Stimulation Project for the Coexistent Animation Industry Cluster in Nerima

FY 2009 - 2014

January 2009

Nerima City
1. Project Objective

Nerima lays claim to being the birthplace of Japanese animation releasing Japan’s first animated color feature film, “The Tale of the White Serpent” in 1958, and broadcasting Japan’s first animated TV series (30 min.), “Astro Boy” in 1963. Even today, Nerima is home to over 90 animation affiliated firms and has effectively become the nation’s largest animation hub.

At the same time, the contents industry representing animation, manga, film, and games is amplifying the international market and expected to grow even further in the future due to advancements in telecommunications technology (Note 1).

Based on such, we formulated the “Stimulation Project for the Coexistent Animation Industry Cluster in Nerima,” a project which aims to foster local pride while attempting to stimulate industry in Nerima and produce a ripple effect across the local economy by strategically strengthening Nerima’s animation industry cluster as the priority industry.
2. Current Animation Industry in Nerima

(1) Birthplace of Animation & Largest Animation Industry Cluster

Producing Japan’s first animated color feature film, “The Tale of the White Serpent” (Toei Animation Co., Ltd., 1958) and Japan’s first 30-minute animated TV series, “Astro Boy” (Mushi Production Co., Ltd., 1963), Nerima lays claim to being the birthplace of Japanese animation.

With geographic proximity being a requisite factor in the smooth collaboration of animation production – processes being divided into various fields such as sketching, animation, coloring, background, filming, and audio recording – the industry has developed around Nerima.

Based on recent studies, Nerima hosts the biggest animation industry cluster in Japan, and home to 94 animation houses including the animation giant, Toei Animation Co., Ltd. Across the nation there are 626 animation affiliated firms, 497 located in the Tokyo metropolitan region (*1).

(2) Amassment of Human Resources including Manga and Animation Artists

With animation production companies developing around Nerima, many creators opt to reside in the area, including industry leaders Yasuo Otsuka and Isao Takahata. In fact, Nerima has always been home to an array of famous manga artists, including the late Osamu Tezuka and Shotaro Ishinomori. Today, numerous animation ambassadors, with the likes of Leiji Matsumoto and Tetsuya Chiba, continue to work while residing in Nerima.

(3) Nerima Animation Association Activities

Through the active efforts of Nerima and the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Nerima Chapter), animation affiliates in Nerima came together to form the Nerima Animation Association in 2003. In December 2007, the Association became a Limited Liability Company (LLC) boasting over 50 member companies.

Each year the Association hosts the Tokyo International Anime Fair and, as an operational aid utilizing the Japan External Trade Organization’s
(JETRO) Regional Industry Tie-up program (RIT), attempts to expand new business ventures by engaging in international business in Paris and Annecy, France. Additionally, the Association collaborates in animation projects in Nerima while also managing event planning and producing animation resource information programs.
3. International Perspective on Japanese Animation & Current Tokyo Metropolitan Government and National Support

(1) International Popularity of Japanese Animation Culture

Today, Japanese animation is watched in over 100 countries around the world, and it is said that Japanese animation accounts for 60% of that viewed globally (*2). Looking at production and attendance numbers for theatrical animated feature films demonstrates that this genre also commands a great deal of popularity worldwide.

On top of the animation events attracting many young animation fans in Paris and Los Angeles, the local bookstores even have “manga corners” dedicated manga, a genre that provides stories with films within the animation field. And through streaming technology available on the Internet today, Japanese animation culture is virtually broadcast around the world simultaneously with Japan. As a result of the great reception Japanese animation receives around the globe, the number of “animation tourists” visiting places like Akihabara in tour groups from America, Europe, and Asia is increasing annually.

(2) Contents Industry & International Market

In order to constantly evolve along with the globalization of industry and assume a leading position in the international marketplace, it is important to possess outstanding expertise and skill that attracts the attention of nations from around the world. At the same time, although the world average growth rate for the contents market is 5.8%, the growth rate in Japan is around 2.3% (2004). As such, efforts to further expand the international and domestic realms are required.

