax base shrinking as the proportion of retirees in the population grows and health and welfare costs increase. In this situation, neoliberal policies are readily adopted by public agencies, and they strive to conceive PPPs to assemble private-sector financing for redevelopment and explore ways to exploit community and private-sector resources. Local governments also seek ways to minimize the growing cost of extending health care provision and social welfare to aging residents. Meanwhile, there is a commitment by all levels of government to promote an environmentally friendly built environment and encourage sustainable lifestyles, marking a major shift towards sustainability over the past few decades. This is aligned with the global approach towards addressing the climate change crisis that encourages cities that may not be sufficiently resourced to do so on their own to enter into PPPs. The C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, for example, sees PPP as a format whereby cities and the private sector could form contractual partnerships to deliver projects, noting that the “private sector has a pivotal role to play in accelerating and scaling the efforts needed towards sustainable urban development” [8].

Within the prevalent neoliberal mindset, Japanese cities tend to offer relaxation of building-control regulations to attract private-sector developers to form PPPs. Kidokoro et al. (2022) report that since the 2000s or thereabouts, Tokyo has allowed the expansion of allowable floor area ratio (FAR) bonuses to promote large-scale private development schemes [5]. Private-sector partner firms gaining substantially increased profit margins from additional FAR or building heights would, in return, offer developers’ contributions to facilitate the realization of local government’s redevelopment objectives.

The City of Yokohama has entered into a public–private partnership (PPP) initiative that seeks to set up a model for future suburban redevelopment. The project involves an extensive upgrade and retrofitting of hard and soft infrastructure in a designated urban renewal area in Tama Plaza, focusing on community spaces and facilities around the area’s train station. In pursuit of the city’s planning objectives of creating a sustainable compact city and lowering costs of health service provision for the aging population, it has undertaken the relocation of community welfare services and health facilities to be close to the train station, with a barrier-free pedestrian circulation network connecting them to the train station. This initiative seems aligned to the SDGs embedded in United Nations’ 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, as it sets out to build sustainable suburban communities.

Urban development-related PPPs, a product of neoliberalism, also seem to be supported by the 2030 United Nations’ SDGs. A recent review of sustainability-oriented PPP studies reports that the UN has proposed PPP as a tool for achieving SDGs [4]. SDG 11 is concerned with making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. It “aims to renew and plan cities and other human settlements in a way that offers opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and green public spaces, while reducing resource use and environmental impact” [9]. This applies to all forms of urban and suburban development. SDG 17, however, is especially relevant to the execution of urban development projects by government agencies through the PPP format. SDG 17 stresses the need for innovative, multi-stakeholder partnerships, emphasizing that such partnerships should promote the “sharing of knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals (. . .) Goal 17 further seek[s] to encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships” [10].

2.2. Post-War Urbanization in Tokyo and the Role of Private Railways

Japan’s trajectory of urbanization is somewhat different from that of the Western capitalistic nations largely comprising the Global North. Japan’s long self-imposed isolation between 1853 and 1939 through its *Sakoku* policy made it miss out on the industrial revolution that took place in Europe. The reopening of Japan to the rest of the world following the isolation saw the country engage in world trade and import technology to speed up

its own industrialization process. By 1920, Tokyo's population had reached 3.7 million, and it grew to 7.3 million by 1940 [11]. The rapid urbanization spurred public and private railway networks in Tokyo to similarly expand rapidly between the 1920s and early 1930s. Private railway operators developed their routes stretching outwards from the edge of the downtown areas serviced by the national railways, into the suburbs.

Rapid techno-economic expansion between 1955 and 1970 inspired phenomenal urban growth, with approximately nine million people added to the three major metropolitan areas, viz. Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya, due to net in-migration from rural regions. The three metropolitan centers experienced expansion in the shape of rapid suburbanization with 30% to 50% of their annual population increases accommodated in their outer suburbs [10]. Tokyo's population soared from 6.3 million in the 1950s to 11.4 million in 1970, driven largely by Japan's post-WWI rapid growth in heavy and chemical industries [11].

By the late 1960s, the suburban fringe of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area had spread out up to 40 km from the CBD, with the advent of huge dormitory towns. New transportation lines, in the form of private railway lines radiating outward, "further spread urban areas and increased the problem of long-distance commuting" [12] (p. 254). This created a commuting-based settlement pattern with people residing in distant suburbs commuting to workplaces concentrated within a 5 km radius of the CBD [13]. Government agencies constructed *danchi* (subsidized public housing in the form of large-scale apartment complexes) to accommodate the swelling population, while private rail operators developed suburbs along their railway lines.

Private railway companies not only helped to establish local train networks in Japan from around 1890s but they also developed suburban land along their railway lines to secure passengers. Ichizo Kobayashi's rail company's business diversification model to include retail and entertainment in the late 1920s was adopted across Japan [14]. This enabled private railway companies to play a proactive role in the post-war suburban expansion of major cities. The rapid large-scale urbanization and the following suburbanization facilitated by rail commuting demanded and/or prompted changes in lifestyle.

2.3. Modernization Policies Promoted by the Government

The spectacular economic development and wide-scale rapid urbanization during the 1950s and 1960s led to a sudden change in the living conditions in cities. Changes needed to support new lifestyles in new urban conditions transformed Japanese society and its values. Large numbers of households who made the city home cut off their links with relatives left behind in the regions and their social networks. These changes amounted to the westernization or modernization of Japan, as government policies popularized the concept of the nuclear family. As Nuijsink reports, Japan's post-war ideology led to "the predominant post-war housing model in Japan based on a nuclear family ideology" [15] (pp. 132–133). Nuijsink further notes that the new house design of a *danchi* "promoted a radical new lifestyle for the post-war democratic nuclear family" [15] (p. 135). Westernized values were thus promoted over the established traditional values and familial obligations.

2.4. Role of Traditional Neighborhood Resident Associations

Young nuclear families relied extensively on local neighborhood associations (*chonaikai* or *jichikai*) that emerged in the newly created *danchi* complexes and suburbs. These organizations, rooted in earlier Edo period traditions and reinvigorated by the government during the world war period, brought together community resources and social capital to organize community services focusing on self-responsibility of individuals and shared group tasks. Their role and structure were modified to suit the social and political climate that strongly promoted modernized lifestyles [16].

The concept of such neighborhood associations is not unique to Japan. Both in Japan and elsewhere, their roles have evolved over time. The early form of neighborhood groups in Japan, such as *Tonari Gumi*, not only served to distribute information essential for day-to-day living but "also functioned as a substructure of individual control by the

government” [16]. During the world wars, these associations were revived to serve the government’s war effort, and not surprisingly, following Japan’s defeat, the Allied Occupation forces banned them. However, these associations circumvented and survived the ban. In more recent years, these associations have become more autonomous and they lead a range of activities at the local level such as crime prevention, traffic safety control, and festival management [16]. The structure of these neighborhood associations is well defined and their role in providing cultural autonomous self-help area management is recognized by local governments, even though it lacks formal legal status.

2.5. Currency of Residents’ Associations in a Globalized Planning Agenda

Across many Global South countries, especially in Asia, neighborhood associations play a similarly valuable community governance function, serving as “a valuable anchor for community-level policy interventions, due to their unique ability to mediate relations between state and society. Performing this task requires neighborhood leaders to maintain a delicate balance between enforcing official directives from above and responding to residents’ wishes from below” [17]. Similar to the Japanese experience, Jaffrey (2020) notes that in the case of Indonesia, the once centrally controlled coercive governance units have been democratized into more autonomous associations. Although these associations may still serve some social control functions, their leaders’ roles are now more community-oriented and responsive to community views [17].

The emergence of poorly resourced mega-cities in the Global South with often strained urban infrastructure has highlighted concerns for environmental deterioration. The situation, compounded by the increased reliance on PPPs to deliver urban development projects has prompted ‘new governance’ theorists to advocate the involvement of civil society. Several cases have been reported where urban authorities acknowledged the significant positive role civil society has played in development initiatives across Asia [18]. In many Southeast Asian mega-cities, where the state’s capacity to provide urban and environmental services is limited, there is a need to recognize and encourage “the capacity of suburban neighborhood groups to mobilize and co-operate in culturally meaningful ways to solve problems of mutual concern” [19] (p. 93). In Zimbabwe, where the tradition of residents’ associations was introduced rather recently in the 1950s due to pre-independence urbanization, these associations became more visible following the post-2000 socio-economic crisis. As local authorities failed to deliver essential urban services, these associations became active, contributing to political liberalization by challenging the established political power structures [20].

