

Moving Okinawa Forward

120 Policies to Move Okinawa Forward

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Okinawa, Forward.

English translation of “沖縄を前に進める120の政策” (Genta Koja — Okinawa Gubernatorial Election 2026)

- Work to reduce energy prices, including electricity, gas, and gasoline.
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- Using priority national grants and working closely with municipalities, ensure prompt benefits and finely tuned livelihood support for low-income households and child-raising and elderly households struggling with rising prices — while eliminating the “system walls” that cut off support at income thresholds, and building a framework that reliably delivers help to the households that truly need it.
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- Strengthen cooperation with the National Governors' Association and aim for the early realization of a zero consumption tax on food.
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- Strongly urge the national government to lower social insurance premiums, which burden both employers and employees.
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- Promote strong wage increases that outpace inflation through hands-on support for small and medium-sized enterprises.
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- Implement support to overcome the structural disadvantages Okinawa faces as an island prefecture.
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- Promote higher food self-sufficiency in the staples and side dishes residents consume every day (rice, meat, eggs, vegetables, and more).
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- Accelerate “locally produced, locally consumed” renewable energy that is not at the mercy of external factors, and raise energy self-sufficiency through the demonstration and deployment of next-generation technologies — building an economic structure resilient to fuel-price swings, reducing environmental impact, and creating a disaster-resilient, energy-independent society.
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- Seek an extension of the reduced gasoline tax and local gasoline tax rates under the Special Measures Law for Okinawa's Reversion.

Diverse Industries Built on Okinawa's Unique Strengths and an Economy Where People Shine ⁽²¹⁾

- Promote the new “5K economy” built on Okinawa's uniqueness — tourism (*kankō*), health (*kenkō*), environment (*kankyō*), oceans (*kaiyō*), and entrepreneurship (*kigyō*) — to realize a flexible, resilient Okinawan economy that can adapt to changing times.
- Powerfully advance the business community's GW2050 PROJECTS and evolve Okinawa into a gateway connecting Japan and the world.
- Work broadly with the national government and private companies inside and outside the prefecture to capture Asia's growth — increasing private investment in Okinawa and expanding the scale of its economy.
- Track fast-changing social conditions and use the technologies of the times to build growth industries and growth models across all of Okinawa that draw on its natural, cultural, and other attractions.
- Partner with OIST and national institutes (AIST and others) to create new industries founded on cutting-edge technologies such as AI and quantum, while supporting AI adoption (“AX”) across every existing industry, including tourism, construction, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.
- To make tourism growth something residents can truly feel, promote cross-industry collaboration in tourism and use it to nurture a diverse range of industries.
- To smooth seasonal tourism demand and raise its value-added, attract international air routes and pursue diverse inbound visitor markets.
- Aim for ¥2 trillion in tourism spending by enhancing both the “quantity” and “quality” of tourism.
- Aim to double per capita prefectural income through support for new industries, higher value-added SMEs, and more.
- Use the newly introduced accommodation tax to further strengthen tourism infrastructure, while returning benefits to residents — for example, by making off-season “resident discounts” permanent.
- Advance the Startup Island vision of making Okinawa a sacred ground of entrepreneurship for Japan and Asia — developing new technologies and industries that leverage Okinawa's geography, and creating an environment that helps solve social and community challenges.
- Create a sustainable, distinctly Okinawan “blue economy”: utilizing and conserving marine life and seabed resources, industrializing ocean energy such as ocean thermal energy conversion, and promoting land-based and marine aquaculture and the marine leisure industry.

