

Profile of Kitakyushu City

- An ordinance-designated city located at the northernmost tip of Kyushu
- Taking advantage of its proximity to Asian countries, Kitakyushu City has supported Japanese manufacturing as one of Japan's four major industrial zones since the Meiji era (1868-1912), when the government-run Yahata Steel Works was established.
- Kitakyushu boasts a world-class environment, a concentration of industrial technologies, and an extensive transportation infrastructure with airports, ports, and bullet trains, all set against a backdrop of abundant nature with a long and beautiful coastline and lush mountains.



Population 920,070 (as of Mar. 1, 2023)

Area 492.50 km² (as of Jan. 1, 2022)

7 wards each filled with character



Wakato Bridge connects Wakamatsu and Tobata



Kokura Castle, with its kara-zukuri castle tower



Mojiko Retro District, with many Taisho-era buildings



Tobata Gion Oyamakasa Festival (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage)



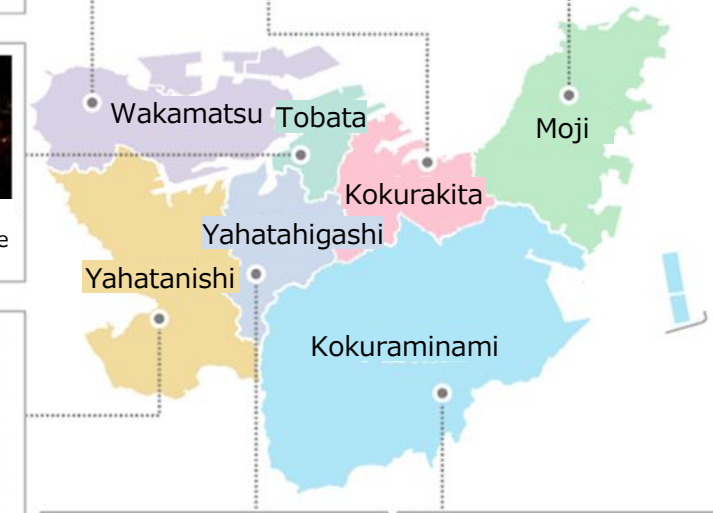
Attractive night view of factories in the Kurosaki area



*Facility not open to the public.
Photo: Nippon Steel Corp, Kyushu Steel Works
Former main office of the government-run Yawata Steel Works, which is registered as a World Cultural Heritage Site

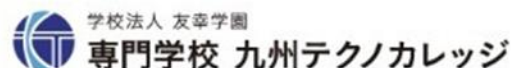
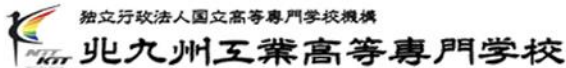
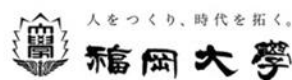


The karst plateau of Hiraodai



Kitakyushu City's Potential

- Kitakyushu balances the conveniences of a city with the comforts of the countryside and is highly regarded throughout Japan as a "great place to live," ranking third in the "best rural areas to live in (for families with children and senior citizens)".
- The national government has named Kitakyushu a "Municipal SDGs Model Project" and the OECD has named it a "Global Model City for Promoting the SDGs," demonstrating how highly regarded its SDG initiatives are both in Japan and internationally.
- Kitakyushu is a center of the manufacturing industry that produces a large number of scientists and engineers each year.
- Kitakyushu also has a robust logistics infrastructure that includes a 24-hour marine airport and a city-wide transportation network.



14 science and technology schools produce approximately 3,000 human resources every year

Land

Kitakyushu Freight Terminal

Container cargo handled 6th in Japan (2020)

Kokurahigashi IC

Highway Nodal point (Kyushu, Kitakyushu, Chugoku-do)

Sea

Tachinoura Container Terminal

Container cargo handled 9th in Japan (2021)

Shinmoji Ferry Terminal

Ferry cargo handled 2nd in Japan (2021)

Air

Kitakyushu Airport

Utilized 24 hours a day

All Nippon Airways Cargo

International cargo handled 6th in Japan (2021)

The Kitakyushu National Strategic Special Zone

- Since its designation as a National Strategic Special Zone in 2016, Kitakyushu City has been promoting the establishment of four hubs around the theme of "responding to the declining and aging population by realizing comprehensive senior activities and care services."

