Kyoto City Landscape Policy

Forming Timeless and Radiant Kyoto Landscapes
(September 2007~)

Kyoto City
Kyoto City Location and Population

Kyoto City is located west of central Japan, with a metropolitan population of 1.47 million people.

Population: 1,470,000  Area: 828 km²
Kyoto City Terrain

The Kyoto City terrain is a basin enclosed to the east, west and north by mountains (Higashiyama, Nishiyama, Kitayama), with two rivers to the north and south.
Kyoto, Historical City

Spanning approximately 1000 years as site of the Imperial Dignity, Kyoto is home to the Imperial Palace and many other historical edifices.
Kyoto features a multitude of exquisite landscapes interweaving historical buildings with abundance scenes of nature.

- Sagano (pasture)
- Kamo River and Kitayama
- Kyo-machiya (Kyoto traditional townhouse)
- Yoshida Residence
- Nijo Castle (World Heritage Site)
- Kiyomizudera Temple (World Heritage Site)
Timeline of Measures to Preserve Kyoto's Landscapes

Various measures were established in Kyoto City to protect these landscapes

1930 Scenic Landscape Districts designated (3,400ha ▶ 17,938ha at present)
Mid 1950's to 1960's Narabigaoka development issue ▶ Ancient Capitals Preservation Law in 1966
1964 Kyoto Tower issue

1967 Special preservation areas designated under the Ancient Capital Cities Preservation Law
(117ha ▶ 2,861ha at present)

1972 City Ordinances on Urban Landscape established (nation's first)
• Aesthetic Landscape Districts • Large Scale Construction Restriction Zones
• Special Preservation and Improvement Districts (Gion Shimbashi, Sanneizaka)
  ▶ 1975 Cultural Property Preservation Act revised (newly Preservation Districts for Groups of Historical Buildings)

1973 City Mostly under Height Zone (Center area up to 45m in height)

1991- 92 Report by Committee for Kyoto Town Development on Land Use and Landscape Measures
Fundamental Concept for Northern Preservation, City Center Revitalization and Southern Creation
  ▶ 1993 New Kyoto Fundamental Plans
  (Northern Preservation, Southern Creation, City Center Revitalization)

1995 City Ordinances on the Betterment of Urban Landscape established

1996 Landscape Restriction Districts expanded, Outdoor Advertisement Measures reinforced,
Building Height Control reinforced
(Aesthetic Landscape Districts 932ha ▶ 1,804ha ▶ 1,956ha)

2003 3-Point Set Rule for Commercial-Residential Coexisted Districts Introduced
(City Center Building Height Control Districts reinforced, Special Use Districts designated, Aesthetic Landscape Districts Expanded)
Loss of Kyoto’s Beautiful Landscape

Despite these efforts, beautiful landscapes have been lost. The following societal changes are said to account for this.

- Change in values and lifestyles
- Economy and efficiency driven motivations
- Loss of Kyo-machiya and other historical buildings
- Construction projects maladapted to surrounding cityscape
- Loss of scenery and borrowed landscapes
- Degradation of landscapes due to outdoor advertisements

Machiya houses and high-rise buildings

East bank of Kamo River as seen from west bank (Ponto-cho)

Outdoor Advertisements

Apartment buildings near World Heritage Site Kamigamo Shrine

Buildings visible behind a historical park (Shosei Garden)
Fundamental Concept of Kyoto City Landscape Policy

To meet these challenges, 5 basic policies framed investigations into regulations and guidelines that suit the region's characteristics, leading to the implementation of the New Landscape Policy in September 2007.

Features of Kyoto Landscape

- Kyoto 50 to 100 years later: Landscaping that will remain relevant as a historical city in the future
- Buildings may be private property, but landscape is public assets
- It is each and every one of ours duty and responsibility to inherit Kyoto's magnificent landscapes for future generations

Basic Policies

- Landscaping that naturally conforms to scenery in the basin
- Landscaping that coordinates harmony between succession of traditional culture and creation of new
- Landscaping comprised of multitudinous spaces that bespeak the features of Kyoto
- Landscaping that generates the city pulse
- Landscaping through partnerships among the government, residents and enterprises

New landscaping policies that suit the region's characteristics
Landscape Policies Suited to Regional Characteristics (by region)

Fine-grained policies suited to regional characteristics.

1 Mountainous and piedmont area
   - World Heritage Areas
   - Historical buildings and scenic sites areas
   - Residential areas (residential areas / areas along community roads)

2 Residential areas bordering mountainous area
   - Historical assets areas
   - Residential areas (residential areas / areas along community roads)
   - Areas along main roads
   - Waterfronts
   - Commercial areas

3 Western region
   - Industrial areas
   - Residential areas

4 Southern region
   - Highly integrated area
   - Industrial area
   - Residential areas
   - Commercial areas

5 Historical urban area (generally within Kitaoji St., Higashioji St., Kujo St. and Nishioji St.)
   - Historical urban cente district
   - Commercial-residential coexisted district
   - Southern historical urban area
   - Waterfront and green area
   - Historical heritage area
   - Areas along main roads
   - Western and southern urban areas
   - Commercial areas

6 Eastern region
   - Residential areas
   - Commercial areas
The landscape policy comprises 5 main elements and the support systems. To implement these measures in Kyoto City, a broad range of city planning and ordinances were changed in 2007. The 5 main elements and the support systems are below.

