



Vol. 251
April
2012

Konnichiwa!

NAGAOKA

International Affairs Division, Nagaoka City Office
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E-mail: intlexchange@city.nagaoka.lg.jp
URL: <http://www.city.nagaoka.niigata.jp/dpage/kokubun/chikyuhiroba>

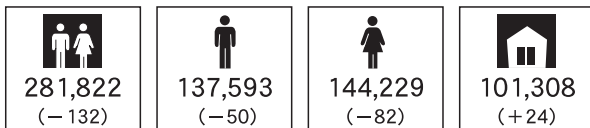


A shot of white chrysanthemum-shaped fireworks was dedicated as a memorial flower to the night sky over Honolulu in memory of the victims of the Pearl Harbor attack and the air raid on Nagaoka, in the pursuit of everlasting world peace, and in promotion of friendship between Japan and the U.S.A.

Our Thoughts for the Pursuit of Peace Blooming in Honolulu, Hawaii

On March 4th (Honolulu time), approximately 1,500 shots of Nagaoka’s fireworks were launched off of the shores of Waikiki Beach. Spectators crowded on the beach and in the vicinity burst into cheers and applauded the spectacular show with our message of “Sending out to the World Our Prayer for the Pursuit of Peace.”

Population and Households
As of March 1, 2012
(compared to the previous month)



Major Features:

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The Cities of Nagaoka and Honolulu United as Sister Cities A Historic Step toward Strengthening Ties of Friendship between Japan and the U.S.A.



Mayor Peter Carlisle Mayor Tamio Mori

Stressing the motto “We will come together in efforts to secure an everlasting peaceful world,” Nagaoka City established a sister city affiliation with the City and County of Honolulu. The official signing ceremony was held at the Mission Memorial Hall in Honolulu, Hawaii on March 2nd, 2012.

In 1941, the military base at Pearl Harbor was severely damaged by an attack commanded by Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, whose hometown is Nagaoka. There was an air raid by the American Air Forces on Nagaoka in 1945. Despite the tragic history of war experienced by our cities, we are now coming together, which can be a significant message to the world for the pursuit of peace.

The Nagaoka-Honolulu Sister City Signing Ceremony



Mayor Peter Carlisle and Mayor Tamio Mori stressed that both cities will work together not only for the pursuit of peace but also in the areas of education, tourism, culture, and business. Approximately 150 civic delegates from Nagaoka also attended the ceremony and witnessed the historic event.

Cultural Exchange Program



During the Honolulu Festival, the Hula Phoenix Nagaoka, a hula group from Nagaoka, added the flavor of Nagaoka to one of the most exciting events in Honolulu with their original hula of Nagaoka’s *Ôhanabi Ondo*, a grand fireworks song.

Sending out to the World



Mayor Mori and Mr. Ôbayashi (the director of the film depicting the story of Nagaoka’s fireworks) led the parade as Grand Marshals during the Honolulu Festival, promoting the establishment of the sister city partnership and Nagaoka’s fireworks display.

In Memory of the Pearl Harbor Attack Victims



At the shrine room of the USS Arizona Memorial Hall, Mayor Mori presented flowers in honor of the 1,177 victims whose names are all engraved on the wall. Mayor Mori emphasized that recognizing the tragic facts of both sides be the first step toward peace.

In Cooperation



Mr. Satoshi Maruyama (left), the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Admiral Yamamoto *Keigyôkai* (a supportive organization), presented a framed reproduction of Yamamoto’s calligraphy of the Chinese characters “*Gôken*” meaning “Virile” to Mr. Paul Heintz (right), the Education Director of the Arizona Memorial Museum at Pacific Historic Park. Mr. Heintz suggested a possible video conference with the historians from the Arizona Memorial Museum, the Nagaoka War Damage Exhibit Hall, and the Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto Memorial Museum.

