

DEMOGRAPHIA



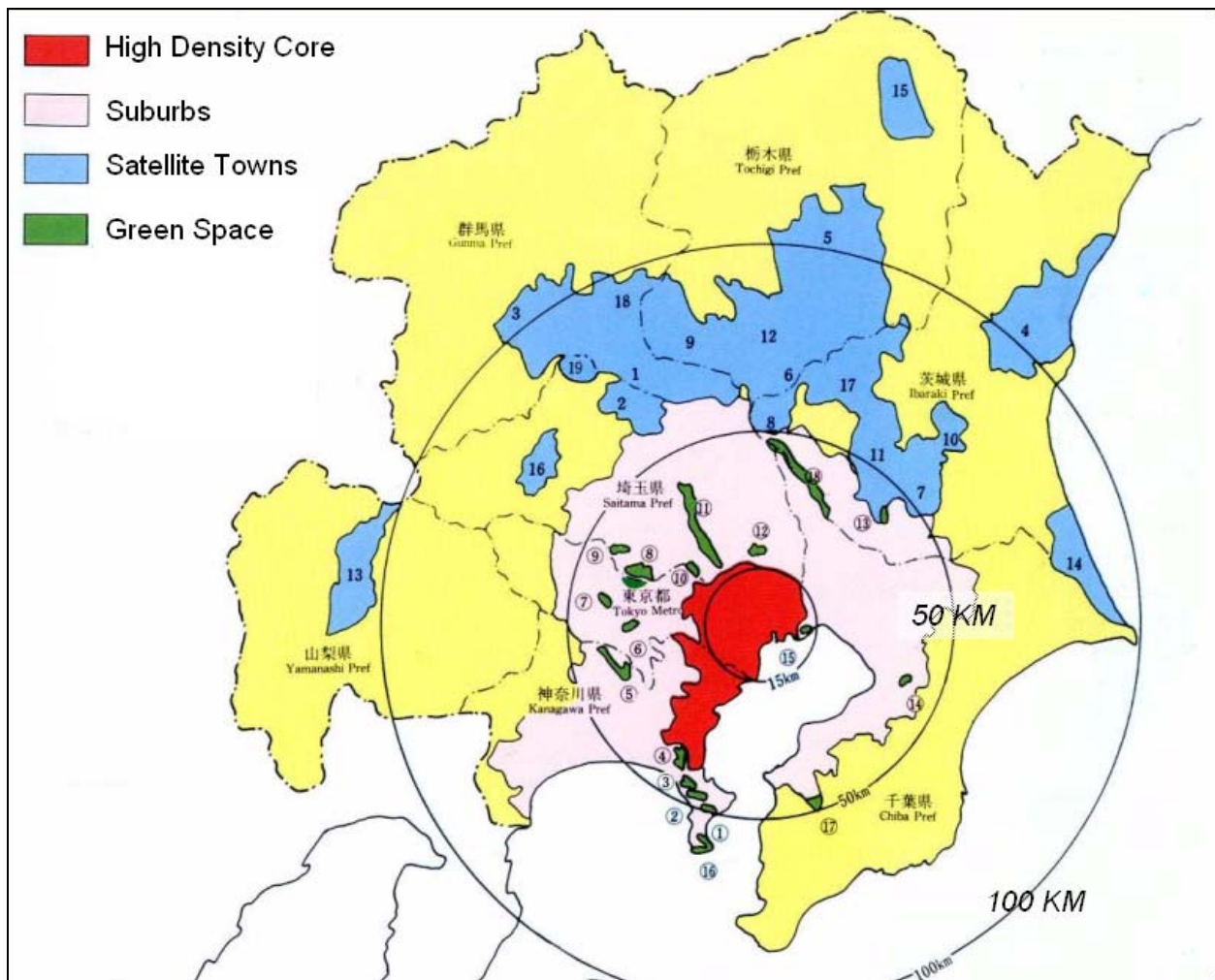
TOKYO-YOKOHAMA: UNIQUE AND SUPERLATIVE

FAST FACTS		Similar To
Metropolitan (Labor Market) Population	33,400,000**	1.5x New York
Urbanized Area* Population	31,200,000	2x Osaka, 2x Sao Paulo
Urbanized Land Area: Square Miles	2,030	Chicago, 1.2x Los Angeles, 0.6x New York, 2x Paris, 3x Toronto
Urbanized Land Area: Square Kilometers	5,258	
Population per Square Mile	15,400	Osaka, Lisbon, Manaus
Population per Square Kilometer	5,900	
Capital of Japan		
Largest metropolitan area in the world		
*Continuously built up area		
**Includes the prefectures of Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama and Chiba. An alternative metropolitan definition would also include Gumma, Ibaraki, Tochigi and Yamanashi prefectures (the National Capital Region), which would make the population 41,300,000.		

