

Mayor's E-newsletter from the City of Okayama No. 132  
February 24, 2021

**“The budget to protect and create our common future”**

Hello Citizens, this is OMORI Masao, Mayor of Okayama City.

We announced the initial draft budget for FY 2021, or “the budget to protect and create our common future” on February 15, 2021.

The fiscal year 2021 represents the culmination of what I have been aiming for during the two terms as mayoral position. At the same time, the year is the start of the mid-term plan of the second half of the sixth comprehensive plan and long-term vision of Okayama City, which will set the direction for our urban development.

However, the hardest part in drawing up the budget for the new fiscal year was, after all, how to deal with the COVID-19 infections. The COVID-19 pandemic has had major socio-economic impacts on communities and revealed social distortions including the vulnerability and economic disparity that overcrowded cities entail.

We are being demanded more than ever to correct the concentration of power in Tokyo and realize the SDGs promise “No one will be left behind.” I renewed my pledge to overcome these difficulties together with you citizens and accurately grasp a sign of change in order to pass on a better society to the next generations.

I will make the new fiscal year a year of recovery, ongoingly placing the top priority of city government on countermeasures against COVID-19. We “protect” citizens through making our utmost efforts to strike a balance between containing the spread of the infections and enhancing socio-economic activities. In addition, we “create” the future of Okayama City by advancing the current key policies steadily and developing measures to promote a with- and post-COVID-19 society including changes in people’s values and lifestyles, growing momentum to return to regional cities, etc.

The general account budget of the initial draft budget for the fiscal year 2021 is 344.1 billion yen (up 0.2% compared to the previous year). In the midst of severe financial strains where the city tax revenue has declined significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are striving to ease a revenue shortfall by cutting running expenses and adjusting the progress of projects, thereby keeping the withdrawal from the fund at the same level as the previous year.

While ensuring financial soundness, I am satisfied to have been able to draw up the budget which will contribute to the future development and improvement of the lives of citizens.

Mr. MATSUSHITA Konosuke had chosen “persons who have good luck” when he had had to hire new employees. I also heard from those involved that these “persons who have good luck” are ones who are able to think positively even when they face hardships. I suppose what Mr. MATSUSHITA Konosuke wanted to actually say is that when you are faced with unexpected difficulties, it is important for you to calmly analyze the situation and remain flexible in order to overcome the difficulties and continue to take on challenges. As a result, those with good luck can turn even tough times into opportunities.

Right now when the whole world is in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, I take his words as cheering message to us. Therefore, I am determined to take on the challenges to overcome aggressively and boldly, while responding to the demands of the new era, so that I can “protect and create” the future of Okayama City.

Please refer to the following websites for the initial budget for the fiscal 2021 in detail.

**<PDF> Highlights of the initial budget for FY 2021**

<https://www.city.okayama.jp/shisei/cmsfiles/contents/0000028/28212/001.pdf>

**<PDF> Outline of the initial budget for FY 2021**

<https://www.city.okayama.jp/shisei/cmsfiles/contents/0000025/25283/R3gaiyou.pdf>