While receiving acclaim as a uniquely Japanese industry and coupled with rapid developments in Web and digital technology, the animation industry is becoming a key sector in the contents industry.
(3) Tokyo Metropolitan Government and National Support Measures for the Contents Industry

In 2004, the Japanese government determined the contents industry – one that has experienced a higher level of growth than the world GDP rate – to be a cutting-edge, new industry sector in its New Industry Creation Strategy, which also aimed to develop the international market and reinforce the licensing business for animation characters and so forth. Additionally, headquarters for the Intellectual Property Strategy Department were established in the Cabinet to promote the creation, protection, and utilization of intellectual property.

As for the Tokyo metropolitan government, in March 2007, it established the “Tokyo Industrial Promotion Basic Strategy: Carving out Tokyo’s future with industrial vitality and urban appeal,” and, positioning the contents and fashion industry as key industries to fortify Tokyo’s information transmission ability, strives to maintain and cultivate the concentration of these industries in the region.

Furthermore, Nerima also provides support for exhibitions including the Tokyo International Anime Fair, held by the Nerima Animation Association, and the Annecy International Animation Film Festival held in France.
4. Requirements and Issues Surrounding Animation Industry Support in Nerima

(1) Industry-wide Issues in Nerima

Businesses operating in Nerima fell from 25,412 in 1996, to 21,553 in 2006. As a result, approximately 3,850 businesses or 15% of the total number of establishments decreased over this 10-year period. In contrast, while decreases continue across the industry, increases are evident in the real estate and service industries (*3).

Furthermore, land purchased for residential use is forecast to increase in the future with continued developments of Nerima as a residential district. And there is a call in the manufacturing sector to cultivate the IT and contents industries that can blend in with the residential landscape.

It is also necessary to pursue regional stimulation to further develop Nerima’s economy and produce favorable effects across the entire industry and not only specified businesses. As decentralization system reform continues to make way, it has become necessary to cultivate the key industries that make up the industry framework of the self-governing body of Nerima.

(2) Risk of Losing Animation Studios in Nerima

The animation industry cluster in Nerima traditionally evolved from the sheer importance of geographical accessibility to animation businesses – businesses which continue to exhibit strong artisan traits today. In recent years, access to the area has greatly improved through the diversification of modes of transport and railroad work. Nonetheless, seeing cases of studio support and contents industry promotion plans emerging in Kanagawa Prefecture and other municipalities within the Tokyo region, it is highly likely that Nerima will lose studios if favorable conditions are available elsewhere (Note 2).

Additionally, animation studios basically incorporate desk work and require studio space according to the number of staff members and amount of work undertaken, and because it is generally difficult to estimate long-term and stable workloads, convenient transportation coupled with inexpensive rent is
sought.

Based on this information, it is evident that meticulous countermeasures are necessary to sustain and expand Nerima’s distinctive industry and effectively the nation’s largest animation industry cluster.

(3) **Animation Industry Support in Internationalization and Innovative Technology**

With the plateauing of domestic demand in the animation industry and influx of streaming technology today, we are ardently seeking a new business model. And in order to develop the animation industry in Nerima, which comprises of many small and medium sized businesses exhibiting vulnerable management foundations, a certain amount of fixed government support is required.

Specifically speaking, in addition to international market entry and production environment assistance such as studio improvement and expansion, the task at hand is supporting the cultivation of human resources encompassing the succession and improvement of animation creator skill and technique, etc.

As for international market entry, simply injecting animation into the market will not expand operations. In fact, it is necessary to establish contracts subsequent to negotiating business and marketing animation to market buyers. In order to facilitate such, a system that accurately embraces the needs of animation, understands the business culture of target nations, and recruits a team of negotiation staff is necessary. In reality, the number of business that exhibit these attributes are limited, and the preparation of a support system that allows small and medium businesses to operate overseas remains a task at hand. Another challenge faced is the issue of financial procurement for production costs through funding.

