

Managing policy measure implementation as specified in the Action Plan

Shizuoka Universal Design Action Plan

To promote universal design measures throughout the entire prefectural government, the Universal Design Promotion Headquarters as created the Shizuoka Universal Design Action Plan, which systematically compiles the major policy measures starting from fiscal 2000. To ensure the continued steady implementation of the Action Plan, the division monitors how well it is being implemented each fiscal year, and the Universal Design Committee (comprised of various universal design experts) verifies and assesses the work to continually ensure that effective measures are implemented.

Term of Shizuoka Universal Design Action Plan: Fiscal 2000 through fiscal 2004

Major measures

- Spread awareness of universal design concepts.
- Create universally accessible town environments.
- Create products that are universally easy to use.
- Provide services and information tailored to universal use.
- Promote self-sufficiency and coexistence among Shizuoka residents.

Term of Shizuoka Universal Design 2010 Fiscal 2005 through fiscal 2010

Major measures

- Spread awareness of universal design concepts.
- Create universally accessible town environments.
- Create products that are universally easy to use.
- Provide services and information tailored to universal use.
- Promote self-sufficiency and coexistence among Shizuoka residents.

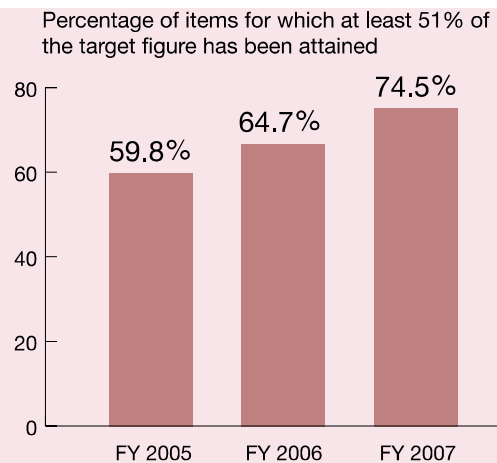
Priority items

- Promote universal design implementation by businesses.
- Spread universal design awareness among children.
- Address the needs of seniors.

Progress management

The Shizuoka Universal Design Headquarters manages Action Plan progress by setting targets (102 items) and determining how well initiatives are being implemented through internal assessments (monitoring) and external assessments (verification and evaluations).

(Shizuoka Universal Design 2010 Action Plan)



Universal design staff training

Training staff of each level

To implement universal design in all the wide-ranging areas of the prefectural government, it is important for each staff member to understand the principles of universal design, and actively apply them to the work they are in charge of. The prefectural government has therefore trained managers and new staff members on universal design by presenting concrete examples of universal design concepts. Along with this conceptual training, staff members have also received hands-on training. Participants have inspected government facilities by taking part in simulations designed to let them experience life from the perspectives of the disabled, seniors, and pregnant women. This training is designed to help participants notice and improve various inconveniences.

Overview of staff training

- Manager training, staff training (for each level), new employee training (provided each year)
- Hands-on simulations to check for inconveniences in prefectural government offices or branch agency facilities

■ Training at townships and branch agency facilities

Universal design training has been included in the training for new township staff and similar events held at general government offices throughout Shizuoka. These offices have also hosted training for branch agency staff that includes an overview of universal design and examples of its implementation by the prefecture.

■ Immediate facility upgrades and improvements

Eliminating entrance level differences discovered during training simulations and other facility upgrades that can be done within the budget are carried out immediately. Facility upgrades requiring new budget measures (such as installing multipurpose toilets or elevators) are budgeted for and carried out in order of urgency.



Contributor article

Universal design staff training

Atsuko Kamoshida

Chairperson of the Accessible Design Foundation of Japan and former Vice-Chairperson of the Shizuoka Universal Design Discussion Group

About ten years ago, the Lt. Governor asked me to give a presentation on universal design (UD) at a meeting hall on the 20th floor of a prefectural government office. The room was packed with the Governor, Lt. Governor, Chief of Police, other top members of the prefectural government and representatives of Shizuoka townships. The Design Center staff assisted me that day by providing various exhibits, allowing me to make my examples as concrete as possible. To provide an easily understood example, I handed out shampoo and rinse sets to all the audience members to use as explanatory materials upon returning to their departments.