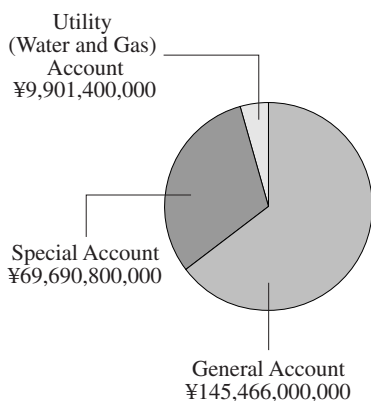


Visitors being amazed by a replica of a fireworks shell at the Nagaoka booth that was set up for the tourism fair in the Honolulu Convention Center

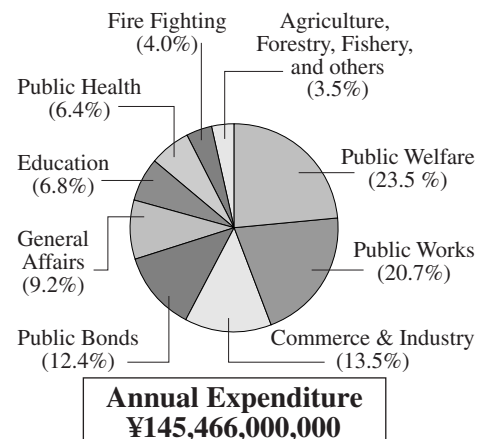
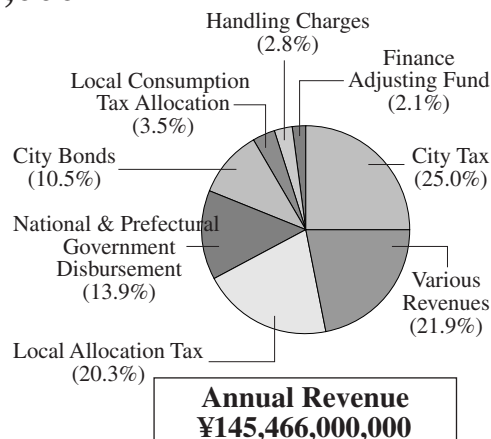
The Municipal Budget for the 2012 Fiscal Year

~ For the City of Nagaoka where the administrative and civic sectors work together to develop a safe and secure community ~

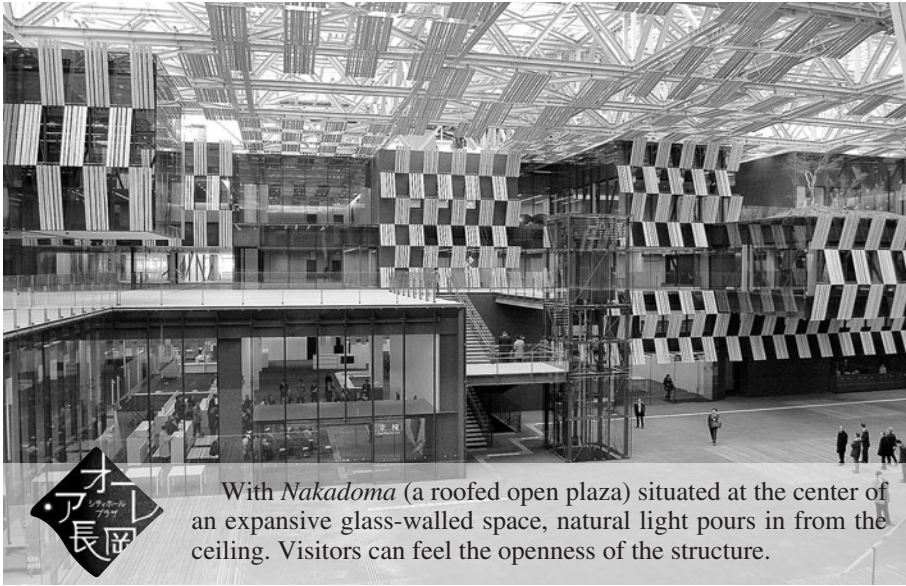
Total ¥225,058,200,000



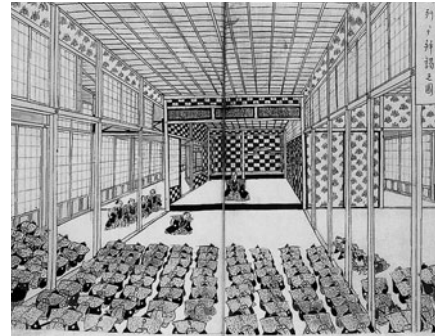
General Account ¥145,466,000,000



City Hall Plaza – *Aôre* Nagaoka Finally Opened on April 1st, 2012!