Diverse Industries Built on Okinawa's Unique Strengths and an Economy Where People Shine ⁽²¹⁾

- Move quickly to develop key facilities such as a large-scale MICE center, the Ushinumui (Ushio-no-Mori) project, and a J1-standard soccer stadium.
- Create a world-class airport and an aviation-industry cluster in Okinawa by strengthening and expanding Naha Airport, upgrading MRO (aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul), and developing talent through industry–academia collaboration.
- Work with SMEs to build the physical and workplace environments where the young generation carrying Okinawa's future will want to work, and create and promote a talent-matching platform — including attracting U-turn, I-turn, and J-turn returnees.
- Promote industries and create jobs that make young people who left to study elsewhere in Japan or abroad want to come home to Okinawa to work.
- Together with private companies, build employment and evaluation systems that let people keep working with purpose and fulfillment — without giving up career or income — even when they face challenges at different life stages.
- Promote smart agriculture, forestry, and fisheries through the latest technologies, achieving greater efficiency and higher value-added, while supporting workforce development, including the training of successors.
- Strongly press the national government for a fundamental review of the Japan–Taiwan fisheries agreement and stricter enforcement, protecting the livelihoods and safety of Okinawa's fishers.
- To create an environment that attracts private investment in R&D and growth industries, request and negotiate with the national government for expanded tax incentives and deregulation that promote business location in Okinawa.
- Work with the national government, municipalities, and experts to protect the physical and mental health of working people, comprehensively supporting workplaces — from early mental-health care through legal responses to malicious cases.

Regional Development Where Every Community and Every Island Shines ⁽¹¹⁾

- Nurture industries that draw on the environmental, cultural, and economic character of each region and each island.
- Protect the core industries of the outer islands — tourism, agriculture, fisheries, and livestock — and turn them into industries that truly earn.
- Work with the national government and municipalities to continue lowering transport and logistics costs for the outer islands, and to promote fleet renewal and upgrades on air and sea routes.
- Attract the (tentatively named) National Museum of Natural History and present to the world a sustainable destination that protects its natural environment.
- To resolve housing shortages in the outer islands and the northern region, promote long-term leasing of public land, conversion of teacher housing, and private-sector-driven supply of low-cost housing.
- Advance the use of vacant houses in partnership with communities, and build housing-support frameworks that serve diverse family arrangements.
- To resolve the prefecture's serious shortage of residential land, improve urban planning to fit today's urban structure, including reviewing urbanization control areas.
- Support business succession at the SMEs that underpin local economies, and strengthen bankruptcy-prevention measures against unforeseen events.
- To overcome the geographic disadvantages of the outer islands, develop infrastructure — airports, ports, roads, telecommunications — while advancing digital transformation of medical, welfare, and administrative services, expanding travel subsidies for island patients, supporting the retention of essential workers, and addressing each island's specific challenges.
- Accelerate the restoration of Shuri Castle in its entirety, and promote community development that draws on history and culture.
- Support the growth and vibrancy of *machigwā* (traditional neighborhood shopping quarters), shopping streets, and markets, and revitalize local commerce and industry associations.

Infrastructure That Is Friendly and Easy to Use for Residents and Visitors Alike ⁽¹³⁾

- To ease road congestion and build towns that are easy to get around, steadily develop the road network — including motor-vehicle-only expressways — in cooperation with the national government and municipalities.
- Conduct emergency inspections covering road signs, road markings, street trees, and weed control, and maintain roads that are safe and reassuring.
- Promote the undergrounding of power and utility lines along major arterial roads and school routes, thoroughly preventing lifeline cutoffs in disasters.
- Strengthen the functions of airports and ports — the gateways that support the economy of island-prefecture Okinawa and the strongholds that protect residents' lives — and promote resilient infrastructure that supports regional development and safe living that stands up to disasters.
- Upgrade Naha Airport into a business-resort airport of the highest global standard and, in parallel, expand outer-island airports — reliably capturing growing tourism demand and driving further growth for all of Okinawa.
- To resolve the prefecture's serious shortage of residential land, improve urban planning to fit today's urban structure, including reviewing urbanization control areas.
- Advance study of establishing an airport in the northern region as the main island's second gateway.
- In light of price surges driven by global conditions, ensure that unit costs in public-works cost estimates are properly updated, and then raise the share of public works contracted to companies within the prefecture.