Civil Society, comprising non-governmental organizations (NGO) and community-based organizations (CBO), including neighborhood associations, are best positioned to ensure the mobilization of community resources through effective community engagement. As urban redevelopment is increasingly undertaken in the form of PPP projects in Global South cities, it is crucial that the existing traditions and community-building capacities in local communities are maintained and further strengthened.

3. Theoretical Background

3.1. Neoliberalism, Globalization, and PPPs

In the 1980s, many cities around the world embraced the neoliberal project-led planning approach to finance and implement large-scale urban development projects [21]. According to Sager (2009), the neoliberal public management governance model claimed that market and business rationality could be made to operate just as effectively in the public interest as it does in securing private business interests [22]. Proponents of neoliberalism also pointed out that with private actors sharing resources and capacity in a public–private partnership (PPP), the burden on the state should be reduced [23]. Around this time, there was also a growing concern for sustainable development, a concept popularized by the Brundtland Commission Report [24].

The neoliberal approach towards the role of government created sufficient flexibility to enable the private sector to become a key partner of governments in the areas of planning and development. Since the 1980s, public–private partnerships (PPP) have gradually become the normal framework for the financing and execution of major large-scale infrastructure projects. PPP is promoted as a win–win game that improves cost effectiveness in building and managing these projects by bringing perceived efficiencies of the corporate sector into complementarity with the regulatory and policy frameworks established by governments [25]. It is argued that, as leaders in technology and innovation, private companies potentially offer a pool of expertise that the city could tap, through PPPs, to develop environmentally friendly urban environments. By delivering higher standards and better service delivery in crucial sectors, PPPs could, therefore, improve the living conditions of aging neighborhoods. As such, each potential benefit from PPPs “directly enhances residents’ quality of life and contributes to a sense of community” [26].

Bellamy puts another positive spin on the neoliberalization of planning, asserting that neoliberalism, along with globalization, have contributed to a more participatory relationship between state and civil society by shifting the focus away from statute law to more flexible forms of regulation and implementation [27]. The neoliberal approach has prevailed, despite strong criticism of neoliberalism for its “systematic but selective deregulation of the global economy” that could hurt the environment and the economic conditions of most people [28] (p. 101).

Neoliberalism may be seen as encompassing the processes of globalization. Sager (2011) suggests that neoliberalism is a concept that “connects the political discourses of the economising of social life, the reformation of the welfare states, and the complex processes of globalisation” [1]. Neoliberalism and economic globalization have now been around as the economic development model for around 50 years. They have impacted the urban planning agenda with cities opting for public–private partnership (PPP) projects to finance major urban development projects.

PPPs are a product of the processes of neoliberalism and globalization that took hold of the development agenda during the 1980s and 1990s. They have driven city governments around the world to compete to attract global capital while ‘rolling back of the state’ (i.e., Keynesian welfare economics) was initiated [29]. Neoliberalism is seen by many scholars as an ideology that rejects a welfare state with collectivist institutions providing services to the public, and it advocates instead the use of market mechanisms and competitiveness to achieve economic growth [29]. It is “a process of changing the relationship between the public sector, private sector and civil society to facilitate economic growth” [29]. As PPPs began to appear across many countries, many cases were reported that highlighted their shortcomings. Pollock and Price (2004), for example, warned as early as 2004 of the terrifying financial implications of expensive government bailouts in the cases of failed private finance initiative (PFI) projects. In this paper we refer to PFI and PPP interchangeably as, in certain countries PFI is used to specifically refer to construction-related PPP.

They challenge the main proposition used to sell the concept of PPPs as a “partnership” that allows public agencies to share the financial risk involved in delivering the product with private-sector partners [30]. They point out the substantially higher costs of financing projects through a PPP as compared to conventional public financing that adds to the project’s cost, and the very high profits investors make in the process. They refer to a report that undermines “the government’s basic claim that investors’ profits are justified because the private sector assumes risks for project failure or default”, highlighting the reality that in case of failures, “private finance gets repaid while the public sector carries the extra cost of keeping services going and communities suffer . . . because the risks that are supposedly transferred to the private sector are ultimately not transferred at all” [30]. They reported that within a little over a decade, the policy of adopting PPP had created new debts of GBP 35 billion in the UK and yet the policy was not evaluated nor the cost to the public purse ascertained.

Hearne (2014) asserts that PPPs were branded as ‘partnerships’ to deflect public opposition to privatization and claimed that PPPs would yield ‘benefits’ for the public through the involvement of the private sector and markets. In reality, though, the partnership increased private-sector involvement in public governance and decision-making, facilitating the processes of ‘marketisation’ of public services and infrastructure which had traditionally been delivered by the state [3].

Among the many criticisms of PPP-led projects, those relating to residential redevelopment/regeneration projects involving active residents have mainly highlighted issues of maintaining effective community engagement/participation during project implementation. Literature reports, for example, the case of the regeneration of St. Michael’s Estate in Dublin, Ireland, in 2008. A PPP model was advocated by the Department of Environment as the fastest and most efficient model for urban regeneration that would potentially also yield monetary benefits for the city. The reality of the failed project, however, revealed many problematic aspects of the exercise. Although community engagement was promoted initially, “the critical stages of the PPP process were inaccessible to the community” [31]. The community was discouraged from being represented on decision-making panels and the major decision-making focused on financial and technical matters. The general attitude adopted by the city council was that such decisions were the exclusive domain of professionals and experts. The lack of community engagement meant that their priorities were disregarded, resulting in community dissatisfaction over many issues, such as the poor handling of the housing tenure mix and the prioritization of finance over the design of the housing units. In short, the market-led nature of the PPP model adopted was seen as the city council’s shift towards an ‘entrepreneurial’ ideology [31] (p. 112).

3.2. Neoliberalism and Planning

Neoliberal ideology has challenged and largely prevailed over the traditional planning ethos of universal provision of welfare services by public agencies and opposed state intervention in land and property markets. Notwithstanding the criticism and concerns raised since the adoption of neoliberal ‘processes’ by city governments around the world, there has not been any serious review of its impact on urban planning. This is mainly due to a dearth of studies dealing with the impact of neoliberalism on planning theory and practice.

Tasan-Kok and Baeten (2012) point out that, unlike in other disciplines, ‘neoliberalism’ and ‘neoliberalization’ have generally remained overlooked in planning theory and planning practice analysis. This has allowed an “uneasy cohabitation” of ‘planning’ (or state intervention for common good) and ‘neoliberalism’ (or the belief that market mechanisms are better at organizing land use than state intervention) to prevail [6]. In such a situation, planners across the world somehow manage to deal with an “increasingly neoliberal mode of producing spaces and places” and navigate the “contradiction between the serving of private profit-seeking interests while actually seeking the public betterment of cities” [6]. It thus becomes difficult to assess the degree of success or efficiency of the outcomes of current planning practices, including those involving PPP projects.

Along similar lines, Sager (2011) emphasizes the need to conduct an “overview of planning-related neo-liberal policies and map their effects on urban economic development, infrastructure provision, management of commercial areas, housing and neighborhood renewal, and other aspects of urban living that planners are professionally engaged with” [1].

Rather than a clearly defined product or end-state, neoliberalism is best understood as the process of neoliberalization of policies that has not affected or transformed states uniformly across the world. Brenner and Theodore (2002) argue that the actual manifestation of neoliberalization appears differently in different societies [32]. Hearne (2014) states that while adopting the process each state selects particular pathways of political-economic restructuring, “revealing a distinct geography of ‘actually existing neoliberalism’” [3]. This implies that PPPs, essentially a product of neoliberalization within a particular state, would have similarity or dissimilarity across countries, closely reflecting the nature of their exist-

ing institutions and political-economic structures. Beyond macro perspectives, the ‘actually existing neoliberalism’ framework of analysis can also be applied to study the effects of neoliberal rationalities on the informal, noncapital domains of the economy in different urban contexts [33]. This would make learning lessons from the execution of PPPs in a particular country either more or less valid for another country.

3.3. PPP Governance Framework-New Governance Theory

The ‘uneasy cohabitation’ of planning and neoliberalism [6] is most pronounced in PPP projects wherein planners struggle to exploit market mechanisms to deliver public good while partnering with private-sector partners with divergent views and motivations. In this milieu, there is potential for clashes of interest between city governments’ urban economic development prerogatives facilitated by the private sector and the interests of citizens concerned about social and environmental sustainability. This has led to the formulation of ‘new governance’ theories around public–private partnership (PPP) projects [23].

In essence, ‘new governance’ theories suggest that public agencies engaged in partnership with the private sector should not take the back seat and hand over implementation of PPP projects to private-sector partners, as they have the duty to protect community interests and promote public good. In order to retain control, public agencies need to establish robust project governance frameworks and governance mechanisms.