With *Nakadoma* (a roofed open plaza) situated at the center of an expansive glass-walled space, natural light pours in from the ceiling. Visitors can feel the openness of the structure.



Check patterns were used in the alcove of the former Nagaoka Castle that was situated at the site of the present-day Nagaoka Station from 1618 to 1867. It is said that the geometric patterns symbolize the practical ways of thinking characterized by the people of the Nagaoka *Han* (a feudal domain).



Mayor Tamio Mori

I'm extremely impressed by the harmonious setting of the City Office, the Arena, the City Council Hall, and the spaces for civic activities, which are all situated around the Roofed Open Plaza (*Nakadoma*). Yet, we cannot find any borderlines between them, which suggests that this is not simply an ordinary city hall.

Since "*Aôre*" means "Let's get together" in the local dialect, this is surely the perfect place for promoting good communication. I hear that in the old days ordinary citizens were welcomed to Nagaoka Castle on festive occasions and enjoyed casual communication with the *samurai*, despite the difference in their social ranks.

When I encountered the city's policy that emphasizes that the functions of the City Office should be merged into citizens' activities, I wanted to solidify this philosophy in an architectural expression. Symbolizing collaboration between the administrative and civic sectors, I used many wooden panels to create check patterns on the walls. I was really surprised to find out that similar check patterns were also used in Nagaoka Castle. What a coincidence! The wooden materials, some of which have knots and bark on their surfaces, create a warm atmosphere that welcomes everyone to this complex. I believe the tradition of welcoming ordinary citizens to Nagaoka Castle has helped this construction project to be a great success.



Mr. Kengo Kuma

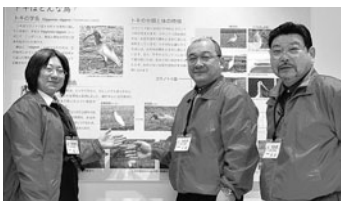
The architect who designed *Aôre* Nagaoka

The Nagaoka City *Toki* (Japanese Crested Ibis) and Nature Learning Hall



In collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment, the Niigata Prefectural Government, and the City of Sado, the City of Nagaoka established the Nagaoka City Regional *Toki* Breeding Center in April 2011 and began its breeding program in October of the same year after receiving two breeding pairs that were transported from Sado Island.

On March 20, 2012, in connection with the beginning of regional *toki* breeding, the learning hall opened to provide a place to learn about the ecology of the *toki* as well as the nature and the environment of the region, focusing on the *toki* as a representative inhabitant.



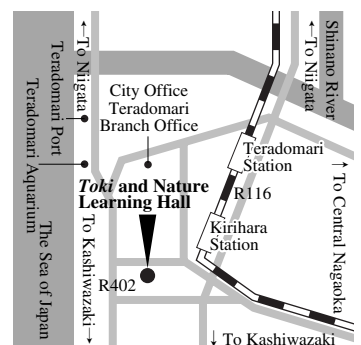
Three tour guides, Ms. Sekikawa, Mr. Okoshi, and Mr. Wada, welcome visitors.

Nagaoka City *Toki* and Nature Learning Hall
2829 Natsudo, Teradomari, Nagaoka City
Phone: 0258-75-3160

Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Closed: Mondays (on Tuesdays in weeks with a national holiday on Monday)

Opens everyday in April, May, July, and August
Admission: Free



The Nagaoka Civic Center

2-2-6 Ôte Street, Nagaoka City (0258-39-2763)

Hours: Every Day Except for the Year-End and the New Year's Holidays

Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays, and National Holidays 9:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.



International Affairs Center (*Chikyû Hiroba*)(1st Floor)

Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Saturdays, Sundays, and National Holidays 9:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Phone: 0258-39-2714 Fax: 0258-39-2715

E-mail: kouryu-c@city.nagaoka.lg.jp



The International Affairs Division moved to the 1st floor of the Nagaoka Civic Center.