I think it was around this time that Shizuoka Universal Design started getting underway. Its success has been due solely to the ten years of ongoing efforts of Governor Ishikawa and then- Lt. Governor Sakamoto, who were among the first in Japan to approach UD head-on and work on its broad-based implementation in government. Shizuoka's UD promotion efforts have made it a noted and valuable role model among Japan's prefectures. But as diversity among individuals rapidly increases, UD's next ten years will undoubtedly call for an even more fine-tuned, in-depth approach. Ultimately, respect for human rights is the driving force of UD. I hope we do not lose sight of that fact.

Spreading awareness of universal design among Shizuoka residents

To popularize the notion of universal design, it is important to have Shizuoka residents and businesses properly understand the terminology and its meanings. The Shizuoka Prefectural Government helps spread awareness of universal design by organizing various events and creating media. Examples include the prefectural newsletter, pamphlets, the website, symposiums, and TV shows. We also offer outside seminars and hands-on classes in response to demand from elementary schools, junior high schools, Shizuoka residents' organizations and businesses.

Universal Design Idea Competition

Universal Design Idea Competition has been held every year since fiscal 2000. It gives participants of all ages the chance to bring to life their own ideas on universal design. There are two award categories: a general category, and a category for children of up to junior high school age. The children's category calls for inspirational universal design ideas regardless of feasibility, while the general category calls for highly feasible, previously unreleased universal design ideas. In fiscal 2008, a third award category was added, to recognize the activities of companies and organizations working to promote universal design in Shizuoka.

Initially, the children's category consisted mainly of entries such as posters illustrating the principles of universal design, but as the contest has progressed, the number of entries addressing real-life problems has increased. Entries have included an easy-open PET bottle cap, and a bedside mat for seniors that faintly illuminates the floor when the user gets up during the night, enabling safer navigation. Winning entries in the general category have included products suitable for mass-market release. Examples include a measure that provides measurement results as voice messages or digital readouts, and a bathroom sink designed for easy use by family members of all ages.



Award ceremony (December 16, 2008)



Contributor article

Universal Design Idea Competition helps shape Shizuoka's future

Masaaki Shiraishi

Universal Socio-Engineering Research Institute;
head of the Shizuoka Universal Design Award judging panel

The Universal Design Idea Competition has immeasurable value and potential since it is the world's only universal design award with heavy participation by businesses, children and students. To date, it has attracted a total of 8,359 entries, and now that most of the contestants for the first year's awards have reached adulthood, it is becoming an event that could help shape Shizuoka's future.

The quality of entries started improving in 2005, when they made the leap from barrier-free-based ideas, to full-scale universal design ideas. Winning designs have recently improved to the point where they are actually anticipating ideas that have been the subject of patent applications in the EU. These entries owe their success entirely to the foresight of the Shizuoka Prefectural Government, the teamwork of organizations committed to finding intelligent solutions, and the dedication of the contestants' families and school staff. Now, the next challenge may be to find ways to develop the resources of ideas and intelligence generated by universal design's continually growing recognition and influence. Shizuoka's association with universal design will no doubt give it global acclaim one day, when its unique identity will be a source of pride for residents.

Shizuoka Prefecture's website and email magazine

The large-scale flow of people, products and information around the world is one of the characteristics of the 21st century. Meanwhile, the aging world population is starting to pose several difficult problems for social systems still adapted to the 20th century. To solve them, planners in Japan and around the world are increasingly looking to universal design principles as a way to create accessible communities for seniors, the disabled, foreigners, and all demographics.

Shizuoka is responding to this trend by using the Internet as a way to deliver up-to-date information to both Japanese and world users. Our website presents universal design concepts and examples of advanced universal design implementation by public facilities and businesses. It has a list of guidelines and manuals created by the prefecture, and information on courses and other events offered. Children can enjoy special pages just for them, with fun quiz questions teaching universal design concepts. The site has always had English pages for non-Japanese users, and Korean pages were added in fiscal 2007.

