Beautification of the Yodogawa River Landscape

Osaka Prefectural Government
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Contents

Introduction .............................................................. P2
1. Transformation of the Yodogawa River .................................................. P3
2. Yodogawa River Landscape
   2-1 Selected Areas .................................................. P5
   2-2 Capturing the Landscape ............................................ P5
3. Fundamental Goal and Policies for Landscape Creation
   3-1 Fundamental Goal ............................................... P7
   3-2 Fundamental Policies ............................................. P7
4. Various Efforts to Beautify the Scenery of the Yodogawa
   4-1 Maintaining and Preserving the Rich Natural Landscape of the Yodogawa ........................................... P9
   4-2 Utilizing the Historical and Cultural Features of the Landscape Resources ........................................ P9
   4-3 Creating Activities and Liveliness to Enjoy the Yodogawa Landscape ............................................. P10
   4-4 Organizations Effectively Transmit Information About Attractive Landscapes ................................ P10
Conclusion ................................................................. P11
Reference Materials, Examples of Landscape Resource Usage ..................... P12
   Attractive Yodogawa Landscape Maps 1-3 .................................. P20
Introduction

The Osaka Metropolitan Area Grand Design represents the broadscale direction for urban space creation in the Osaka metropolitan area. As an example of urban space creation based on a cooperative structure covering a wide area, associated organizations in the Yodogawa area actively cooperate to utilize the unique potentials that cities along rivers possess to beautify urban spaces and attract more visitors.

Additionally, in the Osaka Prefectural landscape vision, attention is given to areas including the harmony and relationship with nearby historical and cultural heritages of river axes, landscaping that actively utilizes the relationship with rivers while striving for coexistence with regional characteristics and nature, creation of hydrophilic spaces that take safety into consideration, and preserving greenery along the rivers.

Furthermore, with the aim of making the Yodogawa riverside an attractive urban space, a platform (see p.11) was established as a place where community developers can exchange their opinions freely. Through this platform, a community development design was created to pursue the formation of an attractive landscape.

With this in mind, this leaflet introduces the nature, history/culture, and activities taking place along the riverside from a diverse perspective, and also summarizes the fundamental goals and efforts that those partaking in the development all share in order to promote the making of an attractive landscape of the Yodogawa River.

The upcoming Osaka-Kansai Expo 2025 is a great opportunity to share the beauty of the Yodogawa landscape to the world. We hope that by taking our initiatives in consideration, everyone coming into contact with the Yodogawa River will help participate in its further beautification.

We also hope that our efforts to create an attractive Yodogawa River landscape contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.
Since its formation, the Yodogawa River has been an active center for politics, the economy and culture since ancient times, serving as a network connecting Lake Biwa to the Seto Inland Sea in order to transport people and goods.

○ Ancient Times
Osaka had a lower sea level about 20,000 years ago, and the Osaka Bay and the Seto Inland Sea were land. A coastline was formed after a rise in sea level, creating Kawachi Bay to the east. From the mid-Jomon Period, Kawachi Bay was gradually filled with sedimentation flowing from the Yodo and Yamato Rivers to the northeast and southeast respectively. In the late Jomon Period, Kawachi Bay separated from Osaka Bay and became a freshwater lake, Kawachi Lake, in the mid-Yayoi Period.

Trade with the Chinese mainland and the Korean peninsula began during the Kofun (Tomb) Period, and a canal (Namba Horie) was excavated between Kawachi Lake and the Seto Inland Sea where the Yodo River joined. Nambatsu was built in the middle of this canal and served as the gateway to ancient Japan, making Osaka the center of diplomacy and traffic.

○ Medieval Period
Many rivers flowed in all directions in the Osaka plains during the middle ages and the Yodogawa River played an important role in linking the Seto Inland Sea, the west, and Kyoto from around the Heian Period. Osaka continued to develop as the “Water Capital,” at the same time suffering greatly from frequent floods.

The Yodogawa River at the time had some shallow waters resulting from sediment that accumulated from upstream, making it unstable for ship routes. For this reason, many residents worked together to remove the accumulated sediment and move it elsewhere. The water from the river was also an important resource for farming.