The Commission on Global Governance (CGG) describes governance as “the cooperation between a political state and its civil society, the government and non-governmental organizations, public and private institutions, which can be mandatory or voluntary cooperation” [34]. In line with this definition, Keping concludes that good governance is about having in place public administration processes that maximize public interest. It essentially entails some form of collaborative management of public life in which both the state and the citizens participate, leading to an optimal relationship between the political state and civil society [35].

PPP projects involve collective action by multiple agencies who depend on each other to achieve their aims and objectives and, in the process, exchange resources and negotiate common goals. In this regard, Keping observes that the outcome of such exchanges depends on the rules of the game that are set up and the environment in which the exchange occurs, as much as on the resources of each organization [35]. This observation emphasizes the role and responsibility of public agencies to set the rules and regulations and create an appropriate environment for delivering public good. It follows, therefore, that ensuring community engagement in the planning and implementation of PPP projects remains the responsibility of public agencies.

PPP projects adopt ‘cooperative governance’, characterized by contracting and decentralization, with the public agency involved in administration and pursuing cooperation between the state and private sectors while allowing management-based decisions to be undertaken on market principles [36]. A successful PPP project aimed at delivering sustainable communities requires the public agency to put into effect cooperative governance mechanisms that clearly make provision for effective community engagement to yield meaningful community-building initiatives.

The case of the Tama Plaza redevelopment project, a partnership between the City of Yokohama and a private-sector entity is described in this paper as an example of the execution of PPP aligned to ‘new governance’ theories. The paper seeks to highlight elements within the PPP governance model that focus on community engagement and community development, analyzed within their contextual realities.

4. Methods

The research reported in this paper mostly relies on qualitative data analysis, using both primary and secondary sources to present a case study of the Tama Plaza redevelopment, a major PPP redevelopment project in Yokohama, Japan. The larger contextual

analysis within which the case study project is embedded is informed by a review of the relevant literature of both English- and Japanese-language publications.

Despite acknowledging the debate about the validity or utility of case studies as a research method, the case study method is adopted because the topic of study has been generally overlooked in the planning literature. Flyvbjerg (2006), although pointing out the limitations of single-case studies as a means for generating theoretical knowledge, appreciates the significance of case studies in the systematic production of exemplars that add to the effectiveness of a discipline [37]. Gerring (2007; 2016) also defends the case study approach against commonly cited criticisms [38,39]. According to Yin (2017), meanwhile, one could employ case studies as a research method to study one or more cases as a unit(s) of inquiry [40]. In this context, this paper presents the Tama Plaza case study as an exemplar that could inspire more case studies to be undertaken by planners from across different regions to add to the empirical evidence about urban development-related PPP projects evolving within their contextual realities.

Basic facts about the PPP project were collected from project reports and publications and field observations. Face-to-face interviews with relevant project staff were sought to obtain insights into the project operations focusing on community dealings. Matters related to managing community engagement and promoting community-building initiatives in the project area were investigated to gain an understanding of the partners' approach towards project implementation.

Interviews with representatives of both PPP project partners were carried out at two points in time, in 2015 and 2017. In 2015, two employees representing the City of Yokohama's core committee were interviewed together at their office (their response is identified and referred to as C1 in this paper), while two employees from Tokyu Corporation operating in a similar capacity were interviewed at the project site (their response identified and referred to as T1). The four people interviewed in 2015 were members of the original core committee put in charge of designing and implementing community engagement for the PPP redevelopment project at the project's inception. In the next round of interviews in 2017, due to the changeover of staff, a new set of two employees each from the two organizations were interviewed (their responses denoted as C2 and T2, respectively). A total of eight resource persons were thus interviewed.

The interviews provide an insight into the viewpoints of the public and private-sector partners as they came together to undertake a major suburban redevelopment project within the PPP governance format. These semi-structured interviews comprised broad questions investigating how the PPP governance framework was conceived with reference to the contextual reality of Tama Plaza, to highlight the influence of socio-cultural and politico-economic factors in shaping the conception and execution of the PPP project. The questions also sought to investigate how the two organizations with different work cultures and approaches to service delivery came together in a partnership, and the salient project governance mechanisms put in place to ensure community engagement.

5. Tama Plaza—Next-Generation Suburban Redevelopment

A case study of Tama Plaza, a model next-generation suburban redevelopment undertaken as a PPP by Yokohama City, is drawn, focusing on matters related to community engagement in community-building initiatives. In order to assess the effectiveness of community engagement in the project, the salient aspects of the PPP governance and implementation framework related to community services provision and the approach of the PPP partners towards maintaining community engagement is investigated. Findings from the interviews are then discussed with reference to prevalent contextual factors.

The paper uses the case study approach to understand the mechanisms for community engagement built into the PPP governance framework within the local contextual reality of Tama Plaza. The case study seeks to highlight how Yokohama City and its private-sector partner, Tokyu Corporation, approach building sustainable communities in view of current demographic and lifestyle changes. It identifies the driving forces behind the PPP,

the motivations of the public and private-sector partners, and the contextual reality they operate within. The investigation also focuses on how existing community associations and dynamics are dealt with as the scope of community-building activities are expanded by the PPP project.

The case study from Japan will have significant relevance to many countries in the Global South as, despite representing the Global North, Japan shares more similarities with countries in the Global South than other Global North countries do. Firstly, social values and attitudes towards urban development in Japanese cities are more similar to cities in the Global South than in the Global North. Kidokoro et al. (2022) for example, attribute the stronger relationships existing between government and private-sector actors in many Asian cities to their sharing of the tradition of the developmental state model as was adopted by Japan. They further claim that, after the 1980s, Asian mega-cities have followed the Japanese trend, shifting away from the development state “to a hybrid political regime of developmental-state and neoliberalism” [5]. Secondly, Japan shares the cultural tradition of neighborhood residents’ associations for mutual help that have historically served as control mechanisms for centralized governments.

5.1. Tama Plaza History

Tama Plaza is the major activity hub within the expanse of Tama Garden City that was initiated in 1964 as a second Den-en Chofu, featuring *cul-de-sacs* and Radburn style separation of pedestrian walkways from vehicular traffic. Tama Plaza station opened in 1966 [41]. In 1977, the rail line from Tama Plaza station was extended to directly connect it to Shibuya station [42]. This connection transformed the area, making it a particularly convenient and attractive place to live in. The opening of a department store in the suburb in front of Tama Plaza station in 1982 marked the establishment of a convenient suburban lifestyle.

Tama Plaza development had been in existence for about forty years when in 2006 Tokyu Corporation began planning for the redevelopment and infrastructure upgrade of the Tama Plaza station area. In 2011, the City of Yokohama approached Tokyu with a partnership proposal in the area’s redevelopment with a shared vision that would facilitate its aim of creating a development model for future sustainable communities [41].

The Tama Plaza PPP is undertaken by the City of Yokohama that presents itself as a progressive city, and Tokyu Corporation, a major private railway company and an established developer that claims expertise in effective community engagement. The PPP seeks to address, in a holistic manner, issues Japanese suburbs are currently facing to prepare for the future by creating sustainable communities. The two main partners in the redevelopment representing the public and private partners are introduced below, before discussing details of the project.

5.2. City of Yokohama—A Progressive Global City

Yokohama is a major commercial hub within the Greater Tokyo Area, with a population of around 3 million. Its image of a competitive global city is supported by its successfully executed iconic global project, Minato Mirai 21 (MM21), an ambitious large-scale city center redevelopment PPP project implemented during the 1980s and 1990s. The MM21 is an iconic waterfront development figuring as one of Japan’s major ‘global projects’ [43] and it has been acknowledged as a successful PPP that applied flexible planning and sustained implementation over an extended timeframe [44].

Yokohama was included among the 11 cities designated as ‘future cities’ as part of Japan’s ‘2011 New Growth Strategy’ [45]. These ‘future cities’ were selected to develop successful models for dealing with issues relating to environmental threats and challenges presented by a super-aging society [46]. As part of its future city initiative, the City of Yokohama has sought projects to develop the ‘Yokohama model’ for regeneration and revitalization of urban areas. One of these future city projects is the ‘model project for sustainable suburbs’ that the Tama Plaza PPP aspires to deliver.

