Basic Policy for Promoting Kobe’s International Characteristics

(Outline)

1. Purpose
Recent changes in environment surrounding Kobe and Japan such as growing competition in tourism and attracting enterprises from home and abroad are quite significant. Under such circumstances, we need to strengthen the international infrastructure of our city, polish its unique attractiveness as a “City where People with International Sensitivity Gather and Grow” and transmit its appealing points to the rest of the world.

This Basic Plan is designed to further promote multilateral interchanges with cities overseas and strengthen international contributions making use of the experiences and know-how that Kobe has. Moreover, we need to develop Kobe in a creative manner taking advantages of its strong points and uniqueness such as prominent living environments, cohesive society, excellent education system, advanced medicine and disaster preparedness thus making Kobe as a further globalized city where people acknowledge cultural diversity with mutual respect, and enjoy rich and pleasant lifestyles.

2. City’s Images to be Realized
Developing Kobe Rich in Lifestyle, Active in International Interchange and Diverse in Cultures Highlighting its Unique Attractiveness

• A City that Develops Business Hub with International Competitiveness
• A City that Creates Attractive Tourism and Convention Resources
• A Livable City where People with International Sensitivity Gather and Live
• A City where Multilateral Intercity Interchanges and International Cooperation Flourish
• A City where Cultural Diversity is Accepted and Respected

3. Target Year
FY2015

4. Linkage
The Fifth Kobe City Master Plan that shows the basic stance of developing the city is to be formulated in FY2010. The Master Plan consists of 3 parts – “Policy Guidelines of Developing Kobe (target year: 2025), “Kobe 2015 Vision” (target year: FY2015) and “Ward Plan” (target year: FY2015). In addition to that, sectoral plans comprised of program plans in various government areas will be drawn up aiming for materializing policies and plans listed in the Master Plan through mutual linkage and complement.

The Basic Policy for Promoting Kobe’s International Characteristics is one of such sectoral plans mutually linked and complemented with the Kobe 2015 Vision.
5. Policy Development

Chapter 1. An Appealing City with Strong International Competitiveness
(1) Formulating international business hub and attract foreign enterprises
   a. Improve links with the next generation super-computer, and further promote Kobe as a City of Design and the Kobe Medical Industrial City Concept
   b. City network support for local corporations that aim to globally develop their business
   c. Implement initiatives to establish ‘comprehensive investments zones’ that strategically support corporations with special measures regarding Japanese regulations, taxation system and finance
   d. Promote and attract foreign and foreign-owned corporations by offering support systems, such as office rent assistance and advancement support
(2) Attract MICE and promote international tourism
   a. Actively promote and attract MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, Exhibitions)
   b. Attract tourists with Kobe’s unique resources, health and safety, such as hot springs, Kobe beef, sweets, sake, and seasonal vegetables
   c. Provide access information between sightseeing spots and effective, easy-to-understand promotion for foreign tourists
   d. Create an environment for foreign tourists to shop and dine with ease
(3) Enhance international arts and cultural activities
   a. Hold cultural exchange events, inviting participants from sister cities, Kobe Biennale, and highly acclaimed international cultural and artistic events, such as the Kobe Flute Competition
   b. Increase natural international exchange opportunities for citizens through events, such as Kobe Marathon
   c. Provide venues for young artists to work
(4) Strengthen city promotion
   a. Use blogs, Twitter and other sites to efficiently and effectively provide information on the Internet
   b. Conduct introductory tours of Kobe for foreign correspondents and hold introductory events for sister cities
   c. Utilize JET (the Japan Exchange & Teaching program for foreign youth) participants, exchange students, and foreigners transferred to Kobe to create a network of People Associated with Kobe and promote the city
(5) Support international students and create human networks
   a. Improve student attachment to Kobe through unique experience programs and offer them job-hunting support
   b. Offer student support to continue ties with Kobe after returning to their countries and provide a human network through alumni gatherings

Chapter 2. A Well-Knit City with Unique International Infrastructure
(1) Attract consulates and support international schools and social clubs for foreigners
   a. Attract the foreign residences of consulates and other government offices, and hold and attract consulate-sponsored events
   b. Support schools and clubs for foreigners to attract corporations to the city
(2) Nurture international human resources
   a. Implement effective English education for children with a Kobe slant
   b. Increase opportunities to teach about multicultural harmony and international understanding
(3) Revitalize the Port of Kobe and Kobe Airport
   a. Improve the position of Kobe Port within Asia as an international container strategic port
   b. Ease regulations and boost the functionality of Kobe Airport
(4) Improve hospitality through multilingual information
   a. Expand the use of multilingual sightseeing and pedestrian signage
   b. Increase multilingual signage on public transport and offer employees elementary language instruction
Chapter 3. A City Leading Way in Intercity Interchanges & International Cooperation

(1) Develop multilateral Intercity Interchanges
   a. Promote exchanges that yield practical results in problem solving of mutual benefit
   b. New exchange partnerships in specific policy areas
   c. Form an intercity network between multiple cities to solve common issues regarding specific themes and in specific areas
   d. Enhance exchanges and city promotion by holding and attracting international city conferences
   e. Expand intercity exchanges for significant economic development with Asian countries
   f. Support private and public international exchanges, especially youth exchanges

(2) Promote international contributions utilizing Kobe’s experiences and know-how
   a. Promote Kobe as a disaster welfare community to the world and conduct training based on drills from lessons learnt in the earthquake
   b. Provide other countries with city infrastructure integrated with the technology of local private corporations, using the city’s town planning knowledge and disaster technology

Chapter 4. A City where Multicultural Interchange & Integration Proceed

(1) Establish a social basis for supporting multicultural interchanges
   a. Provide timely and precise multilingual information fully using the Internet’s functionality
   b. Improve the ease of centrally understanding and managing information for use in multilingual pamphlets produced by the city
   c. Publicize the Kobe International Community Center, strengthen ties between ward offices and related institutions, and enhance the expertise training consultation function
   d. Increase support for Japanese language training and improve Japanese language instruction methods
   e. Provide opportunities for foreign children and students to learn their mother tongue and culture with study support
   f. Improve ties with the foreign community and foreigner support groups

(2) Development for a safe, secure and livable community
   a. Enhance multilingual disaster information services and link this with disaster response and disaster prevention drills for the foreign community and support groups
   b. Provide multilingual health insurance and medical services for newcomers by maintaining a medical interpreter system
   c. Increase multilingual publicity and public knowledge of the nursing care insurance system
   d. Provide multilingual housing information for foreigners
   e. Enhance Japanese language education and consultation services for foreign workers

(3) Improve the understanding of different cultures and traditions and dissolve the sense of prejudice and discrimination
   a. Enhance the quality of the human rights enlightenment project for a multicultural society
   b. Promote human rights education at schools and enhance education aimed at experiencing and deepening an understanding of diverse cultures
   c. Create a city where children and students from foreign backgrounds can maintain their mother tongue and culture

(4) Form local communities built on mutual respect
   a. Delegate foreign citizens to be municipal advisors and various committees and increase the use of the Kobe Foreign Citizen Conference
   b. Create an environment in which foreign citizens can participate in local activities and hold multicultural events