

Kenji's City Development Promotion Project



Background and Reason for the Project

Kenji Miyazawa (1896-1933) is a well-known Japanese writer still beloved by a lot of people thanks to his works such as “The Night of the Milky Way Train” and “Gauche the Cellist”. Kenji, who was born in Hanamaki, named this region “Ihatobu”, and was involved in studies in various fields including agriculture, science, art and religion, as well as creative activities, and he left many great works as his legacy. His works and thoughts are still supported by many people and have a great influence on the creative activities of artists and creators in various fields of study. Hanamaki City, Kenji’s birthplace, wishes to actively promote city development by honouring his achievement and disseminating knowledge about attractions related to him and Hanamaki, where he grew up. “Being proud that the city is Kenji Miyazawa’s birthplace and making the city a place where you can feel his presence” is one of the goals of Hanamaki City’s City Development Comprehensive Plan, the basic plan of the city. Kenji’s City Development Promotion Project is a major project to promote such city development to utilise Kenji’s legacy, and was established in the fiscal year 2012 to efficiently achieve objectives by integrating Kenji-related projects run by different divisions and organisations in the city government.

Project Aims

The project is to aim to develop a city where Hanamaki’s local citizens are proud of being born in the same city that Kenji was born and grew up in, and want to continue living there, while also being a place where people from other cities can feel Kenji’s legacy and want to visit and come back again.

Project Outline

The project is promoted from four different perspectives: People, Events, Townscape, and Goods.

- ◆ People –Provide opportunities to learn about Kenji (people development)
 - 1.Miyazawa Kenji Award/ Ihatobu Award (award impressive study, review, creation and practice activities under the name of Kenji)
 - 2.Seminars about Kenji/ Kenji’s World (Visiting classes that introduce Kenji’s works in an easy to understand manner), Kenji’s World Workshop (Workshop to “Explore Places Related to Kenji’s Works”)
 - 3.Special exhibition at Kenji Miyazawa Memorial Museum (exhibits original copies of Kenji’s works, etc.)

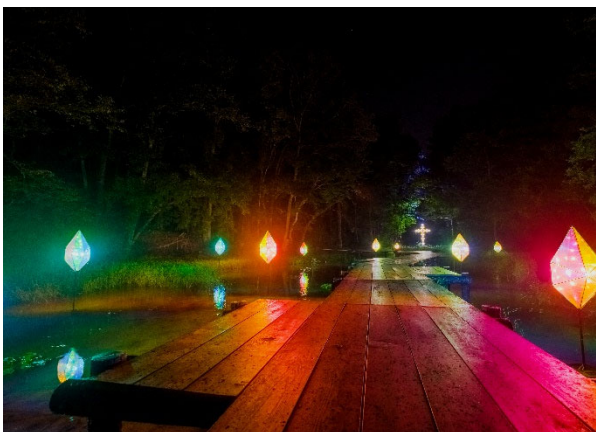
◆ Events –Increasing people’s interaction by holding events

1.Miyazawa Kenji Dowa Mura (Village of Fairy Tales) Forest Illumination (An event where a modern art group sets up stained-glass-like objects, created based on the image of Kenji’s fairy tale works in the rich natural surroundings of the facility, established with the motif of Kenji’s fairy tales and lights projected through the objects to create a fantastic world full of Kenji’s works.)

2.Ihatobu Festival (An event that invites creators and artists active on the front lines of art as guests, introduces their connections with various art and the world of Kenji’s works through talk shows, live performances, and movies screenings.)

3.Fairy Tale Grand Prize Competition for Japan’s High School Students (solicits fairy tales from high school students in Japan and gives awards.)

4.Miyazawa Kenji Creative Art Performances (shows Kenji’s plays by groups actively taking part in theatrical performances)



Dowa Mura (Village of Fairy Tales) at night



Ihatobu Festival

◆ Townscape –Development of a city where you feel the presence of Kenji

1.Kenji Art Street (solicits paintings themed on the world of Kenji’s works, from inside and outside the city, and exhibits the best ones on monuments placed along the street between Shin-Hanamaki Station and Kenji Miyazawa Memorial Museum)

◆ Goods –Products developed as a tool to distribute information and enhance public relations

1.Kenji’s Event Calendar (creates a calendar including information on places related to Kenji, event schedules and souvenirs)

Features and Innovations

◆ Planning and implementation for each project are carried out under collaboration between citizens’ groups and individuals which engage in activities themed on Kenji Miyazawa, and private groups including art associations, agricultural cooperative associations, chambers of commerce, and tourism associations to promote the development of a city that utilises

Kenji's legacy.

- ◆ To enhance the distribution of Kenji-related information, Hanamaki City has established a dedicated website for Kenji-related information on the official city website. It has links with SNS to allow people to easily obtain information such as Kenji-related events from inside and outside the city and has resulted in improving the convenience of users.

Results of the Project

The project leads to the development of an environment where citizens have opportunities to learn the works and thoughts of Kenji on a daily basis. Also, more people are visiting large events every year including Miyazawa Kenji Dowa Mura (Village of Fairy Tales) Forest Illumination and Ihatobu Festival, resulting in new fans of Kenji and increasing people's interaction.

Issues, Problems and Responses

- ◆ Promotion of collaboration with citizens and Kenji-related groups
The project promotes collaboration between businesses and explores the launching of new businesses by promoting information sharing and opinion exchange in the Kenji's City Development committee, consisting of groups which engage in activities themed on Kenji Miyazawa, intellectuals, arts and

culture educational groups, agricultural, industrial and commercial groups, and tourism related groups.

Future Developments (expected effects and project vision and issues)

- ◆ Increasing of opportunities for people to enjoy attractions connected to Kenji by enhancing Kenji-related projects
Hanamaki City would like to respond to changes over time while maintaining the image of Kenji, and implement projects and promote information sharing to acquire new enjoyment from Kenji's works.

Reference URL

<https://www.city.hanamaki.iwate.jp/miyazawa/kenji/index.html>

Contact

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Terminologies and Coined Terms Used

Ihatobu: Name of the fantasy world created by Kenji Miyazawa. An advertising flyer in the fairy tale "The Restaurant That Has Many Orders" says "Ihatobu is a name of an area" and "it refers to Iwate Prefecture in Japan as a dreamland."