○ Early Modern Period
The Osaka plains served as one of the centers of the nation’s politics, economy and culture, and the Yodogawa River was an important foundation for its development.

In 1594, Toyotomi Hideyoshi built the Taiko embankment as he was building Fushimi Castle to help the Fushimi port flourish and prevent the flooding of Ogura Lake.

Hideyoshi also built the Bunroku embankment that extended from Hirakata to Nagara. Until then, there hadn’t been a continuous embankment on the left bank of the Yodogawa River. The Kawachi plains were now protected from flooding and the Kyokaido road above the embankment became the shortest, well traveled, stable route between Osaka and Kyoto. Along with the Saigokukaido road on the right bank, the roadside areas developed as post towns.

Osaka flourished as the “nation’s kitchen” during the Edo Period and the rivers that flowed in all directions functioned as a vital distribution network for the economy. The location which is now Nakanoshima, Okawa was lined with warehouses of various feudal clans, and the passenger boats that sailed between Hachikenya, Osaka and Fushimi, Kyoto delivered goods that arrived from all over Japan.

The riverside towns thus flourished and benefited from the Yodogawa River.
Meiji Period

In the Meiji Period, the Yodogawa River could not function as a channel because the riverbed rose due to sedimentation.

The Dutch engineer, Johannis de Rijke, led Japan’s first waterworks construction project from 1875 to meander the waterway for a gentler flow in order to solve this problem. Water flowed to the center of the river as a result, securing the depth needed for steamboats. Sediment also accumulated in the waterway, coincidentally forming a swamp that became a friendly habitat for aquatic life.

The great damage from the flood in 1885 influenced the enactment of a river law in 1896, and a large-scale construction project to renovate the entire Yodogawa River basin began. This included the excavation of the Shinyodogawa River and the building of Kema Lock Gate and Kemaaraizeki dam.

Until the waterworks were completed in Osaka City in 1895, residents drank water from the Yodogawa River. The need to secure water for daily life, responding to fires and the prevention of infectious diseases called for the establishment of waterworks using the Yodogawa River as a source.

Showa Period - Present

The quality of the Yodogawa River deteriorated rapidly from the mid-1950s due to household and industrial wastewater. However, household wastewater was cleaned with the improvement of sewage systems in the 1960s and the water quality recovered. As a result, fishing resumed in the estuaries and continues to support Osaka’s food culture to this day.

In addition, the Yodogawa River with meandered water (Picture A) has been widened and straightened in order to protect Osaka from flooding (Picture B). As a result, damage caused by flooding has been greatly reduced. Although the wetland environment important for wildlife has decreased, the environment is gradually improving with the effort of dedicated residents.

With the development of cars, railways and infrastructures such as bridges, the once abundant water transportation declined. Recently however, regular sightseeing cruises have been revived and further development of the Yodogawa riverside is anticipated.

Sand that collects at the bottom of the river is also regularly removed for maintenance and to secure space for ship routes. The sand is used as material for concrete, playing an important role in helping to build infrastructures from the high-growth period.

Currently, there are areas with diverse characteristics including rich, natural areas to parks that are filled with activity. The mudflats and coves are inhabited by many species of wildlife, including endemic and rare species of the Biwako Lake and Yodogawa River water systems.

The Yodogawa River helps us in various ways while remaining very close to the people’s lives. The history of the Yodogawa, however, can be said to be a history of repeated struggles with floods.
Yodogawa River is rich in nature throughout the seasons, various historical and cultural resources, and infrastructures that have different facades depending on the time of day.

In addition to these tranquil landscapes, it is important to consider the conservation of nature, bustling activities, and daily movement of bicycles, people, ships and railways in thinking about the Yodogawa landscape. All “things” related to the Yodogawa River thus contribute to its landscape creation, and we present our view of the Yodogawa landscape in hope that it will become a reference for those participating in activities in the Yodogawa area.

2-1 Selected Areas
The selected area is from the estuary (Yodogawa distance 0.00km mark) to Fushimi (near Misu Lock Gate) and part of the Okawa River which is the former Yodogawa (Hachikenayahama-Kema Lock Gate), where the water transportation is currently in service.