The Tokyo metropolitan area is called Tokyo-Yokohama, in recognition of what is generally thought to be the area's second largest city, Yokohama. But the world's largest suburb, at nearly the population of Los Angeles (3.4 million) is also the largest city in the Tokyo-Yokohama area. There is no city of Tokyo. It was abolished during World War II and its former area is directly governed by the prefecture (state) of Tokyo (also called Tokyo Metropolitan Government) and 23 ku (wards or arrondissements) --- an area with 8.1 million residents. But this is not the equivalent of a metropolitan consolidation, because the prefecture also includes 50 additional cities with a population of approximately 4,000,000. And there are two other cities in the metropolitan area just above 1,000,000 --- Kawasaki and Saitama City, a recent consolidation that is the capital of Saitama prefecture. Saitama City is one of Tokyo's many edge cities. Chiba, the capital of Chiba prefecture is near 900,000 population.

But it may be a mistake to think of Tokyo-Yokohama as a metropolitan area of 33,000,000 people. In fact, related suburban exurban development spills into four additional prefectures, which combined with the four core prefectures represents the National Capital Region, what could be considered a metropolitan area of more than 41,000,000. All of which is to say that things are complicated in what is, by far, the world's largest metropolitan area. The world's second largest metropolitan area, New York, trails far behind at 21,000,000. This metropolitan definition contains considerably more people than either the mega-states of Sao Paulo or California (though smaller than the largest Chinese provinces or Indian states).

And what is not obvious from core-oriented tours is the sprawl that is Tokyo. Tokyo is the world's third largest continuously built up urban area, following New York and Chicago. The tourist attractions are also spread out. This is no London or Paris, where much of what attracts visitors is within walking distance, or a short public transport ride.



National Capital Region

It was here, on my first visit, that I learned the lesson --- that there is no way to see the modern urban area other than by car. I started out one morning, walking from my hotel at the south end of the Ginza. It was not long before I realized that little could be seen on foot, and upon seeing a Hertz office, rented a car. But even with a car, the sprawl of Tokyo, combined with the exceedingly heavy and slow traffic, make a comprehensive tour most difficult.