Purpose

The Kitakyushu National Strategic Special Zone promotes **the establishment of four hubs centered** around the theme of **responding to the declining and aging population by realizing comprehensive senior activities and care services**, thereby enabling Kitakyushu to serve as a growth engine aimed at becoming a successful model city for regional development.

Establishment of Four Hubs

A "hub for advanced nursing care and senior activities"

Kitakyushu aims to be a hub for advanced nursing care and senior activities through a variety of measures, such as the establishment of a Senior Hello Work (government employment center), the use of nursing care robots to reduce the burden on nursing care staff, and the advancement and development of robots.

A "hub for start-ups and job creation"

Kitakyushu aims to be a hub for start-ups and job creation through measures that include the use of start-up visas to support foreign entrepreneurs and the flexible movement of human resources between the public and private sectors.

A "hub for domestic and international exchange and inbound tourism"

Kitakyushu aims to be a hub for domestic and international exchange and inbound tourism, such as through measures related to its Special Zone Private Lodging status that leverage its rich natural environment.

A "hub for developing and demonstrating near-future technologies"

With the "One Stop Support Center for Demonstration Tests" at its core, Kitakyushu aims to be a hub for developing and demonstrating near-future technologies that will help solve regional issues and strengthen industrial competitiveness.

Major Initiatives in the Kitakyushu National Strategic Special Zone

➤ While implementing regulatory reforms, 18 special exceptions and 25 projects are underway. (As of the end of August 2020)

A "hub for advanced nursing care and senior activities"

Demonstration testing and deployment of advanced nursing care using nursing care robots

The first in Japan to utilize Special Zone status! Advancing the development and deployment of nursing care robots.

Establishment of a Senior Hello Work center

The first in Japan to utilize Special Zone status! Support for job seekers over the age of 50.



A "hub for start-ups and job creation"

Projects for Encouraging Foreign Entrepreneurs to Start Business (Startup Visa)

To facilitate the launch of new businesses, the requirements for foreigners to start a business (capital, number of employees, and place of business) were suspended for six months, and coworking offices, etc., were recognized as places of business for up to one year.

Job-searching support for international graduates from overseas universities

The first in Japan to utilize Special Zone status!

Provides support to international graduates from overseas universities who have come to Japan to find work after they graduate from Japanese language school.

One-Stop Entrepreneur Center/Employment and Labor Consultation Center

Provides a one-stop solution for procedures needed when opening a business, including online applications and consultation on registration, taxation, pensions, social insurance, etc. Primarily for start-up companies, it also provides employers and employees with consultation from a lawyer or other professional.

Human Resources Matching Support Center/Telework Center

A private innovation facility, scheduled to open this fall, will have a counter that will help match entrepreneurs with human resources from the private and public sectors who have specialized knowledge and skills, and the counter will also provide consultation and information on teleworking.

A "hub for domestic and international exchange and inbound tourism"

Opening of area management to the private sector

Creating a vibrant community atmosphere through open cafes, etc. on the streets.

Special Zone Private Lodging in rural areas

Special Zone Private Lodging themed on "interaction with community residents".

Production of specified alcoholic beverages: A unique wine region featuring the enticing aroma of sea air and the elevated plateau

Application of special measures to meet minimum production quantity standards (fruit wine). 6kℓ → 2kℓ
 → Kitakyushu (Wakamatsu) wine sales peaked in June 2018
 → Kitakyushu (Hiraodai) wine sales in April 2021

Relaxation of regulations related to airport access buses

To ensure the fast and flexible operation of temporary buses, the operating plan submission deadline was reduced (30 days ⇒ 7 days prior).



A "hub for developing and demonstrating near-future technologies"

Rapid issuance of licenses under the Radio Law for specified experimental test stations

Enabled the rapid issuance of licenses to conduct demonstration tests using radio waves.