2-2 Capturing the Landscape
In capturing the landscape, it is important to consider not only what is visible, but also the social background of its history and culture, as well as its origin, based on the natural environment of Yodogawa.

It is also important to capture the landscape after understanding the functions of the Yodogawa River’s flood control and water supply, and the fact that it is a place for living organisms.

The Yodogawa River landscape resources are thus categorized into the following four types.
① Nature/Life: sunset/sunrise, river surface, coves, mudflats, reed beds, wild birds, wild grass, etc.
② Cities/Infrastructure: bridges, buildings, docks, etc.
③ History/Culture: Monuments for boat crossing sites and floods, historic buildings, etc.
④ Activities: Events utilizing river spaces, water transportation, etc.

Furthermore, landscapes are composed by combining multiple elements (sky, mountains, infrastructure, etc.). It is important to organize the attractiveness of landscape resources (night view, sunset, cherry blossoms, events, etc.) by taking the relationships of the elements into account (shape, color, combination, etc.) and the time period, including seasons and time of day.

2. Yodogawa River Landscape
### Yodogawa River’s Main Landscape Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature/ Life</th>
<th>Cities/ Infrastructure</th>
<th>History/ Culture</th>
<th>Activities/ Liveliness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| □ Sky
  (blue sky, stars, moon) | □ High-rise buildings | □ View of Yodogawa
  River banks | □ Airplanes |
| □ Mountains | □ Large-scale buildings | | |
| □ Coast | □ Sakishima Cosmo
  Tower | | |
| □ Sunset/Sunrise | □ Umeda Sky Building | □ Old Kema No.1 Lock
  (water increase, etc.) | □ Naniwa Yodogawa
  Hanabitaikai Fireworks
  Festival |
| □ Disasters | □ Grand Front Osaka | | |
| □ Weather
  (sunny, rain, snow, etc.) | □ Redhorse OSAKA
  WHEEL | | |
| □ Weather (sunny, rain, snow, etc.) | □ High voltage towers, etc. | | |
| □ River fog | □ Hirokata Park
  (giant ferris wheel) | | |
| □ River surface
  (reflections, waves, clean water, etc.) | | | |
| □ Yodogawa Riverside
  Park | □ Yodogawa Riverside
  Park | | |
| □ Hillside flowers, green spaces | □ Water purification
  plant | | |
| □ Coves | □ Bridges | □ Embankments | |
| □ Reed beds | □ Water pipe bridges | □ Bridge illuminations | |
| □ Mudflats | □ Yodogawa-ozeki
  Weir | □ Temples and shrines
  Iwashimizu Hachimangu, etc. | |
| □ Sewaritei
  embankments | □ Water locks
  - water gates
  - drainage pumping
  stations | □ Old Kema No.1 Lock
  Gate | |
| □ Cherry blossoms
  (fall leaves) | □ Water intake
  facilities | □ Japan Mint
  Misu Lock Gate | |
| □ Leisure walking routes | □ Chimeys
  Sakura-deai
  Visitor Center | □ Flood control activities | |
| □ Wild birds | □ Water level
  observation station | | |
| □ Wild grasses
  (pampas grass, equinox flower) | □ Emergency wharfs | | |
| □ Insects | □ Craftworks
  (Signboards, etc.) | | |
| □ Aquatic life
  (crabs, clams, etc.) | | | |
| Near         |                        |                 |                        |
| □ Disasters | □ Boat crossing
  monumens | □ Events using the
  riverside open spaces |
| □ Weather (sunny, rain, snow, etc.) | □ Kurawanka
  Hasshochihi monument | • Yodogawa Urban
  Camp |
| □ River fog | □ Flood monuments | | |
| □ River surface
  (reflections, waves, clean water, etc.) | □ Bomb ponds
  (Sanjikkokubune song) | | |
| □ Yodogawa Riverside
  Park | □ Craftworks
  (Signboards, etc.) | | |
| □ Hillside flowers, green spaces | □ Old Kema No.1 Lock
  Gate | | |
| □ Coves | □ Water purification
  plant | □ Ship transportation | |
| □ Reed beds | □ Bridges | □ Water activities
  (Canoeing, SUP, etc.) | |
| □ Mudflats | □ Water pipe bridges | □ Flood control activities | |
| □ Sewaritei
  embankments | □ Yodogawa-ozeki
  Weir | | |
| □ Cherry blossoms
  (fall leaves) | □ Water intake
  facilities | | |
| □ Leisure walking routes | □ Chimeys
  Sakura-deai
  Visitor Center | | |
| □ Wild birds | □ Water level
  observation station | | |
| □ Wild grasses
  (pampas grass, equinox flower) | □ Emergency wharfs | | |
| □ Insects | □ Craftworks
  (Signboards, etc.) | | |
| □ Aquatic life
  (crabs, clams, etc.) | | | |

