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Changing Akihabara

Akihabara, Japan's largest "electric town," is undergoing a major change. Along with its famous electric goods and PC components, there are a growing number of shops selling *anime* and *otaku* products. Akihabara is also famous for its "maid cafés," where waitresses dress up as maids making otakus dreams come true.

The northern side of the station is the main redevelopment area. To create a global IT industry center in Akihabara, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government sold land formerly occupied by a fruit and vegetable market and a skyscraper complex named "Akihabara Crossfield" is created. The complex will be completed in the next March, with areas for Industry-Academia collaboration, information networking, attractions for visitors and offices for companies. A design museum will be open there and a plan to exhibit art objects on all over Akihabara is underway. The Tsukuba Express, the new rapid transit railway line, opened in August and one of the largest electrical appliance department stores in Japan opened in September are now gathering lots of people to Akihabara. High-tower condominiums are also under construction.

Akihabara is now drawing attention as one of the newest and exciting towns. **J.S**