Being designated as an SDG Future City in 2018, Yokohama City established the SDG Design Center to facilitate and encourage various civil society and private-sector actors to promote SDGs. In this regard, Yokohama City has identified and committed to take up various challenges aligned to the adoption of SDGs, including how to deal with an aging society and declining population and countering the loss of vitality in suburban communities. The WISE City Living Lab set up in Tama Plaza in 2017 is one of the SDG Design Center's partner projects [47]. WISE City is a 2012 Yokohama City's initiative aimed at promoting sustainable urban development, that has now been aligned to three sustainable development goals, SDG 3, SDG 10 and SDG 11.

5.3. Tokyu Corporation—A Private Railway Company and Developer

Tokyu Corporation is a large private railway company, headquartered in Shibuya, Tokyo. Tokyu Corporation undertakes both railway development and residential development hand-in-hand. Between 1922 and 1926, Tokyu Corporation (formerly operating as Den-en Toshi Corporation) developed Den-en Chofu, Japan's first Garden City, and set up a railway company to connect it to the city center. Its next project was Tama Garden City that spread out south-west of Tokyo along the Tokyu Den-en Toshi Line covering an area of 5000 ha [41].

Tokyu, a private corporation, has been procuring and assembling land parcels to expand residential development and high-density settlements along its railway lines through land-readjustment projects [42]. The land-readjustment agreements have involved long and drawn-out community consultation and negotiations with numerous landowners, sometimes lasting over decades (Reported by Tokyu Corporation staff).

Tokyu Corporation has been acknowledged for the "efficient development of a high-quality residential area" [48] (p. 129). Over decades, Tokyu has emerged as a major railway operator and a successful developer that has maintained large-scale and high-quality functional suburbs, such as the Tama Plaza.

5.4. Envisioning the Next-Generation Suburban Redevelopment Model Project

In this section, we seek to identify the salient features of the soft community-building aspects of the Tama Plaza redevelopment model project and understand the decision-making processes taking place in the PPP while it is actually implemented. The Tama Plaza redevelopment project commenced with the signing of a PPP agreement in 2012 that was seeking to deliver a model of effective planning and governance systems for both hard and soft aspects of development. The redevelopment sought the rebuilding and/or upgrading of hard infrastructure as well as the carrying out of soft tasks of community building and social infrastructure.

The PPP set out to address the issues affecting the area, such as the aging of the population, population decline, increasingly dilapidated infrastructure, and the lack of a sense of community [49] (p. 24). The site selected for redevelopment comprised three districts (*chome*) of Utsugushigaoka in Aoba-ku in western Yokohama City. There were around 6600 households currently living in the project area. At the inception of the PPP project, the area featured built form, infrastructure, and facilities needing renewal, including Tama Plaza train station and surrounding retail and service facilities. The area, featuring some older large-scale apartment complexes (*danchi*), as well areas with freestanding detached housing, represented a typical, established suburb of Yokohama.

The major hard infrastructure upgrade sought through redevelopment was the installation of a pedestrian circulation network of terraces to provide barrier-free access within and around the station and its vicinity where commercial, residential, as well as health and welfare service facilities would be housed. The Tama Plaza station building serves as the center of the CBD of Tama Garden City developed by Tokyu Corporation in the 1960s. The station was to be renewed as an integrated UMRT (urban mass railway transit) station with intermodal transport and commercial facilities, connecting the communities on the north and south of the station [50].

The soft infrastructure aspects promoted by the redevelopment focus on addressing issues related to an aging society and declining population by focusing on people, lifestyles and community values; encouraging sustainable suburban communities; and taking up community-building tasks through effective collaboration between stakeholders.

In order to realize the conception of a PPP to pursue its planning agenda, the city granted a relaxation of existing development controls and regulations to make the proposition attractive to prospective private-sector partners. It allowed development at a higher floor area ratio (FAR; 250%) than was normally allowed (175%) and greater building heights (30 m instead of the normal 20 m). These relaxations were offered on the condition that the developer would ensure the redevelopment included certain public facilities to benefit the larger community and would also set aside a certain amount of office spaces for lease to the city at significantly discounted rates.

Before the PPP was realized, extensive consultations between the City of Yokohama and Tokyu Corporation had taken place. Yokohama City and Tokyu Corporation initiated *benkyo-kai* sessions in June 2011 among relevant interested staff to build mutual trust and as pre-discussions for possible collaboration. *Benkyo-kai* are extended study sessions carried out and facilitated by city councils in Japan, where interested community members discuss certain planning ideas amongst themselves and with city staff. Sometimes experts or professionals may be invited to join the discussions. In the process, they organized two workshops in November and December 2011, inviting around 50 to 60 participants comprising Yokohama City officials from across all levels of hierarchy belonging to related sections, interested staff from Tokyu Corporation, health services and welfare workers and third parties, including academics and specialists, to join the discussion [41].

The signing of the PPP agreement was marked by a major community engagement exercise. A ‘kick-off’ forum was organized in July 2012, three months after the agreement was officially signed. It was attended by around 200 community members and specialists. The panel comprised academics, experts, and active community members, including the head of *shotengai* (shopkeepers’ association). A survey followed to solicit community views and perceptions about the PPP, receiving responses from around 1300 households. The Tama Plaza ‘*Machizukuri* Newsletter’ was initiated to provide updates on community-engagement events and initiatives undertaken by the redevelopment project. From October 2012 onward, five workshops were held within six months, each attended by around 100 participants. At the same time, a series of eight lectures on community development issues, such as having a smart city, child raising, and aged health care, were delivered under the ‘TamaPla University’ initiative [41].

The PPP agreement was renewed in 2017 without any significant changes other than agreement to introduce area-management activities and enlarge the scope of the project to include redevelopment of another nearby station, Azamino, along the Tokyu railway line. The PPP agreement was later extended for another 5 years in 2022. In 2013, the city and Tokyu Corporation came up with ‘WISE City’ to highlight the following range of aspirations: ‘W’ for Wellness and Working (i.e., local employment workplace); ‘I’ for Intelligence and ICT; ‘S’ for Smart, Sustainable, and Safe; ‘E’ for Ecology, Energy, and Economics (behavioral) [51].

6. Findings from Interviews

In the rest of this section, we seek insight into how the partners approached community engagement in the implementation of the PPP project as we describe the main features of the PPP. We report on findings from face-to-face interviews with staff serving on a joint core team representing the PPP, focused on community engagement. As explained in the Methodology section, four employees each from the public and private-sector partners were interviewed in 2015 and 2017. Responses received during 2015 interviews from staff members from Tokyu Corporation are identified as ‘[T1]’ and those from City of Yokohama staff as ‘[C1]’, respectively. Similarly, responses from 2017 interviews of Tokyu Corporation employees are identified as ‘[T2]’ and those of City of Yokohama staff as [C2], respectively.

As part of their jobs, each interviewee was tasked to deal with the local community in carrying out various *machizukiri*-related (town/place making) tasks focusing on community facilities and services, as part of the redevelopment project. Following are their responses to the following three broad questions:

- How was the PPP project conceived?
- What governance mechanisms for community engagement are incorporated into the PPP's operational model?
- What issues arise from public and private-sector operators working together?

6.1. How Was the PPP Project Conceived?

Why create a PPP?

The City of Yokohama's representatives referred to neoliberal reasoning to explain their motivation to enter into a PPP for the project (C1; C2). They reported increasing difficulty in maintaining urban services and upgrading infrastructure because of decreasing city revenues from income tax due to an aging population coupled with decreasing tax revenue from an industry facing long-term economic recession. In order to maintain and upgrade the city infrastructure, the city was forced to find partners for investment. The city decided to use relaxation of its development control regulations to not only encourage the private-sector partners to provide high-quality community facilities—a somewhat similar concept to the 'developers contribution' common in the West—but also push its 'compact city' agenda (C1; C2).

The city viewed Tama Plaza redevelopment as an opportunity to establish a practical model of the 'Yokohama' way of reconstructing suburbs. This project would help the city create governance systems to administer optimal standards and criteria for the relaxation of regulations to facilitate effective redevelopment that would yield sustainable communities (C1). A practical planning objective of the project was the partial restructuring of the area's physical layout to comply with the city's 'compact city' strategy, as far as possible. Towards this end, it sought to encourage the relocation of residents, especially those requiring health care and social services, into housing situated within walking distance of community facilities for efficient delivery of services (C2; T2). It also strove to promote child raising through various community living initiatives and increased diversity of housing types to attract different age groups into the area (C2).

Why choose Tokyu Corporation as Partner?

The city put emphasis on finding prospective private-sector partners who shared a common vision and interest in maintaining the town. It ruled out construction companies, "as they only build physical infrastructure and then move on to the next project". Railway companies were favored because "they have to maintain the quality of the place along with their railways so that their train service could be used" (C1).