Okinawa Mobility Revolution

Fundamentally rethink public transportation and deliver smooth mobility with diverse options

- Building on the bus-terminal concepts for the northern and central regions, work with route-bus operators to realize bus routes that are clear and easy for riders to use, and advance the GW2050 PROJECTS to demonstrate and implement BRT (bus rapid transit).
- Accelerate three-car operation of the Yui Rail monorail, and promote the study and introduction of extensions and a loop line.
- Advance consultations with the national government on a north–south railway and move steadily toward its introduction.
- Be an early mover in demonstrating and deploying autonomous-driving technology, and advance study of underground roadways that also serve disaster-prevention functions.
- For transportation within municipalities — LRT, on-demand taxis, and more — carefully listen to each community's voice and understand its transportation challenges, and support making these services a reality.
- Beyond encouraging seniors to voluntarily return their driver's licenses, support community transportation networks that keep residents mobile — barrier-free public transit plus on-demand taxis, volunteer ride services, and more — so that daily life continues unhindered and stays enjoyable even after giving up driving.

- Promote education and awareness of “preconception care” — gaining knowledge of pregnancy and childbirth from an early stage and raising health awareness of one's own body.
- Working with municipalities and business organizations, consider expanding the prefecture's own subsidies for infertility and recurrent-pregnancy-loss treatment, support companies in introducing fertility-treatment leave, and request that the national government broaden insurance coverage.
- Advance system design toward reducing the cost burden of childbirth and making prenatal health checkups completely free.
- Resolve regional imbalances in obstetricians and pediatricians, and strengthen local systems for perinatal and pediatric care.
- Work with municipalities to make postpartum care programs easy to use, supporting mothers under heavy physical and emotional strain.
- Accelerate free childcare for ages 0–2; maintain and expand free medical care for children and strengthen capacity to accept sick children in daycare; and accelerate free education and free school lunches in elementary and junior high schools.
- Expand employment and certification support for single parents, and call on the national government to expand the child-rearing allowance (higher payments and relaxed income limits).
- To overcome the geographic disadvantages of the outer islands, develop infrastructure — airports, ports, roads, telecommunications — while advancing digital transformation of medical, welfare, and administrative services, expanding travel subsidies for island patients, supporting the retention of essential workers, and addressing each island's specific challenges.
- Support the stable, ongoing operation of safe community places where children can spend their time.
- Advance study toward tax incentives — such as full tax deductibility of corporate donations — for initiatives that help end child poverty.

- Reduce teachers' workloads through school digitalization and the outsourcing of club activities, advancing workstyle reform in schools so that teachers have time to face their students.
- Improve pay and staffing standards to achieve work–life balance in childcare settings. By creating workplaces where staff can thrive and securing a stable workforce, support higher-quality childcare and the elimination of waiting lists.
- Promote training for staff of education, welfare, medical, and related institutions to identify and reach young carers early — children whose caregiving often goes unrecognized even by themselves and their families.
- So that families raising children with disabilities are never left isolated, build support for siblings, richer respite care, and systems for safe transportation and pick-up/drop-off — in partnership with municipalities, healthcare, childcare, education, and other specialized institutions.
- Work with the Okinawa Kodomo-Mannaka (“Children at the Center”) Well-being Center to stand beside children facing internet addiction, bullying, difficult home environments, and other challenges — building a society where every child can live healthy in body and mind, true to themselves.
- Work with municipalities to strengthen counseling services for children and students using social media and similar channels, and build proactive “push-type” support systems in cooperation with related agencies.
- Promote understanding in workplaces and beyond of women's distinct health issues — pregnancy, childbirth, menopause — and prevent unwanted resignations for health reasons.
- To end the burden of housework and childcare falling disproportionately on women, encourage men to take parental leave and build society-wide momentum for “co-parenting.”