Consultations Offered for International Residents

Various services are provided for international residents. The center is a place where international residents can find help and support. The staff members are ready to respond to you either in English or easy Japanese. No appointment is necessary for consultations. Feel free to stop by if you have any difficulties, worries, or questions.

Japanese Learning Programs

Nihongo Kôza

The 1st term of classes for the 2012 fiscal year will be offered from April 2012 to September 2012.

A trial lesson is being offered. Please call ahead.

Morning Classes

* Class I

(Lesson 1 – Lesson 12 of *Minna no Nihongo*)

Tuesdays & Fridays 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. (60 minutes)

* Class II

(Lesson 13 – Lesson 25 of *Minna no Nihongo*)

Tuesdays & Fridays 10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. (60 minutes)

April	3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27	¥1,800
May	1, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, 29	¥1,800
June	1, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22, 26, 29	¥2,100
July	3, 6, 10, 13, 14, 20, 24, 27, 31	¥1,800
Aug.	7, 10, 17, 21, 24, 28, 31	¥1,800
Sept.	4, 7, 11, 14, 21, 25, 28	¥1,500

Sunday Classes

* Class I

(Lesson 1 – Lesson 12 of *Minna no Nihongo*)

10:00 p.m. – 12:00 p.m. (120 minutes)

* Class II

(Lesson 13 – Lesson 25 of *Minna no Nihongo*)

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (120 minutes)

April	1, 8, 15, 22	¥1,200
May	6, 13, 20, 27	¥1,200
June	3, 10, 17, 24	¥1,200
July	1, 8, 22, 29	¥1,200
Aug.	5, 12, 19, 26	¥1,200
Sept.	2, 9, 23, 30	¥1,200

A Guide to Japanese Proficiency Tests in 2012



* J Test

Test Dates: May 20 (Sun.), July 8 (Sun.), Sept. 9 (Sun.), and Nov. 18 (Sun.)

Test Sites: Major Cities in Japan (Niigata Prefecture in July and Nov.)

Test Fee: ¥3,600

Application Period for May 20 Test: By April 25 (Wed.)

Application and Inquiries: <http://j-test.jp/xp/>

J Test Office (03-3633-2212) E-mail: info@jtest.org

* Business Japanese Proficiency Test (BJT)

Test Dates: June 24 (Sun.) and Nov. 18 (Sun.)

Test Sites: Major Cities in Japan

Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Oita

Test Fees: ¥ 7,000

Application Period: By May 18 (Fri.)

Application and Inquiries: Japan Kanji Aptitude Testing Foundation

(03-5205-0333)

e-mail: bjt@kanken.or.jp

* Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)

Test Dates: July 1 (Sun.) for Levels N1 – N5

Dec. 2 (Sun.) for Levels N1 – N5

Test Sites: Major Cities in Japan

Application Period for July 1 Test:

April 2 (Mon.) – May 2 (Wed.)

Test Fee: ¥5,500

Application and Inquiries: JPLT Application Center

(03-6686-2974)

<http://www.jees.or.jp>

Volunteers help international residents

learn Japanese at this free program during the following sessions:

- Sundays 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Fridays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.


Nihongo Hiroba





Kosodate no Eki, Gun Gun

Nagaoka Civic Disaster Prevention Center, 1st Floor
1-3-85 Senzai Phone: 0258-30-1025
Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Every Day Except for Tuesdays
(Open on Tuesday if it is a national holiday)

* Fureai Time	10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Every Day
* Picture Storybook Reading Time	3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Every Day
* Gun Gun “Spot Time”	10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Every Monday
* Healthy Tea Time	1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	April 5 (Thurs.) and May 10 (Thurs.)
* Helpful Tips for Times of Disaster	10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	April 9 (Mon.)
* Craftwork Cafe	10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	April 12 (Thurs.) and 26 (Thurs.)
* Child-Rearing Salon		
Discover Nagaoka and Make Friends	10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	April 19 (Thurs.)
* Happy Birthday Party	10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	April 20 (Fri.)
* Helpful Tips for Toilet Training	10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	April 27 (Fri.)
* Mini-Athletic Meet	10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	May 7 (Mon.)
		