Tokyu's reputation as a successful developer of quality residential estates and a long tradition of community engagement also helped to choose Tokyu as a partner. Tokyu claims that ever since they began to develop the area 60 years ago, the company had maintained its 'talking terms' with the area residents (T2). The fact that Tokyu owned 70 per cent of the land involved worked in its favor (C1).

Why agree to partner with the City of Yokohama?

The City of Yokohama's request to enter into a partnership coincided with Tokyu's plans for the Tama Plaza station area redevelopment, initiated in 2006. For Tokyu, the partnership allowed a more comprehensive redevelopment and an opportunity to further build effective communication and interaction with the community. The delivery of quality facilities would make the place more livable, lively, and attractive, thereby achieving Tokyu's ultimate goal, as a railway company, of ensuring guaranteed ridership on its train line (T1; T2).

The higher FAR and extra building heights and a simplified procedure for land purchase (without entering into complicated bidding processes) allowed greater profit margins for the developer, enabling it to undertake significantly more elaborate initiatives to engage the community and make the place more livable (T1).

In the Tama Plaza redevelopment PPP, the City of Yokohama contributed in the form of the relaxation of regulations, whereas Tokyu Corporation provided the sweat equity, undertaking investment, development, and sales. Some other private companies were also involved in minor roles in specific initiatives as required, such as those related to WISE Living Lab activities (T2).

How was the Project Area determined?

The Tama Plaza redevelopment PPP project was formalized in April 2012, following a *benkyo-kai* (study session) run by the City of Yokohama between June 2011 and March 2012. During *benkyo-kai*, the prospective PPP partners carefully selected and demarcated the project area to successfully pilot the model project. Tokyu's previous experience and knowledge of the area were the main criteria guiding the selection of the designated model area. (C1) The area was known to have a cooperative and progressive community with no temples, shrines, nor established large, land-owning families (T1).

Tama Plaza was based on ideal suburban planning principles and features high-quality infrastructure created by Tokyu. It had generally attracted well-educated and relatively well-off people who value community highly. As the residents of Tama Plaza tended to be progressive thinkers, they were more likely to participate in different types of social experiments and engage in *machizukiri* initiatives. High-quality community facilities and services thus created in the area would continue to attract people who value a sense of community looking for a place to live and raise families (C2).

6.2. What Governance Mechanisms for Community Engagement Were Incorporated into the PPP's Operational Model?

What were the governance mechanisms put in place to ensure Community Engagement?

A joint core team, comprising three city and six Tokyu staff, was set up at the very inception of the PPP and tasked with designing and carrying out community engagement. Although there was changeover of actual members from time to time, and the numbers may have varied, both partners continued to assign their staff to serve on the joint core team for community engagement in the project area. The core committee conceived projects and proposals relating to the design and operation of community facilities in the project area, in consultation with the community, including *jichikai* members. (T1, C1).

The two partners were jointly responsible for carrying out all community-building initiatives through this joint core team and equally split all costs associated with related community-engagement tasks. The jointly staffed core team presented the public face of the PPP and its members were responsible for maintaining the interface with the local Tama Plaza community. This core team designed and ran community engagement and community-building projects related to the redevelopment (T1, T2, C1, C2).

This joint team of public and private-sector representatives enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy in the sense that they operated as a single team, somewhat independent of either partner/employer. They carried out day-to-day decision-making in matters relating to engaging the community and dealing with community-building initiatives. They also made strategic recommendations and reported to both the city and Tokyu as a single entity. (T2, C2).

Were the governance mechanisms to ensure Community Consultation effective?

All members that were interviewed emphatically affirmed that the joint core team functioned effectively. The ability to reach consensus on the approach to be taken jointly resolve problems as they arose had been great from the start and had not changed since. This was attributed to the fact that all potential issues were identified and extensively discussed by them during *benkyo-kai* (extended study sessions) before the agreement to

proceed with PPP was finalized. The core team, and by extension, Yokohama City and Tokyu Corporation, therefore, did not confront any unresolved issues (C1; C2; T1; T2).

The joint core team normally held monthly meetings but, at times, they met daily. The team members discussed all aspects of their work, making space for as much deliberation as required to achieve consensus. Sometimes this could lead to very long meetings held on a daily basis. Over the years a strong team culture had developed (T1, C1). At times when members of the core team found it difficult to convince their colleagues back at their home organizations to agree with the team's recommendations, the entire team, including those employed by the other partner, joined forces to plead the joint team's position (C2). In the process, team members representing the two partners had started to better understand the differences in their organizational culture and each other's position in representing their respective home organization employer (C2, T2).

The presence of academics in the role of experts helped the joint core team during negotiations with the community and/or with their home organizations. It tended to bring in a balance of power among the stakeholders. "Even though [City] public officers, as regulators, would normally hold power over private sector representatives, they cannot ride over the expert advice of academics as they are considered specialists" (T2). It was noted that although the city always worked very closely with the community, "having partnership with private sector and getting the academia involved makes it a rather new kind of partnership. While the city did have interactions with the private sector separately before, it has never been such an open equal relationship internally" (C2).

Were the governance mechanisms for Communication across stakeholders effective?

The core team was responsible for maintaining effective communication across all stakeholders in the project. Firstly, the very formation of the core team represented the mechanism for unbroken communication between the public agency and its private-sector partner. The team members from the two partners worked together on a daily basis and reported back to their respective home offices almost daily (T1, C1).

A major concern for the joint core team, however, had been to figure out how best to engage with the community. The team tried various options before deciding, by trial and error, to organize monthly meetings with the community (T1). Representatives of *jichikai* and the core team initially used to meet once every three months, but for many years since they met every month (C1). Representatives of shop owners also attended these monthly meetings. The meetings served to share information, with participants encouraged to discuss matters freely and frankly (T2).

From the City of Yokohama's perspective, the city had made major exceptions regarding community interaction and protocol in the case of Tama Plaza residents. Monthly meetings with *jichikai* were normally conducted only at the *ku* (ward) level. For this model project, however, the community was directly engaged at the higher level, i.e., at the *shi* (city) rather than *ku* (ward) level. Not only was it rare for the city to deal directly with *jichikai* but also to meet either this often, or as informally (C2).

The core team ensured that information regarding community-engagement sessions and WISE City community-building initiatives was disseminated through a wide variety of means, including regular hardcopy newsletters, web site bulletins, public workshops, and through existing *jichikai* network notification systems (T1, C2).

How was sustainability promoted through the suburban redevelopment project?

The core team had been undertaking around eight leading *machizukuri* projects, or leading projects, each year since 2013 to engage residents in community-building exercises aligned to the WISE City vision for sustainable Tama Plaza redevelopment (T2). The Tama Plaza model project aimed to translate this vision into practical initiatives for the community to take up. This was being carried out through an active four-way collaboration, '*san-kan-gaku-min*' [i.e., between private-sector; government agency; academia; and community] (C2).

The leading projects promoted community participation to deal with a range of topics creating awareness towards sustainable living environment and lifestyles. These projects generally built upon their achievements from year to year, so a leading project might be replaced or modified or a new one added, as required. Some notable new projects added over the years represented new agenda topics such as community living, area management, and the [Yokohama City's] 'living lab' (T2). A city core team member noted that "The wide ranging *machizukuri* initiatives exposed us to many topics that came up in the leading projects such as those related to child raising, health care" (C2).

One of these projects, the *jumin sohatsu* (Civic Pride) Project, comprised around 15 small funding grants offered to local residents to initiate their own projects. These grants were publicized and handled through the existing *jichikai* networks in the area. This project attracted the attention of the existing *jichikai* members and other volunteer groups already engaged in various community activities. The numerous small initiatives coming out of this project served as icebreakers that attracted many active local residents (T1). The recipients of the small grants were the first point of contact when volunteers for some initiatives (T1, T2).

6.3. What Issues Arise from Public and Private-Sector Operators Working Together?

Did any issues arise from public agency and private sector working with each other?

All interviewees categorically stated that they didn't face any real or significant issues. Some aspects of working across different organizational cultures, however, were mentioned. Furthermore, the question prompted certain concerns about how the city could be perceived by the community.

Working as part of a single team required adaptation by both partners, not only within the team itself, but also between the team members and colleagues at their home organizations. Tokyu team members struggled to convince their colleagues in Tokyu that dealing with the community and the city for planning decisions is a time consuming but rewarding process. Initially their colleagues criticized them for slow progress, skeptical whether it would lead to any visible returns for the company. This was despite the company's tradition of undertaking cumbersome and time-consuming processes related to land readjustment. However, once they saw the extent of relaxation of regulations the city offered, their impression changed completely (T1). It was a while before many colleagues realized that those regulation relaxations had actually happened, and only since then did their view of the deal and the core team change (T2).