(4) **Local Resident Animation Industry Awareness and Industry-wide Activities in Nerima**

A questionnaire conducted on local residents determined that Nerima is relatively unknown as an animation district (*4). It is important for
residents to realize that their home area holds strong ties to the animation industry and accept the animation side with a sense of community. Subsequently, while pursuing industry support and unison between residents and industry, the formulation of a program that shares animation as a local culture and conveys the existence of the industry cluster to all generations is requisite.

Concerning the local shopping district including local businesses not in the animation sector, we expect industrial stimulation in the many sectors in Nerima through tourism promotion and pursuing animation-driven commerce and industry.
5. Project Objective & Direction of Industry Support Measures

The animation industry in Nerima is projected to produce an estimated 30 billion yen, a figure accounting for around 10% of the animation industry in Japan. In order to develop Nerima’s animation industry as a major axis in the region, it is necessary to further expand the animation industry cluster.

By fortifying the cluster and not permitting its dissipation, it is possible to expand economic effects across local industry and attract affiliated industries to the region. In order to beat overseas competition providing cheap labor, we will investigate which sector to develop as a forte in Nerima’s animation industry and thereafter execute plans. As for providing support, we will devote our efforts to stimulating business and expanding Nerima’s appeal while clustering the district function in a geographically ideal location for the animation industry. We will subsequently aim to stimulate the entire local economy by adopting a strategic industrial development policy, one that can be realized because Nerima has historically been and continues to be the center of Japan’s animation industry.

(1) Fortifying International Competitiveness

At present, the domestic animation market is tending towards reduction and the overall animation industry market requires new developments. As such, we aim to increase future growth through expanding overseas markets and developing other contents industry sectors. So to facilitate this, we will actively engage in overseas studio and creator exchange, and participate/exhibit in domestic and international animation festivals.

(2) Delivering a Ripple Effect across the Local Economy

Through communicating that the contents industry representing Japan lies in Nerima, we will engage in the promotion of animation-driven business expansion strategies for local shopping district promotion and developing manufacturer products. In effect, our aim is to deliver a ripple effect across the local economy through the utilization of animation by local businesses.
(3) Production Environment Enhancement

Striving to improve studios, which of course are the backbone of production in animation operations, we are keenly promoting the concentration of business in Nerima through inviting new businesses to the area and shared local business utilization of studios. For example, the converting of vacant public facilities into studios for rent is a possibility. In addition, playing an imperative part in the animation work process, we will assist the setting up of facilities for shared recording and editing studios, which are typically difficult for small and medium sized businesses to obtain alone.

(4) Animation Technique Succession and Improvement through Human Resource Development

Twenty years ago the majority of animation production was conducted domestically; today, however, animated production is being conducted overseas – a byproduct of fading geographical boarders brought on by digital advancement. As such, we have seen a decrease in the number of people who can produce animated image domestically and it is now proving difficult to train engineers. In large, the production of animation contents heavily relies on individual talent and expertise, and further development of the animation industry requires the passing on of cultivated techniques and skills and learning of cutting-edge computer graphics methods, etc. To achieve this, we will support the development of human resources.

Additionally, while striving to establish a key relationship between the animation industry and Nihon University College of Art, Musashino Academia Musicae, and Musashi University located in Nerima, we shall aim to collaboratively develop with the academic and art fields.

(5) Transmitting Animation Culture In and Outside of Nerima – Making it the pride of local residents

Sharing the vast “contents” of Nerima including original manga works and animation characters born in the locale, we will hold events introducing animation, and endeavor to enrich all animation affiliated operations so to help deepen the population’s fondness of animation.
What’s more, Nerima is blessed with the Toei Animation Gallery located in the Higashi Oizumi district of Nerima. This gallery exhibits 50 years of animation history, boasts a rich collection of animation production material, and attracts great attention from in and outside of Nerima as an animation tourism facility.