Users particularly interested in universal design can join the Shizuoka UD Network, a group run by the Shizuoka Prefectural Government for information-sharing and networking among the universal design workforce. The prefecture is the network's organizer. There are currently over 400 members. Members receive regular issues of an email magazine with the latest universal design information, and information on symposiums and presentations.



Contributor article

IT universal design

Chika Sekine

President of UDIT (Universal Design Institute for Information Technology) and
former Shizuoka Universal Design Committee member

No matter how advanced universal design becomes in town planning or product design, all its intended benefits are lost unless the required information reaches the intended recipients in the format needed. Since evaluations and feedback from these recipients will enable further advances in universal design, IT universal design (design elements such as information terminal usability and website accessibility) is extremely important. Some countries have laws governing IT universal design, and it informs the procurement criteria of public institutions and companies.

Shizuoka Prefecture has worked to ensure that information for Shizuoka residents in sources such as its website and publicity materials is designed for universal ease of understanding, and has taken steps to enable two-way communication. I urge Shizuoka to continue its efforts to encourage residents to provide and share information, and to make universal design a procurement criterion for the prefectural government. Only universally accessible information and equipment should be permitted. The government should provide the infrastructure for universal design, and the people should draw on it to share their universal design insights. A 'new public sector' driven by collaboration between the government and the people will become a driving force of the regional community in the 21st century, and IT universal design will provide the platforms for the dialogs needed to solve the issues this community will face.

Guidelines and manuals

To implement universal design in a wide range of areas affecting the daily lives of Shizuoka residents, it is important to document the standards and guidelines to use as its basis. The Shizuoka Prefectural Government is therefore creating several materials for general release, such as implementation manuals tailored to government and private-sector projects, and pamphlets designed to foster the ‘universal design mindset’ among individual residents.

Guides to implementing universal design in various government projects

The Shizuoka Prefectural Government creates and promotes various materials on universal design. Examples include manuals on how to incorporate universal design into public structures to ensure that facilities are designed for universal ease of use, guidelines on creating printed materials that are easy to view and read by seniors and the color-blind, and pamphlets describing items to consider when holding events.

Universal design manuals for different industries

To help make Shizuoka a more livable environment for its residents, businesses are being called upon to implement universal design in their business activities through the products and services they provide. We create pamphlets describing concrete, practical ideas and tips on implementing universal design in the retail, hotel, manufacturing, and construction industries. They are distributed at events such as seminars to promote universal design initiatives by businesses.



The ‘Universal Design Mindset’

As more public facilities (such as roads and buildings) are created and more elevators are installed in railway stations, users are starting to complain of rudeness in public transport facilities and around parking spaces for the disabled.

Practicing the ‘Universal Design Mindset’ is vital for creating a universally livable community. This mindset means yielding to seniors, pregnant women, and others in need, and acting with compassion toward them. We have created a pamphlet on the ‘Universal Design Mindset’ and implemented a public awareness campaign that focuses on encouraging people not to park their cars in spaces reserved for wheelchair users. Along with providing universal design elements in facilities, practicing the ‘Universal Design Mindset’ is an important part of implementing universal design. We have called on Shizuoka residents to practice this mindset in their daily lives.

Universal design in infrastructure

Japan’s aging population is making it increasingly important to design living spaces ensuring that everyone can do what they want safely and securely, and participate fully in the community. Shizuoka is actively implementing universal design in social capital such as roads and public structures.

Roads and sidewalks

When creating roads and sidewalks, planners make a preliminary survey of the space alongside users, to comply with regulations such as the Shizuoka Prefecture Town Planning Ordinance for Public Welfare. They take whatever measures are needed to ensure that the areas of traffic flow will enable ease of movement. For example, they widen sidewalks so that wheelchair users can pass; improve level differences, slopes and gradients; and install elevators and easily understood signboards.

Public construction

Since design from the user’s perspective is the basic principle behind Shizuoka’s public construction, the first steps in constructing public facilities are given particular care. The planners anticipate and analyze the facility’s service characteristics and users to devise a basic plan that addresses issues such as the user traffic flow and equipment required. They then incorporate this plan into a detailed design. Constructing public structures that successfully incorporate universal design elements requires a successful combination of tangible (facilities-based) and intangible (information-based) resources that provide interconnecting benefits enabling ease of use for all users.