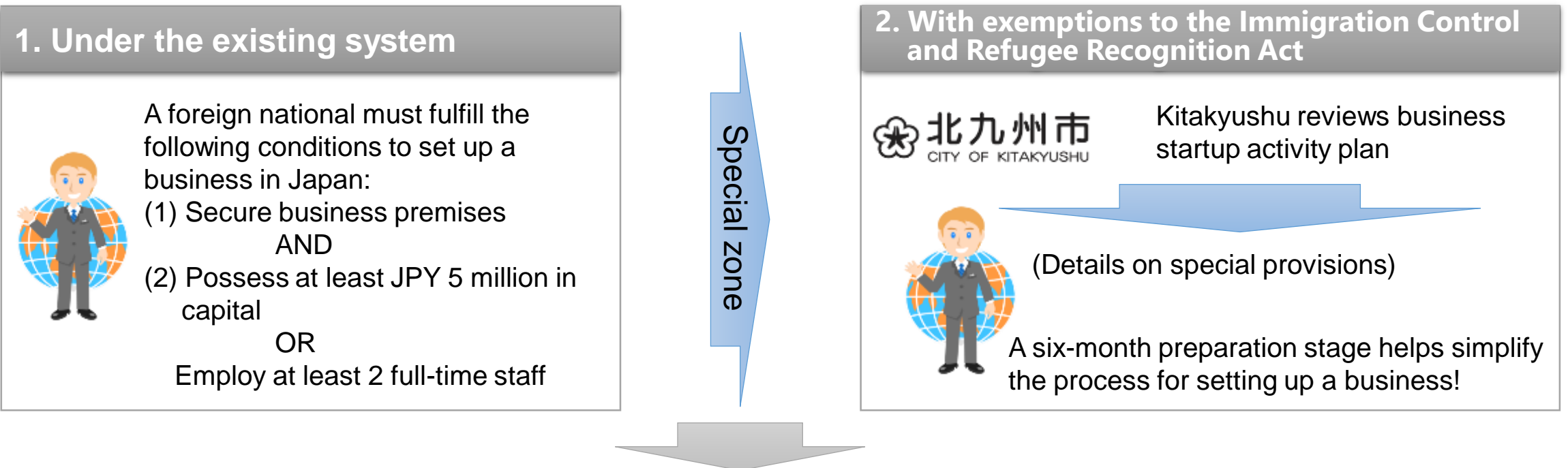
Kitakyushu One Stop Support Center for Demonstration Tests

One-stop support for private businesses and research institutes to facilitate demonstration testing for automated driving, small unmanned vehicles, and radio wave use.



Entrepreneurial Incentives for Foreigners (“Startup Visa”)

- The City of Kitakyushu established the “Kitakyushu Startup Network” as part of citywide efforts to support business startups. The network provides opportunities for professionals who have set up a business and people looking to open their own business to interact with those who have the resources and expertise to support them.
- With interest from overseas rising year after year, Kitakyushu has simplified the process for foreign nationals to set up businesses in the city, a move that also allows them to take advantage of the deep pool of wisdom outside Japan.



The Startup Visa program makes it easier for foreign nationals to set up businesses in Kitakyushu AND promotes synergy between Japanese and foreign business leaders (e.g., in terms of expanding operations overseas)!