Tokyu team members also felt that it took the City of Yokohama a long time to respond to suggestions or approve proposals. They took that to mean that all Divisions within the city office were not involved or committed to the City's model project. However, they later realized that this was simply due to the city's organizational culture (T2). City staff, on the other hand, reported being shocked by how fast responses and approvals were acquired by Tokyu core team members from Tokyu headquarters (C1, C2).

Within a few years, however, initial distrust or reluctance disappeared, and both partners seem satisfied with the core team's overall performance, as all parties understood the need for tangible results (T2). However, some differences in organizational working culture persisted, such as when strict seniority-based hierarchy was sometimes encountered when dealing with the City (T2). There were also differences that appeared in the way the two partners drafted news releases related to the project in their organization's publications. "We, in the private sector tend to use expressions differently. We use present and future tenses in reporting news—such as 'We are doing...' or 'We will do...'. In the public sector, it is more conservative, and more common to use the past tense to report their achievement—such as 'We have done newsletter this or that'" (T1). These issues needed to be worked around in reporting progress in the PPP project's joint publication "*Machizukuri Newsletter*".

Any community perception issues of the public agency and private-sector partnership?

A team member from the city emphasized the need to be mindful of community perceptions about the Yokohama City–Tokyu partnership as private companies want to see direct benefit from the project. “We just have to be careful with projecting what we do to the community, providing clear information about what we do for what purpose. We also must be careful not to promote something which may look like directly benefiting Tokyu” (C1). The city made conscious efforts to ensure that the PPP projects were not seen as a ‘back scratching alliance’ among partners. “We were always afraid of being suspected of having cozy relationships with private companies. However, the new working conditions at the city have necessitated working with the private sector and we need to review our organizational culture and change our old attitude of a regulator and approver” (C1).

Another team member from the city expressed similar sentiments while explaining that the City of Yokohama had undertaken the PPP to promote its ‘compact city’ strategy aligned with sustainability principles. “We believe there is an urgent need to realize a compact city so as not to waste limited resources. We are even considering setting up higher residential tax [rates] for people who choose to live in remote areas to make them consider moving closer to our service center. While we hope to use the redevelopment project to encourage elderly households to relocate close to the station [to reduce delivery costs of health and welfare services to the city], the city does not openly advise elderly residents living in large freestanding houses to shift into apartments built by Tokyu that are directly connected to the station. We could only highlight our concern about their living alone and away from the center—and encourage them to consider a reassessment of their lifestyle. There we could only make a suggestion, like, ‘you could talk to some private consultants...’. We say you have the option of using the city’s visiting health care support teams, but the city would rather have everyone requiring services to locate closer together so we could efficiently provide the services. But we cannot say, ‘sell this house and move into a Tokyu apartment!’” (C1).

7. Discussion of Findings

7.1. Were There Issues with the Conception of the PPP?

In Japan, as in other countries, there are clearly defined rules and regulations regarding transparency and accountability requirements that PPP partners are bound by. For example, the website promoting PPP/PFI projects maintained by Japan’s Cabinet Office posts laws and guidelines governing the conception and execution of PPPs [52]. There seems, however, to be room in the interpretation of the laws to allow extensive discussion between the public agency and a prospective private-sector partner prior to the signing off on the PPP agreement or flexibility in the finalization of project-delivery specifications. As Ohno and Harada (2006) note, each country establishes its tendering and contracting systems “according to the characteristics of its domestic construction market as well as its economic system and practices” [53] (p. 49). Like the UK, for example, Japan has recently been “implementing measures to utilize the abilities of the private sector in public procurement, including Public Private Partnership (PPP)” [53] (p. 50).

In any case, the contextual reality of Yokohama would necessitate adjustments in applying any strict transparency requirements. The suburban context is largely developed by private train companies-cum-developers who own and operate not only the train stations that the suburb centers around, but also the majority of land along the train line. Japan’s recent history of adopting a developmental state model of economic development for its post-war economic boom would also influence the interpretation of transparency and accountability requirements.

7.2. Benkyo-Kai Study Sessions

Extended *benkyo-kai* sessions between the two prospective partners allowed potential issues or misunderstandings to be identified and resolved prior to signing the PPP agreement. More importantly, it allowed the building of mutual trust among partners and

familiarity with each other's working style and approach to issues, overcoming potential friction arising out of differences in organizational working structures and viewpoints.

The point to make here is that the context allowed for extensive pre-consultation among negotiating parties prior to finalizing the project brief or commencement of work. *Benkyo-kai* reflects the local context within which the PPP was conceived and implemented. Organizing *benkyo-kai* study sessions when contemplating any major undertaking is an established tradition in the workplace culture in Japan that facilitates cross-sectoral discussion among all those with an interest in the topic/issue. These sessions allow extensive research to be undertaken to explore all anticipated concerns and issues, in a relaxed and hierarchy-free atmosphere encouraging frank discussion and expressions of opinion. These informal or unofficial meetings serve as preliminary discussions to explore propositions in their rudimentary conceptual form that may or may not eventuate into any concrete idea or proposal.

7.3. Involvement of Academics

The involvement of academics in the design of the PPP and the execution of community engagement by the core team has played crucial roles. Academics were involved in *benkyo-kai* workshops held prior to formalization of the PPP and the formalization of community-engagement program. They had also facilitated community engagement and advised community groups in implementing the WISE City projects. Additionally, the private partner found their presence during meetings and negotiations with the city beneficial as it helped in establishing a power balance among stakeholders.

Again, this needs to be understood as a factor defining the local context within which the PPP and community engagement unfolded. In Japan, it is fairly common for public planning agencies as well as private developers to engage academics for expert advice on various planning and development matters. Academics often facilitate informed decision-making by identifying issues and interpreting the impacts of potential actions. As in many Global South countries, in Japan, their involvement brings credibility to planning initiatives because the community trusts their opinion and expects them to adopt a neutral position with unbiased views.

The involvement of academics in seeking innovation may be seen as part of its developmental state history. At the national level, Japanese government has traditionally promoted "an inclusive consultation process, involving academia, government, and industry stakeholders (called *San-Kan-Gaku*) in a number of areas, and in the preparation of Japan's strategy documents such as the 'Basic Plans'" [54] (p. 10). In more recent decades, four-way collaboration between private sector, government agency, academia, and community (*san-kan-gaku-min*) has become an established strategy promoted by many local governments to encourage innovation and policy reform [55].

7.4. Yokohama City–Tokyu Joint Core Team

The realization of significant community engagement could largely be attributed to positive action taken up by the city in collaboration with its private-sector partner to install formal governance mechanisms at the onset of the project. This mechanism was added into the project's institutional framework in the shape of the joint city–Tokyu core team tasked with coordinating all community-engagement tasks. The joint core team has proved to be a crucial governance mechanism whereby the public and private-sector partners collaborate while initiating, implementing, and maintaining the Tama Plaza redevelopment. With both parties' commitment and sharing of resources, this institutional framework allows effective collaboration between the public and private-sector partners facilitating decision-making regarding community engagement. Most importantly, with a small team working together closely, a new work culture has emerged within the team that could also influence the two organizations they belong to.

The existence of the core team ensured that the redevelopment of Tama Plaza capitalized on cutting edge sustainability projects undertaken by Yokohama City. At the time

of the last round of interviews in 2017, the WISE City initiative, under Yokohama City's patronage, was in place and the core team was finalizing setting up the WISE City's Living Lab in Tama Plaza. The Living Lab seeks to encourage cross-sectoral contributions towards promoting sustainability by engaging various private companies to promote community living and sustainable lifestyles. The WISE City 'Living Lab', completed in 2017, became a partner project of Yokohama City's SDG Design Center in 2020 [56].

7.5. Involving Jichikai in WISE City Leading Projects

The WISE City initiative in Tama Plaza maintains several leading projects that are either expanded or replaced by the core team in consultation with the local community, including *jichikai* members, and advice from academics and experts. The leading projects have thus served to effectively expand the scope of issues dealt with by a traditional *jichikai* by exposing its members to contemporary issues regarding sustainability and sustainable lifestyles.

An important point to note is that rather than creating new networking mechanisms to reach out, inform, and recruit residents to join its diverse initiatives, the core committee sought to work closely with existing *jichikai*. It used their communication networks within the community to announce community-building projects under their WISE City program. Collaboration with *jichikai* not only avoided wastage of project resources by the PPP partners to create networks, it also potentially allayed fears of distrust among existing *jichikai* organizations and their members regarding the PPP's core team.