Contributor article

Universal design in town planning

Ryoko Kawaguchi

Kawaguchi Urban Planning and Development Offices;
former member of Shizuoka Universal Design Committee

I first encountered the concept of universal design (UD) when I became involved in town planning after starting to work on designing streets and other public spaces. Working on town planning sites has always given me a great sense of job satisfaction. But I was bewildered by the wide range of interests, values, and tastes people have that result in many different ideas and desired features. Various spatial, technical, and economic restrictions only add to the complexity. So I wanted to find ways of uncovering genuinely important town planning goals and sensible ways of approaching them. When I discovered the UD concept of ‘design for everyone,’ it made a lot of sense to me as a universal goal applicable to all projects. Up until then, my approach had been centered around the idea of giving local residents a voice in the construction process, and when I saw that this approach is a crucial part of implementing UD, it gave me the courage of my convictions. My approach to town planning consists of having people from all walks of life put their heads together to increase their collective understanding and come up with the best solutions to the problems at hand. The process does not end with construction—after construction ends, projects are continually improved to bring them closer to UD ideals. I coordinate the methods and approaches used in this process. I am grateful to UD for helping me find my own mode of town planning.

Implementing Universal Design in Prefectural Facilities

To have Shizuoka residents understand and experience the benefits of universal design, the Shizuoka Prefectural Government incorporates it into new and existing prefectural facilities when constructing or renovating them. Universal design is crucial not only when designing facilities, but also when operating, maintaining, and managing them. Shizuoka ensures that facilities enable universal ease of use by taking steps such as installing clear signage and posting staff to provide any help required.

■ **Mt. Fuji Children's World** Universal design has been implemented throughout all facilities. Park roads have gradients of no more than 5%, and the park features recorded guidance information, raised maps for the visually impaired, and wheelchair rental. (Opened in 1999.)

■ **Ogasayama Sports Park** Incorporates universal design into the stadium and arena, as well as the connecting road from the nearest railway station (JR Aino Station) to the park. The park entrance features two staircases, moving walkways, and a small automated monorail, while the front row of the second tier in the stadium has 296 seats for wheelchair users. (Wheelchair access was provided in 2001.)

■ **Shizuoka General Hospital** Extensive facility additions and renovations had made the hospital's signage difficult to understand, so it has been given a universal design upgrade. Numbers have been added to clinical and examination departments for easy understanding by non-Japanese users. Signage has also been redesigned to provide maximum sensory appeal, with elements such as the use of different flooring materials at intersections to allow the visually impaired to determine their location from the floor. (Upgraded in 2002.)

■ **Prefectural housing** Universal design has been incorporated by eliminating level differences and installing elevators, and by placing housing units for seniors and the disabled on first floors. Housing sites have been supplied with ample benches and designed with spaces for interaction to create a comfortable living environment for everyone.

■ Shizuoka Cancer Center (Nagaizumi-cho), Shizuoka Prefectural Fuji Swimming Pools (Fuji), Shizuoka Prefecture Martial Arts Center (Fujieda), Ohiradai High School (Hamamatsu) Universal design has been incorporated into these and other prefectural facilities.



Cross-departmental initiatives

Since universal design is being incorporated into a broad range of areas, implementing it requires not only work by individual departments, but also cross-departmental initiatives by multiple related departments. These cross-departmental initiatives are vital for promoting effective universal design measures designed to meet a wide range of needs among Shizuoka residents. For this reason, the prefecture selects topics of particular relevance to universal design every fiscal year. These topics are studied by teams of relevant department members to enable more valid and effective universal design measures.

< Major projects arising from cross-departmental initiatives >

■ Universal design pamphlets for different industries

To encourage universal design among businesses and organizations, we have created several pamphlets containing ideas and tips for implementation. Each pamphlet is tailored to a different industry, with versions for the retail/distribution, hotel, manufacturing, and construction industries.