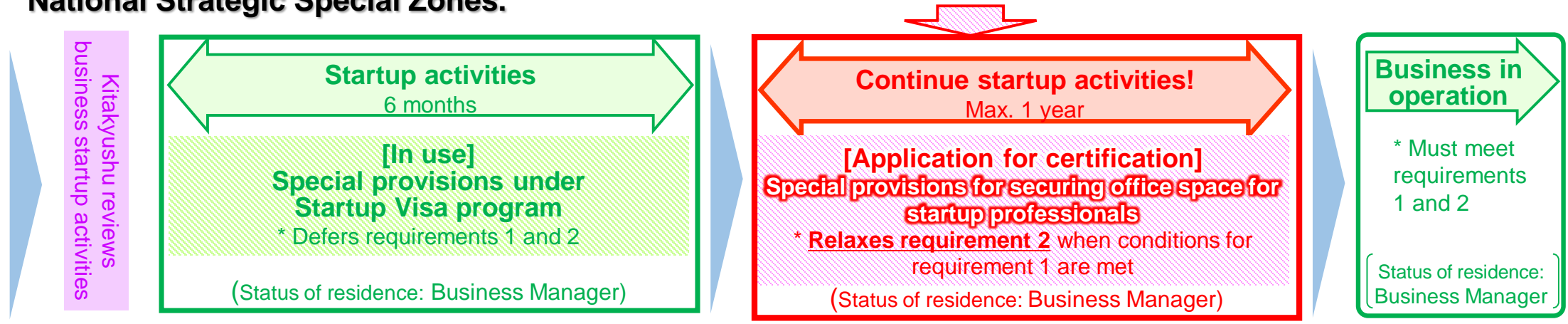
Startup Visa Program in Kitakyushu's National Strategic Special Zone (Special provisions for securing office space for startup professionals)

Issue

In order to set up a business in Japan, foreign nationals must **secure a place of business** to meet requirements for the residence status of "Business Manager". **However, high rents can make it difficult to quickly secure office space.**

Special provisions

Coworking spaces and shared offices are recognized as places of business for a maximum period of one year for foreign nationals utilizing the special provisions available under the Startup Visa program in National Strategic Special Zones.



* Requirements for status of residence of "Business Manager": [Requirement 1] Two or more full-time staff or at least JPY 5 million in capital AND [Requirement 2] **Secure business premises**

Continued and expanded use of the city's **National Strategic Special Zone** boosts the momentum for Kitakyushu's vision of creating a **"Startup Ecosystem Hub"**! (designated by the national government)

Strategy for the creation of a world-class startup ecosystem hub
Startup Ecosystem Hub City

- Startup SDGs Innovation Trial program
- Complimentary support through the Global Acceleration program
- IoT Maker's Project



- One-stop center for business startups
- Employment and labor consultation center
- One-stop support center for testing advanced industrial technologies
- Special provisions under the Immigration Control Act related to accepting startup professionals (Startup Visa program)
- **Special provisions for securing office space for startup professionals**

Introducing a one-stop support system in cooperation with the national government to simplify the online application process for setting up a business, boosting momentum for the creation of Japan's friendliest city for entrepreneurs!

COMPASS Kokura

(Business setup support facility in Kitakyushu)

Kitakyushu One-Stop Center for Business Startups

(Cabinet Office, Ministry of Justice, National Tax Agency, Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, Kitakyushu City)

- Assistance in preparing applications
- Support with online application process
- Consultation services on opening a business
- Communication and coordination with government ministries and agencies
- Organizing seminars and other events



Special counselor on administrative procedures



Business entrepreneur



Business startup procedures

Ministry of Justice

Certify articles of incorporation, register incorporation

National Tax Agency

Corporate tax, income tax, other

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan

Health insurance, employee pension and insurance, unemployment insurance, labor insurance, labor-management agreements, other

Local taxes

Corporate residence tax, corporate enterprise tax, other

Overview of the Super City Initiative

The aim is for residents to, one step at a time, promote the realization of the future society they want to see, to be realized around 2030.

[Points]

① Providing cutting-edge services in multiple fields, aimed at all aspects of life