Free Child-Rearing Counseling	10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	May 9 (Wed.) Child-Rearing Advisor

Child-Rearing Support Facilities

Kosodate no Eki, Senshû (Teku Teku)

1-99-6 Senshû Phone: 0258-21-3860
Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Every Day Except for Wednesdays

(Open on Wednesday if it is a national holiday)

- * **Picture Storybook Reading Time**
Every Monday 2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- * **Nakayoshi Time**
Every Friday 10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
- * **Teku Teku Mini Concert**
Every Friday 1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- * **Birthday Party**
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
April 9 (Mon.) and May 8 (Tues.)
- * **Playing Games from the Old Days**
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
April 10 (Tues.) and May 7 (Mon.)
- * **Wai Wai Chatting**
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
April 12 (Thurs.), 26 (Thurs.), and May 10 (Thurs.)
- * **A Week for Viewing Cherry Blossoms**
April 19 (Thurs.) – 24 (Tues.)
- * **3rd Anniversary Celebration and Concert**
10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. May 5 (Sat.)
- Free Child-Rearing Counseling** 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
April 17 (Tues.) Nutritionist
April 26 (Thurs.) Experienced Mothers
Temporary Day-Care for Preschool-Aged Children:
¥300/hour



Kids' Plaza (Chibikko Hiroba)

Phoenix Ôte West 2nd Floor and 3rd Floor
2-5 Ôte Street Phone: 0258-39-2775
Hours 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Every Day

- * **Story Telling Time**
Every Day 11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
Kamishibai (Giant Picture Card Story)
April 19 (Thurs.)
- * **Time for Chibikko Kids and Birthday Party**
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
April 4 (Wed.), 11 (Wed.), 18 (Wed.), 25 (Wed.), and May 9 (Wed.)
Birthday Party: April 25 (Wed.)
- * **Wai Wai Chatting** 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
April 10 (Tues.), 24 (Tues.), and May 1 (Tues.)
- * **Smiley Mini-Athletic Day** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
April 12 (Thurs.), 22 (Sun.), and May 2 (Wed.)
- * **Picture Storybooks for Expecting Mothers**
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
April 20 (Fri.)
- * **Let's Play with Blocks** 10:45 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.
April 21 (Sat.)
- * **Talking with Babies** 10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
April 26 (Thurs.)
- * **Making Koinobori (Carp-Shaped Streamers)**
9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
May 2 (Wed.) – 5 (Sat.)
- * **Celebrating Children's Day** 10:45 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.
May 5 (Sat.)



- Free Child-Rearing Counseling** 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
April 6 (Fri.) Nursery School Teacher
May 10 (Thurs.) Child-Rearing Advisor
Temporary Day-Care for Preschool-Aged Children:
¥300/hour

A Guide to Cherry Blossom Viewing (*Ohanami*)



Fukushimae Canal

Symbolizing the arrival of spring, cherry blossom viewing is one of the most popular spring events. There are many cherry blossom viewing spots in Nagaoka City and Niigata Prefecture. According to a cherry blossom forecast, cherry blossoms this year will come out as usual or a little later than usual. Here are some spots we'd like to recommend to you.



Yûkyûzan Park

Cherry Blossom Viewing Spots in Nagaoka City:



The Drooping Cherry Tree in the Courtyard of the Nagaoka Institute of Design (NID)



The approximately 11-meter tall drooping cherry tree, estimated to be nearly 100 years old, is splendid swaying in the spring breeze. The tree once stood deep

in the mountains of Saku City, Nagano Prefecture. It was transported to Nagaoka after being carefully dug out with a traditional method known as *nemawashi*, which took almost two years to complete. Being a symbolic tree at the Nagaoka Institute of Design, the cherry tree in full bloom welcomes students to the campus every spring.