- **Near**: Close to the river
- **Distant**: Far from the river
3. Fundamental Goal and Policies for Landscape Creation

In order to promote the creation of an attractive landscape, it is important that all people who utilize the Yodogawa area take pride and care to protect, nurture and utilize the diverse and attractive resources along the riverside. The following are therefore the fundamental goal and policies for riverside residents, community development organizations and companies involved in landscape creation.

3- 1 Fundamental Goal

Conservation and creation of various benefits that can be enjoyed by many people, by beautifying the landscape of the Yodogawa and other major rivers

3-2 Fundamental Policies

1. Sharing awareness of the conservation and restoration of the rich, natural environment and promoting initiatives that take advantage of regional characteristics

In addition to relaying information on the role of coves and mudflats, and the importance of conservation activities, we will foster interest and attachment to the Yodogawa by promoting activities where people can feel closer to nature.
2 Promoting efforts that improve the attractiveness of the landscape resources by making it possible to enjoy the stories of Yodogawa’s history and culture

We will create a mechanism that attracts the interest of diverse people by relaying information about the historical background and origin of the landscape resources and by making good use of their characteristics.

3 Promoting community development that integrates rivers and regions while effectively utilizing the diverse landscape resources along the Yodogawa in cooperation with various organizations

With various organizations working together to participate in continuous activities that connect the rivers and people, new landscapes will be created to promote cities with beautiful scenery.

4 Disseminating information on the attractive scenery of Yodogawa through various organizations

With various organizations effectively disseminating information on the attractiveness of the Yodogawa landscape and activities that take place, it is possible to promote community development in accordance with the other policies.
4. Various Efforts to Beautify the Scenery of the Yodogawa

Many residents, community development organizations and companies are engaged in activities to create an attractive landscape. For further improvements in the future, the following are efforts that various organizations can take part in to help continue to beautify the landscape.

When implementing activities, it is important to ensure safety by taking into account the worsening of weather and increases in river water levels.

4-1 Maintaining and Preserving the Rich Natural Landscape of the Yodogawa

- In order to maintain and preserve the natural landscape, it is important for riverside residents and companies to play a leading role in nature conservation activities. We therefore promote efforts that raise awareness of nature conservation to increases interest and fondness for the Yodogawa area.
  - River education, such as nature conservation, through schools and community activities
  - Cleaning activities in collaboration with companies, etc.

- We promote efforts that increase interest in the Yodogawa’s natural scenery and awareness of nature conservation, such as activities to enjoy the natural scenery and to use the river space as a daily living space.
  - Creating a mechanism for local residents to use rivers as daily living spaces
  - Creating new viewpoints to feel the magnificence of nature, such as viewing natural sceneries from hot-air balloons, etc.

4-2 Utilizing the Historical and Cultural Features of the Landscape Resources

- Relaying not only what is visible now, but the scenery of the past also enhances the attractiveness of the landscape resources and helps to increase awareness.
  - Creating a map that describes the historical and cultural features of the landscape resources
  - Enriching information on boats by digitizing old maps
  - Increasing sightseeing cruises along the old passenger boat routes, etc.

- Promoting efforts to create new landscapes by adding new attractions to landscape resources.
  - Creating new night views by illuminating infrastructures such as bridges
4-3 Creating Activities and Liveliness to Enjoy the Yodogawa Landscape

- By continuing to offer sports or leisure activities while feeling the beauty of the landscape, the activities of people themselves will become a new scene of the Yodogawa.
  - Having sporting competitions or camping while experiencing the magnificent nature of the river space
  - Having events to experience the attractiveness of the Yodogawa and nearby rivers, etc.