Taking advantage of these resources, strengthening transmission efforts, and by appealing to the world that many of Japan’s leading animations in fact derive from Nerima, we will strive to ingrain an animation culture that local residents can be both fond and proud of, while also making Nerima known as the birthplace and growing ground for animation.
6. Project Program

This project is a 6-year project commencing in 2009 and running until 2014, and will be classified into two parts: “First Phase Activities,” implemented for 3 years from 2009 to 2011, and “Second Phase Activities,” which will be executed over the remaining 3 years until 2014.

(1) International Business Support

We will aim to strengthen international competitiveness through international market entry and international exchange.

“First Phase Activities”

a) Investigating International Market Entry and Participation Methods
   In order for animation businesses in Nerima to have a competitive edge and advance into the international market, we will investigate international market sectors exhibiting participation opportunity and growth, and from a technical standpoint, investigate what operations/sectors the animation industry in Nerima should target.

b) Participation Support for International Exhibitions
   We will provide support for participating in the Tokyo International Anime Fair hosted by the Nerima Animation Association, and exhibitions including the Annecy International Animation Film Festival held in France.

c) Industry Exchange between Nerima and Annecy, France
   In an effort to develop the animation industry in both Annecy and Nerima, we will promote animation event exchange and studio and creator exchange in both countries.

d) International Animation Business Center Investigation
   We will investigate the creation and trial of an international animation business center able to respond to consultation and business inquiries directed at Nerima from overseas and vice versa all-year round.
(2) Production Support

We will conduct specific investigations in an effort to realize the establishment of animation studios in Nerima and attract outside businesses into the region.

“First Phase Activities”

a) Investigating Studio Establishment and Methods for Attracting Businesses
   We will investigate methods for establishing studios in Nerima and attracting businesses to the area in order to strengthen the concentration of animation affiliated businesses in Nerima.

“Second Phase Activities”

b) Animation Studio and Facility Setup and Support in the Animation Industry Cluster
   By transforming unused public facilities into animation studios and having them made available to young creators and creative/original studios, we will support the establishment of Nerima as an animation industry hub effectively attracting a diverse variety of animation businesses to the most suitable area for industry concentration.

c) Supporting the Setup of Shared Use Facilities and Recording Studios
   We will provide support for shared use facilities such as recording and editing studios lacking in Nerima.

(3) Activities for Spreading of Animation Culture

We will develop a diverse range of operations aiming to cultivate Nerima’s animation as a culture and industry bearing a close intimacy with local residents. And praising the many manga artists who have played a significant role in the creation of animation constituting key contents in the industry today, we will engage in expansive PR activities.
“First Phase Activities”

a) Neritan Animation Carnival
Through holding the Neritan Animation Carnival, we will promote Nerima as an animation town by communicating to those residing in and outside of Nerima that Nerima is the birthplace of animation. And through cooperating with the world’s largest animation film fair, the Annecy International Animation Film Festival, we will attempt to increase participation calling on overseas tourists and so forth.

b) Neritan Animation Caravan (Mobile Program)
Focusing on elementary school children in Nerima, we will conduct programs at schools incorporating actual animation production experiences while providing a brief outline of Nerima’s proud animation industry so to help children further understand local animation.

c) Animation Archive Creation
Creating an animation archive, we will produce and broadcast animation information programs introducing animation, production studios, manga artists, and creators associated with Nerima. Works from our library will be broadcast around the globe via streaming technology.

d) Hometown Animation Museum (provisional name)
We will strive to spread animation culture while establishing the Hometown Animation Museum as a tourist spot through introducing Nerima-grown animation and manga artists residing in the area and so forth.

