

Sakai City Hall Observation Lobby

The Observation Lobby, located on the twenty-first floor of Sakai City Hall, offers a 360-degree view of Sakai, the greater Osaka skyline, and the area's many *kofun*, or ancient burial mounds. From this vantage point it is easy to see how human hands—both ancient and modern—have shaped the landscape.

Massive *kofun* dot the city, patches of green in an otherwise highly urban part of Osaka prefecture. These *kofun* were constructed for kings and other members of the elite during the fourth and fifth centuries CE. In 2019, forty-nine *kofun* in Osaka were given World Heritage status as the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group.

On clear days the Akashi Kaikyō Bridge, which connects Kobe and Awaji Island, can be seen to the west across Osaka Bay. It is the longest suspension bridge in the world, with a central span length of 1,991 meters. The visible shoreline of Osaka Bay is also artificial, when the *kofun* were built, much of the land was under water.

Signs in Japanese and English that explain the view from the windows have been posted around the Observation Lobby. On most days, a number of volunteer guides gather in the lobby to help visitors understand what they can see.