

# Hirosaki City

Creating attractive communities with the help of residents



## Situation



•A wide variety of issues and the diversification of citizens' needs has made it difficult to manage administration appropriately. So, it is necessary to promote a wide range of citizens' activities for community renovation, through role sharing and cooperation between citizens and local governments.

•Mayor Noriyuki Kasai launched a Citizen Participation System for Community Renovation Financed by 1% of Municipal Tax Revenue in June 2011 for assisting specific projects.

## Intervention



•This system is a subsidy system launched in fiscal 2011 that is open to applications from members of the public. Using the equivalent of 1% of individual municipal tax revenue, the system partially finances the expenses of community renovation measures undertaken by citizens.

•Any citizen who meets the eligibility standards can apply for subsidies under the system, and the municipal government decides whether to subsidise proposed projects after open reviews by a screening committee consisting of 15 citizens selected mainly under an open application method.

•This system supports the efforts of civic activity groups, including neighbourhood associations, nonprofit organisations and volunteer groups, to solve local challenges and revitalise communities under their own initiatives.

## Impact



•The number of projects assisted by the subsidy system was 23 in fiscal 2011, 43 in fiscal 2012, 50 in fiscal 2013, 57 in fiscal 2014 and 42 in fiscal 2015. An example is below.

-Apple production in coexistence with owls

Local farmers' group raised owls, a natural predator of mice, by setting up nest boxes at apple farms, to tackle serious damage to apples by mice.

•After using the subsidy system, some groups continued their projects by accepting donations and other forms of assistance, indicating the effectiveness of the system in linking people and expanding the power of citizens.