(1) Yûkyûzan Park

Visitors can enjoy nearly 2,500 cherry trees in full bloom at Yûkyûzan Park, where “*Sakura Matsuri*”, a special cherry blossom festival, will be held from Friday, April 13th to Sunday, May 6th. Over 500 lanterns illuminate the blossoms at night (6:00 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.) and create a mystical fantasy world.

There will be a special event entitled “*Oishiimono Hiroba*,” a plaza for regional specialties, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 21st and Sunday, April 22nd. Many stores will serve dishes using locally grown or produced ingredients.

If you are driving, please remember that the traffic around the park is usually heavily congested and parking lots are

full during the season, especially over the weekends.

Free shuttle bus services between the park and the parking lot of the Municipal Ski Area are available from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on April 15th (Sun.), 21st (Sat.), 22nd (Sun.), and 28th (Sat.).

(2) Fukushimae Canal

Nearly 170 time-honored cherry trees, planted almost 90 years ago in the 1920s, display a spectacular view of gorgeous blossoms. Petals falling on the water are extremely beautiful and fascinate many visitors every season. Come and enjoy the sight of illuminated blossoms reflecting off the water.

(3) Cherry Blossom Lane on the Shinano Riverbank

(4) Kaki River (*Kakigawa*)

(5) Nagaoka Technical High School Grounds (*Nagaoka Kôgyô Kôkô Gurando*)

(6) Nagaoka University of Technology Campus (*Nagaoka Gijutsu Kagaku Daigaku Kônai*)

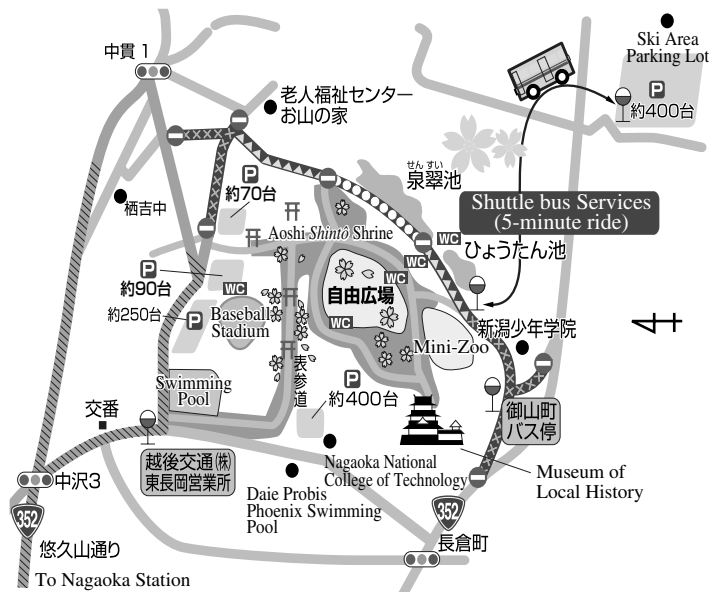
(7) The Senshûgahara Furusato no Mori Area

(8) Imamiya Park (*Heijima-machi*)

Many cherry trees are planted all around the park. It would be wonderful to enjoy playing baseball or soccer and having barbecues surrounded by beautiful cherry trees.

(9) Kôrinji Temple (*Kumoide*)

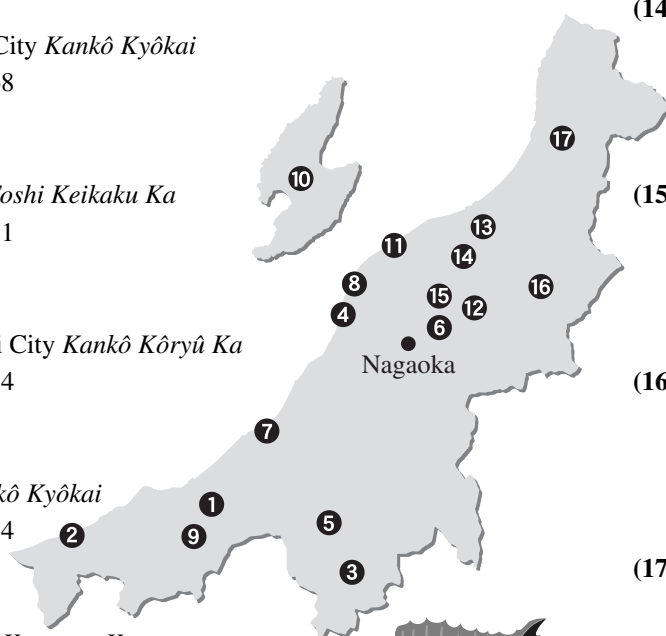
This temple is well-known for its time-honored *shidarezakura* (a drooping cherry tree).