■ Parking space campaign

To ensure parking spaces are always available for wheelchair users, we have organized a public awareness campaign designed to increase the general public's understanding of accessible parking.

■ Staff manual

We have created a staff manual describing how to receive visitors at government offices.

■ Garden for Shizuoka residents

Drawing on the themes of farming, employment, and public welfare, we have started a garden for Shizuoka residents to expose the general public to farming and are providing employment assistance for the disabled.



Contributor article

My work on Shizuoka's pamphlet of ideas and tips for retail outlets

Jun Suzuki

Vice-Chief Director of the Japan Universal Fashion Association and former Shizuoka Universal Design Committee member

Whether shopping, dining out, or ordering services, using retail outlets is an indispensable part of daily life, and stores that incorporate UD clearly enrich and add convenience to daily life. I was a member of the team that created Shizuoka's pamphlet of UD ideas and tips for retail outlets. We were facing a daunting task since there were almost no small stores that identified with the label 'barrier-free' or 'UD,' so we decided to change our approach and instead uncover the essence of universal design by looking at stores that are popular with locals. What we found is that the more popular a store is, the more thought has been given to detailed design elements that customers usually does not notice—things such as product and price display methods and approaches to customer service. We saw that customers are loyal to stores that are sensitive to sources of customer inconvenience or dissatisfaction, and stores that make gradual improvements to their facilities or customer service methods become popular over time. Aiming to provide universal satisfaction is a win-win proposition for both retail outlets and their customers.

Shizuoka Universal Design receives worldwide attention

Overseas exchanges

With the rapid aging of the world's population, interest in Shizuoka's universal design measures is spreading outside Japan to North America, Europe and Asian countries. This interest has resulted in several overseas exchanges. Representatives from Shizuoka have been invited to attend presentations by universities and organizations in South Korea, Taiwan, France, and Canada. The prefecture has also hosted inspection and survey groups from countries such as the UK, Australia, and Korea, and accepted internship students from South Korean universities.

Governor addresses IFA conference in Canada

In September 2008, Governor Ishikawa was the only Japanese local government representative invited to speak at the 9th Global Conference of the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) held in Montreal, Canada. The governor delivered the keynote address, speaking on the topic of creating a livable world for everyone through universal design. The address included examples of universal design implementation in public facilities and businesses in Shizuoka over the past ten years. Since Japan is renowned for its rapidly aging population, conference participants were interested to learn of the universal design measures being promoted by its local governments.



CLAIR presentation in France

In February 2008, Shizuoka was invited to a project organized by the Paris branch of the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR), in which Japanese government organizations at the forefront of the universal design movement were asked to present their universal design initiatives. Representatives of the prefecture presented Shizuoka's universal design measures at an applied training center for executives of French regional local governments (in Montpellier). Although individual French local governments have their own measures for the disabled, the French participants noted the lack of universal design concepts tailored to the needs of disabled people and seniors and a wide range of other users. They felt that such measures would be an extremely effective measure for France, a country due to experience an aging population in the coming years. They had questions about the cost of constructing new facilities and facility upgrades. The presentation inspired the center to give its first training on implementing universal design in structures.

3rd International Universal Design Conference

In 2010, the International Association for Universal Design will hold the 3rd International Universal Design Conference in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka. The conference will present the latest developments in universal design, giving researchers an opportunity to present papers, and hosting exhibits by cutting-edge Japanese universal design product manufacturers. The conference will provide an opportunity for the prefecture to present its universal design policy measures, and for residents to see the latest developments in universal design.

Creating new product and service markets through universal design

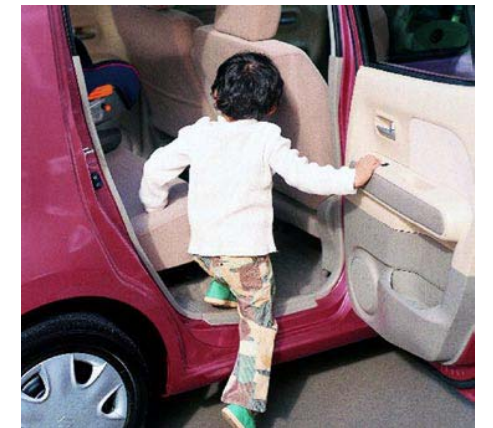
Work by Shizuoka businesses

Making the community livable for all its residents requires towns, products, and environments to be planned and designed for optimum ease of use and accessibility by everyone. Just as governments are implementing universal design in public facilities, businesses and organizations are incorporating it into their business activities to provide high-added-value products and services to meet diversifying consumer needs and generate new demand in Japan's maturing markets.