7.6. Jumin Sohatsu—Icebreaker Projects

Among the leading projects, the *jumin sohatsu* (Community Pride) project has been especially useful in reaching out to active volunteers working either through the *jichikai* or in small groups, allowing them to take up or expand their own community-building projects. With 15 grants funded in 2014, ranging from around \$500 to \$5000, it served as an important 'icebreaker', encouraging active residents to come forward with their own projects, however small. The core team, in effect, created room for community members to set the agenda rather than handing down a preset research agenda. Collectively, these projects represent a locally defined community development agenda supported by the *jichikai* membership that has resulted in, for example, the setting up of community-run cafes and community event venues. The effectiveness of the project has created a buy-in within the community for WISE City projects, borne by the fact the core team refers to members of the *jumin sohatsu* projects as the first point of contact for recruiting volunteers for community-building initiatives.

8. Conclusions

8.1. The Tama Plaza Case Study from Japan

Case studies contributed to testing theory in practice by generating empirical evidence. The Tama Plaza case study provides an example of the adoption of 'new governance' theories that suggest that public agencies do not have to take the back seat in PPP projects but can remain actively involved and engaged in community-building initiatives. Robust PPP project governance mechanisms, like the jointly resourced autonomous core team, can facilitate collaborative designing and carrying out of community-building initiatives by partners with mutual trust and respect for each other's expertise and work culture.

The discussion of the specificity of the contextual reality of the Tama Plaza redevelopment has served two purposes. Firstly, it emphasized the wide variation in 'actually existing' neoliberalism found across countries that can varyingly affect the conception, composition, or execution of its product: the PPPs. Secondly, it encourages planners in Global South cities exposed to similar forms of governmentality and dealing with communities sharing similar cultural traits to draw lessons from how the existing *jichikai* role was expanded to create complementary forums promoting sustainable communities. It makes a case for city governments with a history of residents' association, to reinvigorate the

associations rather than allowing them to be swept aside during redevelopment through PPP projects.

For proponents of neoliberalism, the Tama Plaza suburban redevelopment model project serves as a good example of a city government pursuing its resolve to promote sustainable urban transformation aligned to SDGs 11 and 17 through a PPP. This major suburban redevelopment represents a government agency entering a PPP with a private-sector partner to secure financing and execution of a large-scale infrastructure upgrade project, as promoted by SDG 17. The public and private-sector PPP partners see the model project as a win–win game. Yokohama City could apply its ‘compact city’ strategy of aiming to reduce ongoing costs of extending health, aged care, and other welfare services by encouraging service recipients to relocate closer together. A barrier-free pedestrian circulation network above and around the train station was also retrofitted, which is especially significant in a super-aging community. Meanwhile, Tokyu Corporation could utilize increased FAR allocations to ensure sufficient profit margins to invest in community facilities around its train station, lifting the area’s desirability through the redevelopment program.

On the other hand, those critical of the neoliberalist approach would argue that the PPP led the city to forsake its planning and building regulatory control over a critical built environment. At best, the PPP initiative could be seen as arbitrary decision-making, or at worst, a collusion with a private-sector operator’s interest. From that line of reasoning, development controls such as building height restrictions and FAR have been put in place to protect larger community interests in terms of health and safety, therefore, surrendering that regulatory control may not be justified.

For ‘new governance’ theorists, the Tama Plaza redevelopment showcases a PPP wherein the city has not gone into retreat, but rather engaged actively in elaborate community-engagement activities. The city facilitated market dynamics to encourage the private sector to build community facilities rather than drawing on its own funds, without giving its private-sector partner free rein over the redevelopment. Additionally, it could put in place governance mechanisms like the Yokohama City–Tokyu joint core team that the city believes has raised its capacity to realize effective public participation in pursuing community interests and ensure public good. By sharing running costs and personnel with the developer, and capitalizing on the developer’s networking and experience in community engagement, the city believes it could effectuate community engagement, organize community-building initiatives, and create community spaces. Importantly, by working alongside the developer, the city could engage with the community firsthand to identify and actively pursue community interests.

8.2. Limitations and Further Studies

Tama Plaza redevelopment has shown how a city government can meaningfully collaborate with the private sector through a PPP arrangement to realize sustainable transformation of the urban form, rather than going into retreat. Time and resource limitations, however, forced reliance solely on interviews with the project staff to understand the dynamics of community engagement and its effectiveness. There is, therefore, potential bias in the findings about the effectiveness of community-building initiatives promoted by the project. As such, this paper has not attempted to assess the success rates of any project. As a future research project, however, a community-wide survey could be carried out to get a critical appraisal of the project’s performance and rates of success of various community initiatives.

Other future studies could be undertaken to investigate whether the extensive community-building initiatives focused on a model redevelopment project such as Tama Plaza through the pooling of resources by both public and private-sector players could be sustained once these players exit the project. Another area that merits investigation is whether such focused community engagement and community-building initiatives by dedicated project teams external to the community could create over-reliance among community members on external actors while weakening their own community spirit. Closer to

the specific case study presented in this paper, further research could explore the execution and impact of the new components recently added to the PPP suburban redevelopment agenda, namely, area management and the Living Lab.

Interviewees—PPP Core Team in charge of Community Engagement in Tama Plaza

(C1) marks responses provided by two team representatives of the City of Yokohama interviewed in 2015 who were also members of original core team in charge of community engagement in Tama Plaza project.

(C2) marks responses provided by two team representatives of the City of Yokohama interviewed in 2017.

(T1) marks responses provided by two team representatives of the Tokyu Corporation interviewed in 2015 who were also members of original core team in charge of community engagement in Tama Plaza project.

(T2) marks responses provided by two team representatives of the Tokyu Corporation interviewed in 2017.

Author Contributions: Writing—original draft preparation and conducting fieldwork carried out by M.K.; Writing—final draft, review and editing carried out by S.K. Main decisions in terms of theoretical framework, methodology, analysis, discussion, and conclusions were taken together by both authors. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: No part of the research or its publication has been funded.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The field research carried out and reported in this article has been approved by Curtin University's Human Research Ethics Office. The Ethics Approval number issued is RDHU-242-15.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all interviews involved in this study.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study may be available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to commitment to ensure privacy of the interviewees.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Sager, T. Neo-liberal urban planning policies: A literature survey 1990–2010. *Prog. Plan.* **2011**, *76*, 147–199. [CrossRef]
2. Baeten, G. Neoliberal Planning. In *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory*; Gunder, M., Madanipour, A., Watson, V., Eds.; Routledge: Oxford, UK, 2017; pp. 105–117.
3. Heame, R. Actually Existing Neoliberalism: Public-Private Partnerships in Public Service and Infrastructure Provision in Ireland. In *Neoliberal Urban Policy and the Transformation of the City*; MacLaran, A., Kelly, S., Eds.; Palgrave Macmillan: London, UK, 2014.
4. Wang, N.; Ma, M. Public-Private Partnership as a Tool for Sustainable Development: What Literatures Say. *Sustain. Dev.* **2021**, *29*, 243–258. [CrossRef]
5. Kidokoro, T.; Matsuyuki, M.; Shima, N. Neoliberalization of urban planning and spatial inequalities in Asian megacities: Focus on Tokyo, Bangkok, Jakarta, and Mumbai. *Cities* **2022**, *130*, 103914. [CrossRef]
6. Tasan-Kok, T.; Baeten, G. *Contradictions of Neoliberal Planning Cities, Policies, and Politics*; Springer: Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 2012.
7. Fell, T.; Mattsson, J. The Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Housing as a Potential Contributor to Sustainable Cities and Communities: A Systematic Review. *Sustainability* **2021**, *13*, 7783. [CrossRef]
8. C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, UrbanShift. Research Reports September 2023. Available online: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> (accessed on 20 February 2022).
9. SDG 11-Sustainable Cities and Communities-Statistics Explained (Europa.Eu). Available online: <https://ec.europa.eu> (accessed on 25 July 2021).
10. United Nations (UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Sustainable Development. Available online: <https://sdgs.un.org> (accessed on 25 July 2021).
11. E-Stat Portal Site of Official Statistics of Japan. Available online: <https://www-e%80%94stat-go-jp.translate.goog/stat-search?page=1&toukei=00200524> (accessed on 10 January 2023).
12. Pernice, R. The Transformation of Tokyo during the 1950s and Early 1960s: Projects Between City Planning and Urban Utopia. *J. Asian Archit. Build. Eng.* **2006**, *5*, 253–260. [CrossRef]