Spots in Nagaoka City and Niigata Prefecture

Cherry Blossom Viewing Spots in Niigata Prefecture

- (1) **Takada Park**
Jôetsu City
Information: Jôetsu *Kankô* Convention *Kyôkai*
025-543-2777
- (2) **Cherry Blossom Lane on the Himekawa Riverbank**
Itoigawa City
Information: Itoigawa City *Kankô Kyôkai*
025-552-1742
- (2) **Miyama Park**
Itoigawa City
Information: Itoigawa City *Kankô Kyôkai*
025-552-1742
- (3) **Yuzawa Central Park**
Yuzawa Town
Information: Yuzawa Culture Center
025-784-1511
- (4) **10km Cherry Blossom Lane on Ôkôzu *Bunsui* Riverbank**
Tsubame City
Information: Tsubame City *Shôkô Kankô Ka*
0256-63-4131
- (5) **Kizakura (Yellow Cherry Blossoms) no Oka Park**
Tôkamachi City
Information: Tôkamachi City *Kankô Kyôkai*
025-763-3168
- (6) **Ôsakiyama Park**
Sanjô City
Information: Sanjô City *Toshi Keikaku Ka*
0256-34-5511
- (7) **Akasakayama Park**
Kashiwazaki City
Information: Kashiwazaki City *Kankô Kôryû Ka*
0257-21-2334
- (8) **Yahiko Shrine**
Yahiko Village
Information: Yahiko *Kankô Kyôkai*
0256-94-3154
- (9) **Kyôzukayama Park**
Myôkô City
Information: Myôkô City *Kensetsu Ka*
0255-72-5111
- (10) **Mano Park**
Sado City
Information: Sado *Kankô Kyôkai*
0259-27-5000
- (11) **Yasuragi Riverbank**
Niigata City
Information: Niigata City, *Chûdô* Ku *Kensetsu Ka*
025-223-7403
- (11) **Toyosaka Gas Lamp Cherry Blossom Lane**
Niigata City
Information: Niigata City Kita Ku *Shôkô Kankô Ka*
025-387-1000
- (11) **Toyanogata Park**
Niigata City
Information: Toyanogata *Kôen Kanri Jimusho*
025-286-1080
- (12) **Muramatsu Park**
Gosen City
Information: Muramatsu *Shôkô Kankô Ka*
0250-58-7181
- (13) **Cherry Blossom Lane on Kajikawa Riverbank**
Shibata City
Information: Shibata City *Kankô Shinkô Ka*
0254-22-3101
- (13) **Shibata Jôshi Park**
Shibata City
Information: Shibata City Machizukuri *Shinkô Kôsha*
0254-26-6789
- (14) **Hyôko Suikin Park**
Agano City
Information: Hyôko *Kanri Jimusho*
0250-62-2690
- (15) **Kamoyama Park**
Kamo City
Information: Kamo City *Toshi Keikaku Ka*
0256-52-0080
- (16) **Kirinzan Park**
Aga Town
Information: Agamachi *Kikaku Kankô Ka*
0254-92-4766
- (17) **Shojôji Park**
Murakami City
Information: Murakami City *Kankô Kyôkai*
0254-53-2258
- (17) **Murakami Jôshi**
Murakami City
Information: Murakami City *Kankô Kyôkai*
0254-53-2258