- By promoting liveliness in collaboration with community development activities around the Yodogawa area, new sceneries will be created in addition to the community development of surrounding areas.
  Example: Collaboration between Kurawanka Gorokuichi and Minato Gorokuichi at Hirakatashuku

4-4 Organizations Effectively Transmit Information About Attractive Landscapes

- Municipalities, community development organizations and companies actively transmit information about the features of the landscape, and seasons and times that are best to see them. We also welcome the spread of information by riverside residents and visitors through such means as SNS.

- Information is transmitted through people, objects, media and places, depending on the purpose.
  - People: through environment and disaster prevention classes, etc.
  - Objects: printing attractive points of the riverside on the backside of packaging, etc.
  - Media: websites, SNS, etc.
  - Places: at tourist attractions, events, in trains, etc.

- We collaborate with community development organizations and those who care about the Yodogawa, in addition to those who are knowledgeable about transmitting information. Landscape resource information specific to the area is transmitted to the public to share the attractiveness of the Yodogawa landscape.
Conclusion

We hope that the members of the Yodogawa Riverside Community Development Platform, who are engaged in various activities along the Yodogawa River, will lead initiatives according to these policies to create landscapes, and influence other companies and community development organizations to follow.

Osaka Prefecture, in cooperation with the national government and local municipalities along the Yodogawa River, coordinates the conservation of the natural environment/landscape, consideration for urban infrastructure/landscapes of buildings, and mutual exchanges of initiatives in each region. We support these efforts and will continue to promote the creation of a wide-area landscape.

In regard to the descriptions of these policies, we will continue to discover more attractive landscape resources of the Yodogawa River and update the descriptions as necessary.

In addition, Osaka Prefecture and other public landscape organizations are working on the creation of good landscapes based on the landscape law. For details, please refer to the landscape plans, regulations and policies of each organization.

Everyone is a Team Player in the Yodogawa's Landscape Creation

The Yodogawa Riverside Community Development Platform is made up of riverside community development organizations and was established in August 2017 with the revival of boat transportation from Hachikenyahama-Hirakata to cooperate in the future vision of the Yodogawa riverside. Utilizing the regional resources of the riverside and improving their worth, the platform aims to develop the community by creating attractive urban spaces over a wide area by periodically exchanging ideas and conducting joint projects.

【Members】
- Fushimi City Tourism Association
- Shimamoto Town Volunteer Information Center
- Yodogawa Waiwai Gasyagaya Matsuri Committee
- Nanika Yodogawa Hanabitakai Committee
- Osaka Tenjin Matsuri Committee
- Osaka Aqua Bus Co., Ltd.
- Keihan Holdings Co., Ltd.
- Osaka Tenjin Matsuri Committee
- Osaka Aqua Bus Co., Ltd.
- Yawata City Tourism Association
- Takatsuki City Tourist Association
- Neyagawa Mzube Club
- IWASHIMIZU NATSUKASHI MIRAI-SOZU Group
- Ipponmatsu Shipping Co.
- Taiki Tomo- planning
- Oyamazaki Furusato Guide Association
- Hirakata Culture Tourist Association
- Moriguchi/Kadoma Rekisakaido Promotion Association
- Kyokaido Negawazukuri Liaison Group
- Ban PR Inc.

【Observers】
- Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; Kinki Regional Development Bureau, Yodogawa River Office
- Yodogawa Riverside Park Administration Center
- Kyoto Prefecture
- Osaka Prefecture
- Kyoto City
- Yawata City
- Oyamazaki Town
- Hankyu Corporation
- Setsunan University

【Secretariat】
- Osaka Prefectural Government, Department of Housing and City Development, Urban Space Creation Office

Among the municipalities within the area, the public landscape offices are Osaka City, Neyagawa City, Hirakata City, Takatsuki City, and Kyoto City. The other riverside municipalities are under the landscape administration under Osaka Prefecture's landscape plans and measures.

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