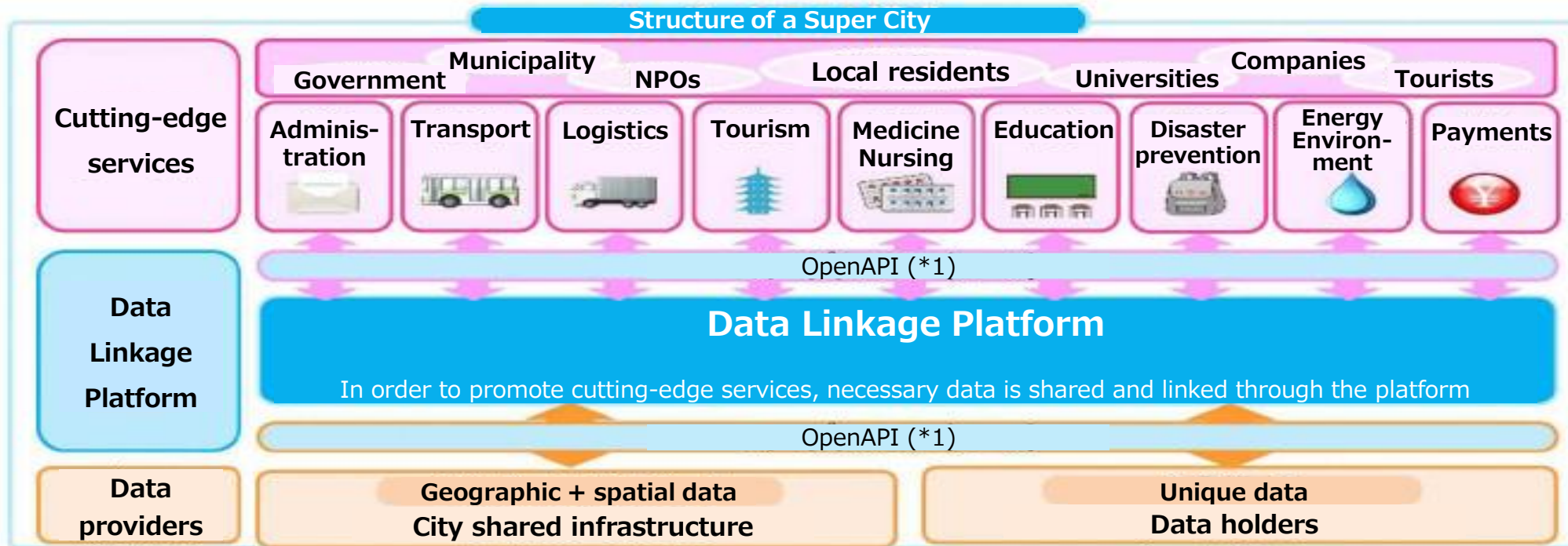
Utilizing cutting-edge technologies such as AI and big data, we will improve convenience in a wide range of fields such as government administration, transportation, medical care, and education.

② Linking of data between multiple fields

In order to realize cutting-edge services in multiple fields, various data will be linked and shared through the "Data Linkage Platform."

③ Bold regulatory reform

Simultaneously, systematically, and comprehensively promote regulatory reform to realize cutting-edge services.



(*1) API: Application Programming Interface – Connection specification for exchanging data & commands between different software

Kitakyushu City/Higashida "Super City for SDGs" Concept

Utilizing the city's history of supporting demonstration testing and expertise in regulatory reform, Kitakyushu has applied to the national government's Super City Initiative with the Higashida district as the future "Super City for SDGs," and appealing to the program with its ability to accelerate SDGs through a virtuous cycle of environment, economy, and society, inability to realize a decarbonized society.