- Promote global education that leverages Okinawa's unique environment (including overseas study and study programs within the region), IT education such as AI, and education about culture and nature.
- Continuously raise Okinawa's soft power and brand by promoting its unique culture, performing arts, crafts, and sports — including UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage such as *shimakutuba* (Okinawan languages), *kumiodori* theater, and karate — and by developing and securing the people who carry them.
- Enrich curricula from the early elementary grades to build capacity for international understanding, beginning with language.
- Promote the development of MBA, tourism-management, advanced-AI, and globally minded talent within the prefecture.
- So that children from small outer islands and depopulated areas without high schools can live and learn without anxiety when they advance to schools on the main island, comprehensively strengthen acceptance systems and daily-life support across elementary, junior high, and high school, starting with expanded student dormitories.
- Expand no-repayment grant scholarships that sustain the desire to learn; expand learning support for students who cannot access education outside school for economic reasons; and, for students not attending school, develop diverse places of learning in partnership with education support centers, free schools, and others.
- Support recurrent education (re-learning) and certification, so that people of every generation can take on new challenges.
- Establish a school of pharmacy at a national or public university in the prefecture, aiming to resolve the pharmacist shortage and energize the drug-discovery and healthcare industries.
- Partner with Okinawa KOSSEN (National Institute of Technology), the University of the Ryukyus, and the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST) to accelerate the development of people who will solve Okinawa's regional challenges and drive its industries.
- Elevate Okinawa's sports tourism and soft power by establishing and upgrading international sporting events — building the Okinawa Karate World Tournament into an international brand and raising the Tour de Okinawa to international-race status — and by attracting professional sports camps and competitions.

- Promote healthy living by communicating clearly, at each stage of life, practical knowledge of health — better eating (drawing on Okinawa's traditional food culture), moderate exercise, quitting smoking, sensible drinking, and blood-pressure management.
- Raise participation in regular health checkups in cooperation with municipalities, leading to earlier detection and treatment of disease — promoting residents' health while reducing the fiscal burden.
- Revive Okinawa as the island of healthy longevity through the latest health and medical technologies and the use of medical big data.
- Promote community design and public transportation services that create environments where people want to walk.
- Strengthen pay and treatment improvements that support higher incomes and career paths for welfare, medical, and long-term-care workers — resolving staff shortages and further deepening collaboration across the three fields.
- Establish an advanced medical care system by realizing the international medical hub vision centered on the Nishi-Futenma district.
- Advance the early completion of the Northern Core Hospital and strengthen hub medical institutions such as Chubu Hospital, soundly operating the prefectural hospitals that carry regional healthcare.
- Ensure a stable supply of the essential workers of healthcare: doctors, nurses, and pharmacists.
- So that seniors can live long, healthy lives, pursue programs that make it easier to go out, lower the rate of long-term-care certification, and prevent frailty.
- Build support systems in which medical, welfare, and disability-services professionals work together, so that seniors and people with disabilities can keep living with peace of mind in the communities they know.
- So that facing family caregiving does not mean sacrificing work or career, build support systems including respite care and flexible working environments, in partnership with municipalities and private companies.