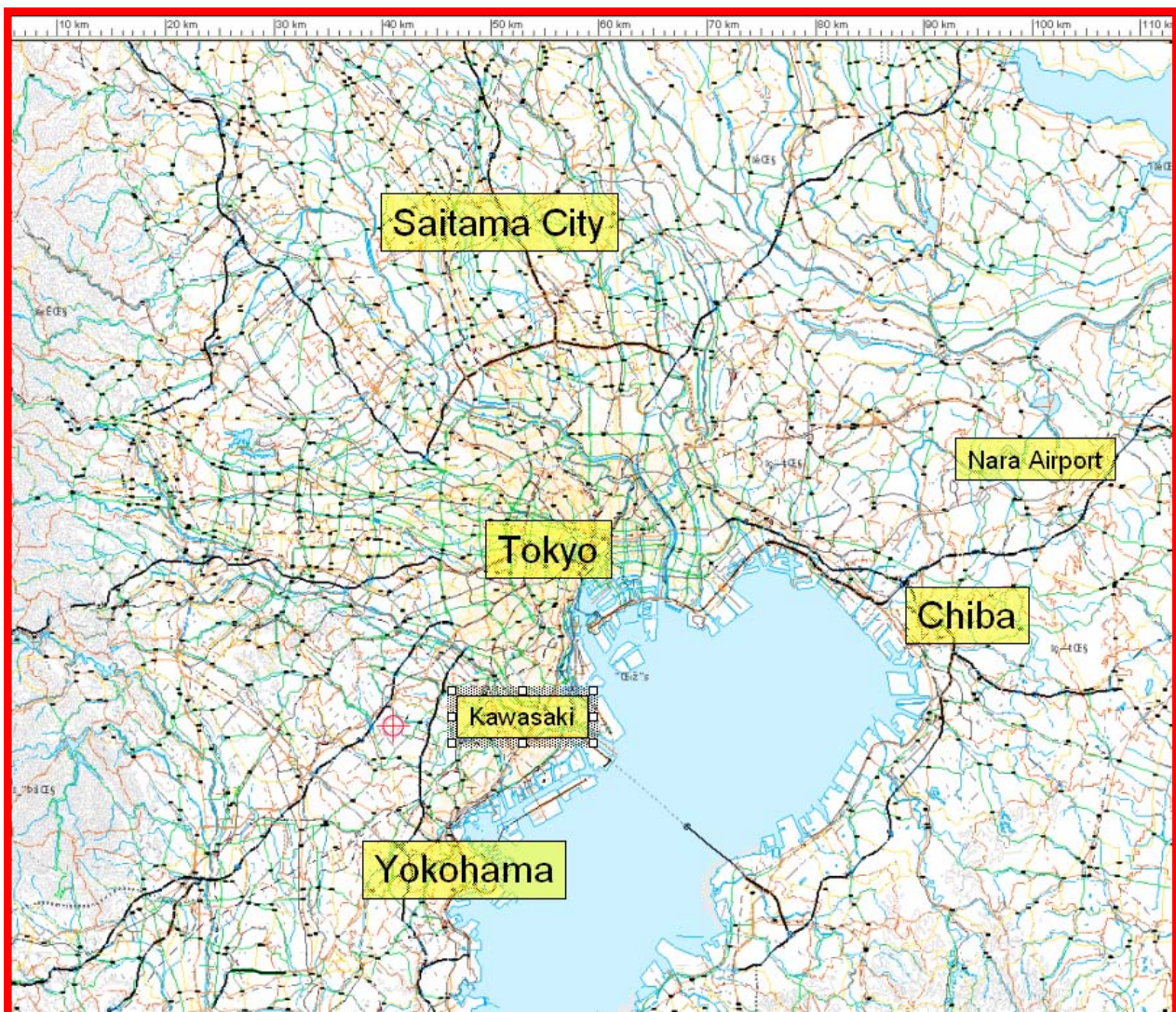
Tokyo has a less than adequate system of urban motorways, though is working hard to make up for the deficit. Parts of the new National Route 16 ring road are open, and eventually this road will provide a grade separated link from Chiba, through Saitama, Tokyo prefecture and then to Kanagawa. A number of other motorways are planned and in recent years a high quality motorway has opened along the west shore of Tokyo Bay, with a connection across the bay, the Aqua Blue Line. Virtually all of the urban motorways charge a toll. Within Tokyo prefecture, the local motorways charge a flat rate of approximately \$7.00. The national routes within the area have toll booths and steep charges.

The Aqua Blue Line Bridge and tunnel crosses Tokyo Bay between Chiba and Kanagawa. In the middle is a multi-storied shopping center that cannot compete with the larger, more diverse shopping centers found throughout the rest of the metropolitan area (some anchored by the ubiquitous French *Carrefour*). There is also the problem of the toll, which is more than \$25. But the best land-based views of Tokyo and Yokohama are available from this point.

The core of Tokyo also has wide arterial streets, though the high population density and heavy truck traffic challenge them well beyond their capability. Because there is so little freight rail in Japan, virtually all land commerce is by truck. Traffic is generally worse than anywhere in the United States, including Los Angeles.

Local traffic engineers have used somewhat unconventional means to meet the challenge. In central Tokyo, toll motorways are placed, elevated, in the middle of wide city streets. In other areas, double deck motorways are built over existing roadways (photograph below)

And, as for trains, forget Switzerland, forget Europe and forget anywhere else. This is Nirvana. A dense mesh of suburban rail lines serves the entire area, and operates at a profit. So much for the tale that all public transport is *unprofitable*. In Tokyo (and Osaka and Nagoya), virtually the opposite is true. Even the publicly operated buses and metros come close to earning a profit, on operations *and* capital. Here, 10 major companies provide suburban rail service --- with this part of the public transport system alone carrying more annual riders than in the entire United States.



A lifetime equivalent of train-spotting can be had in just a few hours on the platforms of Tokyo Station, or at Ueno or Shinjuku, which is reputed to be the world's busiest station. At Tokyo and Ueno Stations, there is the additional reward of watching the famous intercity bullet trains.

Public transport is so effective in Tokyo that it carries 57 percent of all travel in the metropolitan area --- 6.5 times the New York market share, more than double the Paris market share and at least 30 times the Portland market share. There are many reasons for this, virtually none of them replicable in North America or Western Europe. Even so, public transport's market share has dropped nearly 25 percent since 1975.

This is also monorail Nirvana. There is the monorail from the core to former international airport, Hameda. Another monorail crosses western Tokyo suburbs north to south. There are also smaller monorails that have been established by commercial centers, especially department stores. North American monorail devotees often point to the success of Tokyo's monorails as proof that the technology has a place in the United States. But in Tokyo, unlike America, monorails are a sustainable form of transport --- they are paid for by the people who use them, not the people who don't. This makes all the difference in the world.

