

【Budget to make Okayama resilient to natural disasters: livability and powerfulness】

Hello, I'm Masao Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

On February 18, I announced the initial budget plan for FY 2019 which is the first annual budget plan after the heavy rain last July.

This budget puts a priority on converting "Okayama City with less natural disasters" into "Okayama City resilient to natural disasters." I would call this "budget to make Okayama resilient to natural disasters."

The main point is the measure for disaster prevention and disaster mitigation. The total amount, including the hard and soft aspects, is around 1.5 billion yen and it is around 15 times more than the FY 2018 of 96.7 million yen.

- Awareness of disaster risk management has grown recently. To change the present condition that the rate of neighborhood association, the voluntary disaster prevention unit of the linchpin of mutual assistance, is only 44.8%, we will aim to simplify the procedure to found the unit and achieve 100% of organizing rate in the next FY, revising and expanding the preparation at the time of the foundation and the support system for the activities drastically.
- As the prevention measure against the inundation which damaged around 7,700 houses, we will cooperate to maintain the rivers, conduct measurement / geological survey to maintain the pump stations and status survey for adjustment of the level of water channels, enhance the maintenance of the 86 pump stations in the city and consider setting up monitor cameras.

Next point is the measure to secure nursery teachers.

- It is used to be considered that we were in the 2nd worst situation in Japan about the number of children on the waiting list for nursery schools, however, the number of accepting is expected to exceed the number of application finally. At the same time, we still remain the worries about securing nursery teachers. We will continue our own salary addition of 2 % for private nursery teachers (around 6,000yen / month) and support the new private nursery teachers by leasing them apartments (up to 60,000 yen / month) and paying back their scholarship (up to 10,000 yen / month).

Others:

- "City Planning" such as introducing the light rail transit (LRT) for JR Momotaro Line, extending the tramway to Okayama Station Square and establishing Okayama Art Theater (tentative name)
- "Child Care and Education" such as new management system for students' clubs after school and efforts to achieve goals of the educational policy on academic ability and problematic behaviors
- "Health and Welfare" such as new business about health and medical expense subsidy system for mentally challenged people
- "Industry and Sightseeing" such as support for private business, G20 Okayama Health Ministers' Meeting and Okayama Art Summit 2019

The total amount of General Account is 331.1 billion yen including these plans. Although it is the largest budget ever in the past, financial soundness will be secured by the increase of 4.2 billion yen of tax revenue by the increase of individual income along with the economic recovery. The balance of fund for adjustment of financial

resources increases by 1.7 billion yen and the balance of municipal bond decreased by 2.3 billion yen compared to the same period of the previous year. We secure soundness with financial indicators.

I believe that we would secure the budget which leads to Okayama City containing "safety" against disasters, "livability" for the citizens and "powerfulness" to play a leading role, while keeping fiscal soundness not to put off the bill to the future.