- Update regional disaster-prevention plans based on the latest simulations and conduct evacuation drills, while countering the aging of infrastructure (water and sewer systems, undergrounding of power lines, and more) and reinforcing facilities — advancing preparedness, in both hardware and operations, against disasters growing larger and more severe.
- Introduce a firefighting and disaster-response helicopter to enhance emergency transport and medical systems, including for the outer islands.
- Build an “Okinawa resilient to disasters and drought” by reinforcing the power grid and systematizing water-resource management.
- Make civilian evacuation plans for contingencies genuinely effective (clarifying the national government's responsibility, developing evacuation infrastructure, and building stockpile systems), and demand that any use of civilian infrastructure such as Naha Airport be operated so as to minimize the impact on civilian life and economic activity.
- To protect the water and soil that are the source of residents' lives, thoroughly investigate the actual state of PFAS and other contamination and strengthen countermeasures.
- On infectious diseases, advance mobilization plans for medical resources in preparation for pandemics and a fundamental strengthening of the public-health system.
- Work toward a society in which women, children, LGBTQ people, and foreign residents can live with peace of mind.
- Given the growing importance of cybersecurity to the economy and national security, develop cybersecurity talent and attract related institutions.
- Strive to improve animal welfare, aiming for zero culling of dogs and cats.
- Roll out measures and policies, in both programs and facilities, to protect Okinawans from all bullying, abuse, domestic violence, and sexual crimes.
- Work with schools, municipalities, and police to protect residents from threats such as *tokuryū* (anonymous, fluid criminal groups), “dark part-time jobs” (criminal recruitment schemes), and illegal drugs.

Never Again a Battlefield: Preserving a Peaceful Okinawa and Reducing the Base Burden ⁽⁹⁾

- As the security environment surrounding Okinawa grows more severe, show understanding for securing a measure of self-defense capability, while steadily working to reduce Okinawa's base burden.
- Accept and advance the Henoko relocation as the realistic solution for removing the dangers of Futenma Air Station at the earliest possible moment, while working for the development and growth of Nago City — including the three Kube districts — and of the entire northern region.
- On the Self-Defense Forces' "southwest shift" to strengthen the defense posture of the Nansei Islands — primarily with a Taiwan contingency in mind — local understanding is indispensable: demand careful and convincing explanations from the government, and advance the responses needed to protect residents.
- Steadily advance the return of U.S. military facilities and installations south of Kadena as set out in the SACO agreement, and move as quickly as possible on the use of returned land to contribute to Okinawa's economic development.
- Strongly demand that the recovery of the remains of the war dead and the disposal of unexploded ordnance be carried out under the national government's initiative and responsibility, as unfinished postwar business.
- So that the memory of the Battle of Okinawa never fades and the preciousness of peace is handed to the future, properly maintain and manage war-history sites and memorials, including facility improvements such as handrails.
- Establish or attract a Peace Creation Center (tentative name) — a hub for communicating peace that only Okinawa, having lived through tragic war, is positioned to carry.
- Attract international conferences to Okinawa, building toward the future attraction of international organizations.
- Demand compliance with the rules agreed between Japan and the United States, and strongly press the government for improved operation and revision of the Japan–U.S. Status of Forces Agreement.

Connecting Okinawa as One: Maximizing the Power to Deliver ⁽⁸⁾

- Establish the Yanbaru, Miyako, and Yaeyama Governor's Offices, so that frontline voices are reflected in policy without delay.
- To promote co-creation powered by private-sector vitality, establish a single unified point of contact within the prefectural government for industry–academia–government–citizen collaboration.
- Quickly restart the Okinawa Policy Council — composed of all ministers of state except the prime minister together with the governor of Okinawa, dormant for nearly a decade — and press for Okinawa's development and the reduction of its base burden as the entire government's highest priorities.
- Promote DX (digital transformation) for more efficient administration and better services for residents, while expanding support services for people unaccustomed to operating digital devices.
- Verify the effects of major policies through EBPM (evidence-based policymaking), and use open data to deliver policy improvements that residents can clearly understand.
- To revitalize the prefectural government organization and secure talent: right-size staffing levels, continue employing those past retirement age, build alumni-rehiring programs for those who left, promote mid-career hiring, exchange personnel with the private sector and national and municipal governments, and drive reform toward an open, well-ventilated organizational culture that stems attrition.
- Powerfully request and negotiate with the national government for a major increase in the Okinawa promotion budget and lump-sum grants needed for Okinawa's development.
- To secure independent revenue sources, expand individual and corporate *furusato nōzei* (hometown tax donations) and make fund management more efficient.