The 23 wards of Tokyo are dense, but there are much more dense places. The core is considerably less dense than the ville de Paris, Manhattan or Hong Kong. Soon after leaving the core area, one enters areas of smaller apartment buildings, and then in the suburbs begin the single-family dwellings. In the farther reaches of Saitama and Chiba, single-family dwellings predominate. Houses are on very small lots, generally, and residential streets are often no more than one lane, with little space for parking.

All of this seems to suggest a Japanese preference for detached housing, similar to that exhibited by North Americans. The data suggests the same, with detached housing representing 30 percent to 45 percent of units in the core prefectures of Tokyo and Kanagawa. More suburban Saitama and Chiba have more than 55 percent detached housing, while the exurban prefectures of Gumma, Ibaraki, Tochigi and Yamanashi together have a more than 75 percent detached housing. While there are superficial differences (especially architectural), the lower density suburbs of Tokyo-Yokohama resemble their cousins in Australia, Canada, Europe and the United States.

As one drives farther out into the suburbs, there are the "housing stages," where like the "Hus Expo" in suburban Stockholm or the "Dom Expo" in suburban Paris, builders exhibit model homes that represent the Japanese Dream (photograph). In the suburbs, the reviled phenomenon of "leap frog" development provides welcome lungs for an urban area with insufficient green space outside the core.

Like virtually all of the high-income world's largest urban areas, all growth in the Tokyo-Yokohama area has been suburban for decades. The 23 wards of Tokyo reached their population peak in 1965. Since that time, the 23 wards have lost more than 750,000 people, while the suburbs and exurbs have gained 14.3 million --- equal to the population of all but a very few of the world's metropolitan areas (Table).

Tokyo-Yokohama Area Tokyo (23 Ward) and Suburban/Exurban Population: 1965-2000				
Sector	1965	2000	Change	% Change
Former Tokyo (23 Wards)	8,893,000	8,130,000	(763,000)	-8.6%
Suburbs	12,124,000	25,283,000	13,159,000	108.5%
Metropolitan Area	21,017,000	33,413,000	12,396,000	59.0%
Exurbs	5,947,000	7,903,000	1,956,000	32.9%
National Capital Region	26,964,000	41,316,000	14,352,000	53.2%
Source: Census of Japan				

But despite all the suburbanization, Tokyo has by far the largest commercial core (downtown or central business district) in the world. Like the metropolitan area, there are different definitions. Inside the Yamanote Loop, named for the East Japan Railway (a segment of the former Japanese National Railway) elevated rail line of the same name, are nearly 4.3 million jobs --- more than double that of the world's second largest central business district, New York's Manhattan, south of 59th Street. The core area of Chiyoda, Chuo and Minato wards (within the Yamanote Loop) has 2.4 million employees. The Tokyo central business district, however, is much less concentrated than New York, with an employment density less than one-fourth as great. As in the case of other major high-income world central business districts with the exception of London, employment is falling. From 1996 to 2001, employment within the Yamanote Loop fell by three percent, a job loss greater than that of the downtown areas in Portland, Dallas, Vienna or Zurich.

Tokyo has no peers. There was a time, less than two decades ago, that the world's urbanologists declared Mexico City to soon be the world's largest metropolitan area. The myth was so enduring that some publications even announce it to be so. But it is not. Mexico City's growth slowed significantly, and so did that of another heir to the throne, Sao Paulo. Much poorer cities are growing much faster, such as Mumbai, Dhaka or Lagos. But each is so far behind Tokyo as to make their ascent unlikely in the next few decades. Tokyo is a metropolitan area of superlatives not likely to be soon challenged.



Ginza



JNR Yamanote Loop Train at Central Station



Double Deck Motorway Over City Street



Inner Suburban Multi-Unit Housing



Suburban Single Family Housing



Exurban Residence (Northern Saitama)



New Infill Single Family Housing, Inner Suburbs of Saitama



Entrance to Shopping Center
Aqua Blue Line (Tokyo Bay Bridge and Tunnel)



Landmark Tower, Yokohama
Tallest Building in Japan (980 Feet)



Housing Stage: Honjo



Leap Frog Development: Saitama



French Hypermarket



Exurban Expressway: Northern Saitama



Department Store Sponsored Monorail (Kanagawa)

By Wendell Cox
27 September 2003

Return: www.demographia.com/rac-ix.htm

Home: www.demographia.com