“Second Phase Activities”

e) Nerima Animation Monument
In order to further facilitate PR activities for Nerima’s animation industry, we will investigate the possibility of furnishing the area with a monument signifying Nerima as the birthplace of animation.

f) Supporting Setup of Amusement Facilities that Introduce Animation
and Animation Production
We will investigate setup support and methods to attract private amusement facilities to the area that focus on popularizing animation and drawing in tourists.

g) Establishment of Sightseeing Tour Courses at Animation Production Sites
We will investigate the setting up of ongoing animation production sightseeing tours for elementary school field trips and out-of-town tourists.

(4) Human Development Support
Aiming to produce highly marketable animation and resolve the shortage of animation engineers, we will provide assistance in the development of animators and other human resources while supporting skill and technology advancement.

“First Phase Activities”

a) Neritan Creators Awards
In an attempt to unearth and nurture talented animation creators, we will conduct an animation contest; the Nerima Animation Association will produce a promotion video to act as a bridge to bona fide animation production for the winner of the “Outstanding Performance Award for Scriptwriting”.

b) Creator and Studio Exchange Activities between Annecy and Nerima
We will execute exchange between outstanding creators and studios in Annecy and Nerima. The Nerima Animation Association will act as the responsible agent for Nerima that in turn will provide the Association with all necessary support.

“Second Phase Activities”

c) Attracting Animation-Contents Industry Orientated Vocational Collages to Nerima
In order to foster talented human resources, we will investigate
methods to attract contents industry orientated vocational colleges offering animation and film programs to Nerima.

(5) Local Industry Initiatives

Adopting animation characters with roots in Nerima, we will aim to stimulate the region, shopping districts, and related industries.

“First Phase Activities”

a) Application of Animation in Shopping District Operations
Including the Oizumi Yumeteru shopping district (Higashi Oizumi Trade Promotion Association), we will support the application of animation characters for all merchant group events in Nerima. What's more, we will investigate the possibility of setting up vacant stores as “animation cafes” furnished with animation character products; in effect these venues will act as places where people can come into contact with animation in shopping districts.

b) Regional Stimulation through Collaborating with Railway Operators
We will prompt regional stimulation through collaborating with railway operators and bus companies by having animation utilized at all stations in the vicinity of regional events, including the incorporation of animation character wrap/mobile advertising displayed on trains running through Nerima, and having animation theme songs played at stations in the area.

c) Developing Original Nerima Animation Characters
By cooperating with manga artists and animation businesses in Nerima, we will develop original Nerima animation characters. And while adopting selected character designs for various products produced in the Nerima, we will generate favorable economic effects across related industries and shopping districts by selling the merchandise at shopping district events and so forth.
7. Results Sought through Activities

(1) Establishing Nerima as Japan’s Leading Animation Industry Hub

An industry cluster not only has the advantage of large business occupancy, but also amplifies mutual benefits that specific regional concentration presents. This includes business exchange and cooperation, and the relocating of affiliated businesses into the area, which consequently produces synergistic effect in the presence of the regional concentration and entices prominent companies to execute new business development in Nerima, and in turn produce favorable effects further fortifying the cluster. Based on such, we aim to turn Nerima into Japan’s leading animation industry hub.

Although there is an estimated 2000 people employed in the animation industry in Nerima at present, we can expect increased employment after developing the industry cluster, and anticipate that workers in the animation industry and those aspiring to enter the industry will take up residence in the area.

(2) Amassing of Business Expertise and Developing the Role of Animation Industry in Nerima through International Business Development

We will accumulate superior skills and specific business expertise for Nerima businesses by grasping the opportunity for small to medium companies to develop business internationally; an exploit formally for major enterprises only. Looking into the future, we will aim to develop the role of the animation industry in Nerima by supporting the establishment of the Animation Business Center, which will facilitate business exchange with overseas companies and creators.

(3) Tourism Promotion and Stimulating Shopping Districts and Local Industry through Generating a Favorable Ripple Effect

Through merchant group activities, product sales, and commodity production incorporating animation characters, we will aim to increase manufacturing product consignments and store and restaurant turnover by attempting to stimulate the local industry and shopping districts, and enticing local and non-local tourists to enjoy the area. What’s more, we will
establish and enhance animation tourism in Nerima, attracting domestic and international tourists, by holding animation events and setting up animation based facilities in the area.