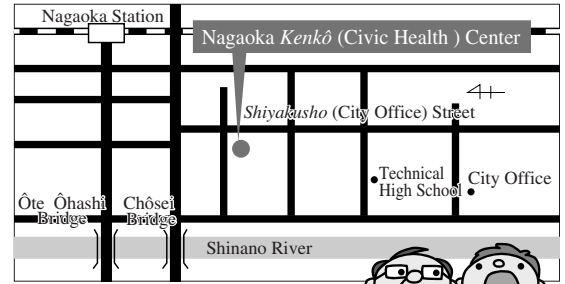


Major Emergency Medical Facilities

Major General Hospitals

Nagaoka Chûô Sôgô Byôin (Central General Hospital)	0258-35-3700
Nagaoka Sekijûji Byôin (Red Cross Hospital)	0258-28-3600
Tachikawa Sôgô Byôin (General Hospital)	0258-33-3111
Nagaoka Kenkô (Civic Health) Center	0258-32-5000

2-5-1 Nishi Senju



Nagaoka Kenkô (Civic Health) Center



Facilities	Departments	Hours
Clinic for Sundays, Holidays, and Nights (0258-37-1199) For obstetrics and gynecology (<i>san fujin ka</i>), the staff at this facility will give information about which clinic is assigned for each Sunday or holiday.	Internal Medicine (<i>Naika</i>)	(Monday – Friday) 6:45 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. (Sundays and Holidays) 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
	Pediatrics (<i>Shônika</i>)	(Sundays and Holidays) 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
	Surgery (<i>Geka</i>)	(Sundays and Holidays) 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Dental Clinic for Sundays and Holidays (0258-33-9644)	Dentistry (<i>Shika</i>)	(Sundays and Holidays) 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Chûetsu Center for Children's Emergency Treatment (0258-86-5099)	Pediatrics (<i>Shônika</i>)	(Monday – Saturday) 6:45 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

To all foreign nationals residing in Japan

A New Resident Registration System for Foreign Residents Will Begin July 2012!

Beginning on Monday, July 9, 2012, a new residency management system will start. This will replace the Alien Registration System. What exactly is the new residency management system?

1. A resident card will be issued.
2. The period of stay will be extended to a maximum of 5 years.
3. The re-entry permit system will be changed.
4. The alien registration system will be abolished.

Copies of information booklets are available at the Nagaoka City International Affairs Center, *Chikyû Hiroba*, in the Nagaoka Civic center on Ôte Street.

Atmospheric Radiation Monitoring Information

<http://www.kishou.city.nagaoka.niigata.jp/Radiation>

Apology

The May issue of *Konnichiwa Nagaoka* will be published on May 15th at the latest. The reason for this delay is that there will not be sufficient business days during Golden Week, a week full of national holidays. The editor would like to apologize for any inconveniences that may be caused by the delay.

Information from the Niigata Labor Bureau

Consultation Hours:

Thursdays 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (English and Japanese)

(Please call us in advance to make sure the consultants are available.)

Department of Inspection (*Kantoku Ka*), Labor Bureau 3F

1-56 Kawagishi-chô, Niigata City 951-8588

Phone: 025-234-5922

Fax: 025-234-3151 (Please write, "Attention to *Kantoku Ka*".)

Q&A for resolving conflicts between employers and non-Japanese employees from abroad

Q: I got a visa allowing me to work in Japan, and will begin to work for the first time. What should I be careful about when signing a contract?

A: A labor contract is an important criterion for judgment in solving problems. In the new law concerning labor contracts, it is stipulated that when concluding a labor contract between a worker and an employer, both parties should reach an agreement on equal footing, and both parties should do their best to clarify the content of the contract in writing.

Under the Labor Standards Law in Japan, which is applied to all workers in Japan, the following conditions must be made clear in written form to the worker when an employer asks him or her to sign a labor contract.

- 1) Matters concerning the term of employment
- 2) Matters concerning the place of employment and the content of duties
- 3) Work hours, whether or not any work must be done outside of predetermined work hours, rest periods, rest days, leave, and changes in shifts for employees who work two or three shifts
- 4) Determination of wages (including retirement allowance, etc.), methods of wage calculation and payment, items concerning the closing of wage accounting, payment, and timing of payment
- 5) Matters concerning retirement, including reasons for dismissal

It would be preferable to get any other conditions in writing as well.