

Recovery Plan of Tsuchiyu Onsen as "Home of Health, Hot Springs & Kokeshi Dolls"

PROJECT ENTITY: Tsuchiyu Onsen Town Planning Council

LOCATION: Fukushima, Fukushima

Background and progress

Tsuchiyu Onsen is a hot spring tourist destination located approximately 16 km southwest of Fukushima City, the prefectural capital, at 450 meters elevation inside the Bandai-Asahi National Park, and is known for making traditional carved *kokeshi* dolls. In March 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake and the subsequent accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant damaged the prefecture's image and caused a dramatic drop in tourists, forcing five of 16 accommodations in the town to go out of business. In addition, demographic aging and population decline accelerated and pushed the ratio of residents over 65 to a high level of 52%.

About the project

The Tsuchiyu Onsen Town Planning Council is composed of 17 organizations including the local hot spring association, tourism association, and local neighborhood councils, and is spearheaded by Fukushima City and Genki Up Tsuchiyu Co.,Ltd., which was established with capital from two of the council members.

At the request of the local community, Fukushima City established a public bath, community, and tourist center in a former hotel, and has also invested in infrastructure including roads and a park, which are planned to be completed in March 2019.

Genki Up Tsuchiyu Co.,Ltd. is experimenting with a multi-pronged business model to regenerate the hot spring town by returning proceeds to the local

Facing this depressed condition, locals resolved to start the Tsuchiyu Onsen Recovery and Regeneration Council (later the Tsuchiyu Onsen Town Planning Council) not simply in order to return things to how they were before the disaster, but to turn the town into a model for hot spring resorts nationwide. The plan is being implemented after discussion of topics including creating a model region to show the future of hot springs, adapting to demographic aging and population decline, developing an ecotown using renewable energy, public-private-academic collaboration, and establishing an organization to support planning.

area from new ventures including geothermal power generation, shrimp cultivation, and hydropower generation at an earthen dam.

These projects have generated new industry and employment in the local area, and led to an increase in visitors by creating opportunities for tourism and educational experiences. Additionally, once its contract to sell electricity exclusively to Tohoku Electric Power Co.,Inc. expires, Genki Up Tsuchiyu Co.,Ltd. is considering providing inexpensive electrical power to the local area. It also aims to introduce megasolar and biomass electricity generation, creating a sustainable ecotown that utilizes all of the area's renewable energy.



A planning project improved the scenic appearance of the hot spring town



A binary cycle geothermal power plant is a focus of the town plan



Public bath opened in a renovated hotel



Event to catch shrimp cultivated using heat from the hot spring



A tour of renewable energy facilities