(4) Fostering Love and Local Pride for Animation Culture in Nerima

Through generating a ripple effect across the local economy by way of the animation industry cluster, and deepening local interest in animation, we will establish Nerima as a town known for its animation industry. As a town to globally admire, backed with advanced technology and internationally renowned culture, we will strive to make animation the pride of the people by molding an international city brand image.
8. Measuring Results

By way of economic effectiveness investigations, perception studies, academic verification, and production evaluations, we will measure results and evaluate performance in the animation industry cluster.

(1) Economic Effectiveness Investigation
- Investigate economic effects by evaluating the increase/decrease of annual commodity sales through surveying local animation businesses
- Investigate economic effects by calculating animation event attendee numbers and evaluating subsequent economic ripple effects
- Investigate economic effects by evaluating the increase/decrease of Nerima’s annual commodity sales in the Tokyo Commercial Statistics Survey

(2) Perception Studies
- Investigate local awareness/sentiment
- Conduct questionnaires focusing on children
- Investigate media coverage on television and in newspapers and magazines, etc.

(3) Academic Verification
- Conduct collaborative research with Nerima university on animation industry business models and Japanese animation technical history

(4) Production Evaluation
- Evaluate production by monitoring awards in film festivals and competitions, etc.
9. Conclusion

Including animation, games, and music, there are unexplored fields in the contents industry that boast potential future growth. Amid this situation, we can assume that the trade conditions of businesses in the animation industry will undergo change resulting from intensifying international and domestic competition, changes in the value of animation production, and advances in human resource development for creators and so forth. As such, it is necessary to timely execute efforts in Nerima while understanding industry conditions and collaborating with the Japanese government, the Tokyo metropolitan government, and JETRO.

While instituting this project as the core foundation, we will fully support the individual efforts of businesses and industry associations, and aim to popularize animation culture, further develop local industry, and fortify the animation industry cluster in Nerima.
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**Annotation 1**

**Contents Industry & Animation Industry Relations**
The contents industry can be described as an umbrella term incorporating various industries including the film industry, music industry, broadcasting industry, animation industry, game industry, publishing industry, and character business industry. As for the animation industry, although it formerly centralized around the business fields in television and cinema, it has become the core focus of the contents industry through character business image production, the popularization of video, DVD, and cellular telephones, and the evolution and advancement in media including computer games and so forth.

What’s more, the Japanese contents industry market is worth approximately 14 trillion yen. And although the animation industry only accounts for 258.4 billion yen of this amount, it does not include sales figures – equaling favorable economic effects – deriving from related industries which have incorporated animation contents into their business, including food packaging of foodstuff, clothes, and toys featuring animation characters for example (*5).  

**Annotation 2**

**Contents Industry Cultivation in Other Municipalities**
Tokyo: Installation of business inauguration support facility for contents industry (established in Nakano, August 2008).
Yokohama: Amplification of location promotion and aid system for video contents production businesses (established October, 2008).
Reference List

(*1) “Investigative Research into Direction of the Contents Industry”
Business Support Information Center, Organization for Small & Medium
Enterprises and Regional Innovation, Japan.

(*2) “New Industry Creation Strategy”
Economic and Industrial Policy Bureau, Ministry of Economy, Trade and
Industry

Bureau of General Affairs, Tokyo Metropolitan Government

(*4) “Resident Awareness & Sentiment Investigation 2006”
Nerima Ward Mayor’s Office

Digital Content Association of Japan
## Project Formulation Progress Table

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<td>Sept, 16 2008</td>
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<td><strong>1st Review Meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Discussion covering issues and current condition of animation industry&lt;br&gt;• Animation industry stimulation policy #1</td>
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(titles omitted from names)
Stimulation Project for the Coexistent Animation
 Industry Cluster in Nerima
(formulated January 2009)

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