13. Takahashi, J.; Sugiura, N. The Japanese urban system and the growing centrality of Tokyo in the global economy. In *Emerging World Cities in Pacific Asia*; Lo, F.C., Yeung, Y.M., Eds.; United Nations University: Tokyo, Japan, 1996.
14. Kato, S. Development of Large Cities and Progress in Railway Transportation. *Jpn. Railw. Transp. Rev.* **1996**, *8*, 44–48.
15. Nuijsink, C. From “container” to “lifestyle:” Kazuyo Sejima, Sou Fujimoto and the destruction of the nuclear family box. *Interiors* **2021**, *11*, 132–156. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
16. Agriculture and Rural Development Information Centre (ARIC). *Community Chapter: History of Community Development in Japan*; ARIC: Hong Kong, China. Available online: www.aric.or.jp (accessed on 2 February 2020).
17. Jaffrey, S. *The Role of Neighborhood Leaders in Indonesia’s COVID-19 Response*; ARIScope, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore: Singapore, 2020; Available online: <https://ari.nus.edu.sg/ariscopes> (accessed on 30 December 2022).
18. Friedmann, J.; Douglass, M. *Cities for Citizens: Planning and the Rise of Civil Society in a Global Age*; Wiley: Chichester, UK, 1997.
19. Askew, M. Community-building among the Bangkok middle class: Ethnographic perspectives on group identity and problem-solving in a suburban housing estate. *South East Asia Res.* **1999**, *7*, 93–120. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
20. Musekiwa, N.; Chatiza, K. Rise in resident associational life in response to service delivery decline by urban councils in Zimbabwe. *Commonw. J. Local Gov.* **2015**, *16*–17, 120–136. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
21. Albrechts, L. Strategic (Spatial) Planning Re-examined. *Environ. Plan. B Plan. Des.* **2004**, *31*, 743–758. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
22. Olesen, K. The Neoliberalisation of Strategic Spatial Planning. *Plan. Theory* **2014**, *13*, 288–303. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
23. Abbott, J. *Collaborative Governance and Metropolitan Planning in South East Queensland—1990 to 2010: From a Voluntary to a Statutory Model*; Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, UTS: Sydney, Australia, 2012.
24. United Nations. *Our Common Future—Brundtland Report*; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 1987.
25. Chan, C.; Forwood, D.; Roper, H.; Sayers, C. *Public Infrastructure Financing—An International Perspective*; Productivity Commission Staff Working Paper: Canberra, Australia, 2009.
26. Partida, D. How Public-Private Partnerships Shape Urban Development. 2023. Available online: <https://www.planetizen.com/blogs/126342-how-public-private-partnerships-shape-urban-development> (accessed on 28 January 2022).
27. Bellamy, R. *From Government to Governance*; Ashgate: London, UK, 2010.
28. Jones, C.; Parker, M.; Bos, R. *For Business Ethics*; Routledge: London, UK, 2005; ISBN 0415311357. Available online: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/27247620_For_Business_Ethics (accessed on 7 January 2021).
29. Wright, I. Are we all neoliberals now? Urban Planning in a neoliberal era. In Proceedings of the 49th International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) Congress, Brisbane, Australia, 1–4 October 2013.
30. Pollock, A.; Price, D. *We Are Left Footing the PFI Bill*; News Article; Guardian: London, UK, 2004.
31. Bisset, J. *Public Good or Private Profit*; TASC/New Island: Hong Kong, China, 2009.
32. Brenner, N.; Theodore, T. Cities and the geographies of “actually existing neoliberalism”. *Antipode* **2002**, *34*, 349–379. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
33. Chopra, V. Actually Existing Neoliberalism and Enterprise Formation in the Informal Economy: Interrogating the Role of Mediating Social Enterprises in India and South Africa. *Econ. Geogr.* **2023**, *99*, 390–410. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
34. Commission for Global Governance (CGG). *Our Global Neighborhood: Report of the Commission on Global Governance*. UN-ESCO Digital Library. 1995. Available online: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000100074> (accessed on 25 July 2021).
35. Keping, Y. Governance and Good Governance: A New Framework for Political Analysis. *Fudan J. Humanit. Soc. Sci. (FJHSS)* **2017**, *11*, 1–8. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
36. Merrien, F.-X. Governance and modern welfare states. *Int. Soc. Sci. J.* **1999**, *50*, 57–67. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
37. Flyvbjerg, B. Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qual. Inq.* **2006**, *12*, 219–245. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
38. Gerring, J.; Cojocaru, L.; Mahoney, J.; Elman, C. Selecting Cases for Intensive Analysis: A Diversity of Goals and Methods. *Social. Methods Res.* **2016**, *45*, 392–423. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
39. Gerring, J. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practice*; Cambridge University Press: New York, NY, USA, 2007.
40. Yin, R. *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, 6th ed.; SAGE Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2017.
41. Tokyu Corporation & Senden Kaigi. *Jisedai Kogai Machizukiri*; Senden Kaigi: Tokyo, Japan, 2018. (In Japanese)
42. Tokyu Corporation. The History [Maturity]: Tokyu Corporation’s Town and Housing Special Content. Available online: <https://109sumai.com/history/1972.html> (accessed on 28 December 2022). (In Japanese) .
43. Marshall, R. *Emerging Urbanity: Global Urban Projects in the Asia Pacific Rim*; Spon Press: New York, NY, USA, 2003. (In Japanese)
44. World Bank Group. *Yokohama Development Knowledge Sourcebook*; World Bank: Washington, DC, USA, 2018. Available online: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30899License:CCBY3.OIGO> (accessed on 24 December 2021).
45. Government of Japan. “Future City” Initiative: Urban Development for the Future: Get it Rolling. 2016. Available online: <https://future-city.go.jp/en/about/futurecity/> (accessed on 6 January 2022).
46. Hashimoto, T.; Yokohama’s Unique Urban Development and City-to-City Collaboration. City of Yokohama. Available online: <https://events.development.asia/system/files/materials/2018/12/201812-yokohamas-unique-urban-development-and-city-city-collaboration-based-it.pdf> (accessed on 6 January 2022).
47. Yokohama City. “Tokyu Corporation and the City of Yokohama’s ‘Next-Generation Suburban Community Development’ and ‘WISE Living Lab’ Have Joined the Design Center Partner and Network”. Available online: <https://www.yokohama-sdgs.jp/topics/tokyu-partnership-wiselivinglab/> (accessed on 23 February 2020).

48. Ishibashi, N.; Taniguchi, N. Study on the Planning Process for the Development of “Tama Garden City”: Study on the planning of suburban residential area developed through a combination of land readjustment projects. *J. Archit. Plan. (Trans. AIJ)* **2005**, *70*, 129–136. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
49. Tokyu Corporation. *Tokyu Corporation 2020–2021*; Tokyu Corporation Sales Office: Tokyo, Japan, 2021. Available online: <https://www.tokyu.co.jp/tokyu/ebtkk-2020-21/html5.html#page=1> (accessed on 5 May 2021). (In Japanese)
50. JICA 12248811_02.pdf (jica.go.jp). Available online: https://openjicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/12248811_02.pdf (accessed on 4 November 2022).
51. Toura, R. Next-Generation Suburban Planning. In Proceedings of the 2nd International Forum on the “Future City” Initiative, Hokkaido, Japan, 16 February 2013; Cabinet Office and Cabinet Secretariat, Government of Japan: Tokyo, Japan, 2013.
52. PPP/PFI Promotion Office, Japan Cabinet Office. Available online: [https://www8.cao.go.jp/pfi/index_e.html\(www8.cao.go.jp\)](https://www8.cao.go.jp/pfi/index_e.html(www8.cao.go.jp)) (accessed on 23 February 2022).
53. Ohno, T.; Harada, Y. A Comparison of Tendering and Contracting Systems for Public Works between Japan, the United States and EU Countries. *Gov. Audit. Rev.* **2006**, *13*, 49–72.
54. Delaval, B.; Rapson, T.; Sharma, R.; Hugh-Jones, W.; McClure, E.; Temminghoff, M.; Srinivasan, V. *Hydrogen RD&D Collaboration Opportunities: Japan*; CSIRO: Canberra, Australia, 2022.
55. Kato, H.; Fukumoto, M. The direction of local government policies regarding bus system and the roles of ‘local public transport council’. In Proceedings of the Japan Society of Civil Engineers 34th Infrastructure Planning Conference, Takamatsu, Japan, 1–3 December 2006. (In Japanese).
56. Website of Yokohama SDGs Design Center (Local Government SDGs Experimental Project) Yokohama City (transer.com). Available online: <https://www.city.yokohama.lg.jp.e.sj.hp.transer.com/kurashi/machizukuri-kankyo/ondanka/futurecity/designcenter.html> (accessed on 23 February 2022).

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.