< Implementation examples >

Automotive industry

Vehicles are an indispensable part of modern life. Starting from the design phase, Shizuoka's carmakers have been working to make vehicles easy to use by as wide a range of users as possible. Universal design elements in vehicles include easy-to-use shift levers and child safety features.



Retail industry

Shizuoka department stores and supermarkets have been designed for pleasant shopping by the disabled and users of all ages. Universal design elements include facilities for nursing mothers, multipurpose toilets, wide aisles, parking spaces for seniors and the disabled, and ridged guide paths for the visually impaired.

Hotel industry

Shizuoka's lodging facilities are designed for ease of use by wheelchair or stroller users. Guest rooms are easy to use by the disabled, bathrooms are free of level differences, and family toilets have been installed. The number of facilities with universal design elements is increasing at Shizuoka's many hot spring areas. Many of the traditional Japanese-style ryokan accommodations in these areas are highly accessible to seniors, wheelchair users, and non-Japanese, with ramps and oversized handicapped-access toilets, and bathing areas that often have multilingual signage and handrails from the entrance to the bath.



Taxi operators

Some taxi operators have vehicles with universal design elements enabling use by wheelchair users. The special vehicles charge the regular fares. They are ideal for group travel and outpatient hospital visits.



Issues and outlook for universal design

Coordinating competing needs

Japan's rapidly aging population is making universal design increasingly important. Since universal design addresses the needs of a wide range of different users, implementing it requires planners to coordinate needs that sometimes conflict. Whether young, old, disabled, or able-bodied, users have different characteristics and different problems.

When creating infrastructure that incorporates universal design, an essential requirement is to supplement the work done by government, businesses, and organizations with active efforts by local residents familiar with local conditions. Having residents check for potential problems and actively propose solutions could be a helpful approach to coordinating a diverse range of conflicting needs. Supplementing the work of government and businesses with activities of local residents will be crucial in making the transition from the 'partially optimized' communities of the past, to 'fully optimized' universal design communities.

Accepting diversity

As government, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and Shizuoka residents each play their individual roles in implementing universal design, seniors and the disabled will be able to enjoy lifestyles of greater freedom, helping make the community more vital and livable. The ultimate goal of government is to improve the welfare of the people—a goal closely allied with the concept of universal design.

We look forward to the day when universal design has become so well integrated into everyday life as to be no longer noticeable. This day will come when project planners and designers in government, businesses, and organizations take it for granted that every project they do starts by addressing the needs of all possible users. Positive feedback from users will encourage this approach, ensuring that the diversity of all users continues to be actively addressed.

Making Shizuoka more livable

The economic activities of the 20th century were centered on mass production for mass consumption, and targeted the average user. The 21st century is projected to be the century of the environment—a time to start undoing the harm done to the planet's natural resources we all share. This emphasis on environmental protection and the advances in science and technology that will lengthen life expectancies around the world are making universal design increasingly important. Through joint, concerted efforts among townships, businesses, organizations, and residents, Shizuoka is aiming to promote advances in universal design that help make Shizuoka a more livable environment for all residents, and create lifestyles of greater freedom and vitality.



Universal Design Office, Department of Community Affairs, Shizuoka Prefectural Government

9-6 Otemachi, Aoi-ku, Shizuoka City, Shizuoka Pref. 420-8601 Japan

TEL +81-54-221-3153 FAX +81-54-221-2827

E-mail ud@pref.shizuoka.lg.jp <http://www.pref.shizuoka.jp/ud>

Published: March 2009

Shizuoka Universal Design

Search