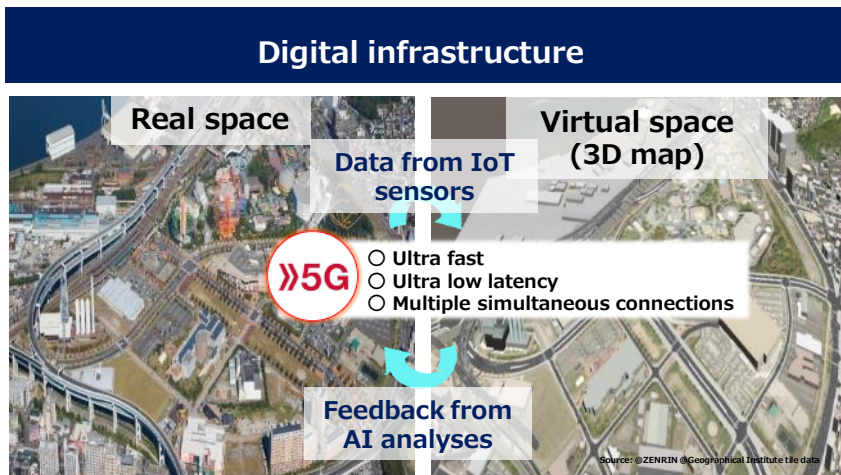
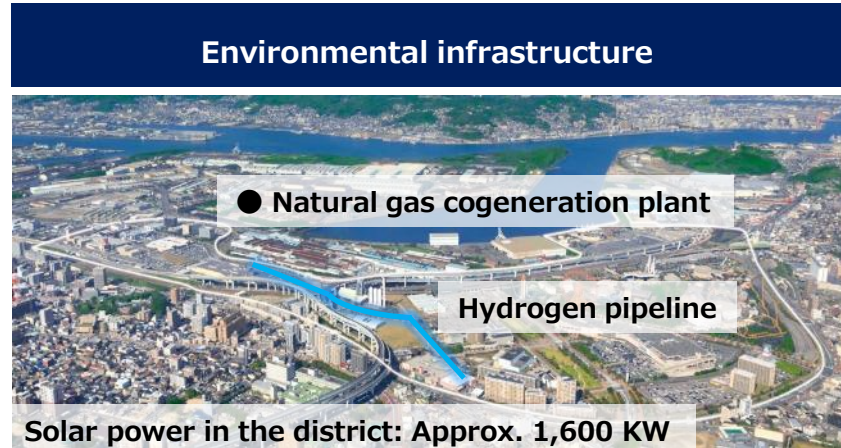
A city aiming to achieve a decarbonized society through a virtuous cycle of the environment and the economy



A city that can solve local problems while promoting and developing new cutting-edge businesses



A city in which everyone, regardless of age or disability, can play an active role



Major cutting-edge services (Overall: a total of 31 projects in collaboration with 82 businesses)

<p>Direct trading of renewable electricity</p>	<p>Smart garbage collection</p>	<p>Cylindrical solar power</p>	<p>Future water-based batteries</p>	<p>CO2-free hydrogen</p>
<p>Walking aids for the visually impaired</p>	<p>Self-driving wheelchairs</p>	<p>Crowd visualization</p>	<p>Smart mask</p>	<p>Smart bus stops</p>
<p>On-demand EV buses</p>	<p>Self-driving mobility</p>	<p>Autonomous flying drones</p>	<p>Automatic delivery robots</p>	<p>Infrastructure inspection robots</p>

Higashida Future City Project

- The city launched a new "Higashida Future City Project" in August 2022 to expand and promote the Super City Initiative on its own.
- Regulatory reform proposals were re-proposed in October 2022 under the regular National Strategic Special Zone scheme. Negotiations are now underway with several parties.



<Appealing Demonstration Fields>

- ◆ The concentration of **various demonstration testing fields**, including major shopping malls and shopping arcades
- ◆ **Availability of an extensive digital infrastructure**, including 5G and 3D maps
- ◆ **Develops advanced decarbonization demonstration projects**, including a hydrogen town



Strong support through a consortium of industry-academia-government-private collaboration!

- One-stop support for demonstration testing fields, licenses, etc.
- Support for obtaining national and municipal subsidies, etc.
- Support for regulatory reform using its status as a National Strategic Special Zone
- Support for business collaboration, public relations, etc.

New demonstration and implementation projects have begun under **the Higashida Future City Project!** (August 2022)

Project Promotion Structure

Strong support through a consortium of industry-academia-government-private collaboration

- ✓ One-stop support for field provision, licenses, etc.
- ✓ Support for obtaining national and municipal subsidies, etc.
- ✓ Support for regulatory reform using its status as a National Strategic Special Zone
- ✓ Support for business collaboration, public relations, etc.

Achievements in cutting-edge technology demonstrations, etc.



Higashida Area Features

- ✓ A wide range of demonstration fields, including shopping malls and museums
- ✓ Extensive digital infrastructure, including 5G and 3D maps
- ✓ Develops advanced decarbonization demonstration projects, including a hydrogen town

Aiming to accelerate the SDGs by leveraging cutting-edge technologies to achieve a virtuous cycle of environment, economy, and society