### Framework of Kyoto City Landscape Policy

1. **Building Height**
2. **The design of buildings, etc.**
3. **Surrounding Scenery and Vistaed view**
4. **Outdoor Advertisements**
5. **Historical Streets**

### Changes in City Planning

- Building Height Control Districts / Scenic Districts / Scenic Landscape Districts

### Established and Revised City Ordinances

- **< Established >**
  - City Ordinances on the Preservation of Vistaed Views
  - An ordinance requiring special permits for building exceeding height controls

- **< Revision >**
  - City Ordinances on the Betterment of Urban Landscapes
  - City Ordinances on the Scenic Landscape Districts
  - Ordinances on advertisements
  - City Ordinances on the Preservation of Natural Scenery

### Derivative and Supporting Measures

- Projects that improve historical cityscapes
Building Height (Building Height Control Districts)

The height of buildings is an important element that forms city landscape and environment. To this end, maximum heights have been lowered over a wide range while segmenting height controls according to the areas characteristics.

- Maximum heights have been lowered for Building Height Control Districts in
  - Historical City Areas,
  - Residential Areas in Mountain Foothills, and
  - Industrial Areas
- Heights lowered in 30% of urbanization areas (approximately 15,000ha)
  - (Formerly) 10m, 15m, 20m, 31m, 45m
  - (Currently) 10m, 12m, 15m, 20m, 25m, 31m

- Fine-grained regulations suiting characteristics of each area
- Attention to difference in height with adjacent areas
- Consideration for both land use and scenery
Major Areas Where Maximum Heights Were Lowered (Historical Urban areas)

Maximum heights were lowered in nearly all areas of historical townscapes. Case in point is Kyo-machiya (Kyoto traditional townhouse) and the height of nearby buildings. This is a human scale urban space.

(Ex)

Centrally located artery roadside districts: 45m ↓ 31m
Commercial-residential coexisted districts: 31m ↓ 15m

Other artery roadside areas, Kamo River, East Kamo area, Nishijin, etc.
In a historic town where rows of Kyo-machiya houses are built, deep relationships are fostered where life and livelihood thrive and traditional culture like Gion-Matsuri Festival are passed on. By restricting building heights, this kind of human scale towns continue to be passed on.
Building Design Regulations
(Landscape District, Landscape Improvement Districts, Scenic Landscape Districts)

Building design (shape, materials, color, etc.) is an important element that forms scenery. To this end, regulation districts have been more broadly expanded than before while fine-grained design standards have been set in tune with regional characteristics.

- **Landscape Districts Expanded** 1,956ha → 3,431ha (presently)
  Aesthetic landscape districts expanded, new aesthetic landscape promotion districts designated
- **Landscape Improvement Districts Expanded**
  (Notification zones based on Landscape Act)
  6,704ha → 8,582ha (presently)
- **Scenic Landscape Districts Expanded** 17,831ha → 17,938ha (presently)
  Expanded to World Heritage areas
- **More Detail and Clarification in Design Standards that Suit Regional Characteristics**
  From categorical standards to regional, using objective palette standards
- **Workpiece Regulations Strengthened**
  Cell phone antennas, solar panel
Landscape districts are divided into 6 large aesthetic landscape districts, and 2 aesthetic landscape promotion district suited to regional characteristics. Landscape improvement districts are likewise divided into 4 districts suited to regional characteristics.
## Design Standards for Landscape Districts and Aesthetic Landscape Promotion Districts (Major Common Standards)

Design standards are composed of the following common standards and region specific standards.

### Roof Palette
Roof tiles are in principle oxidized silver / copper plates either plain or blue-green / non-copper plates and other roof materials are in principle matte gray or matte black.

### External Wall Material
Material on major external walls are to be matte (with exception to glass and natural materials).

### Balcony
Balconies are not to protrude from the wall of the building. However, low buildings, or places out of view from public spaces are not restricted.

### External Wall Palette
The following palettes are not to be used on major external walls. However, unstained natural materials are not restricted.

1. Red hues with color saturation greater than 6.
2. Yellow-red hues with color saturation greater than 6. <abbreviated below>

### Gates, Fences, Hedges
Parking spaces for automobiles and bicycles should be enclosed by a gate, fence or hedge in keeping with the cityscape.

Quality suggestions gained from practice and suggestions from regions were integrated into design standards, and the standards will continue to advance.
Landscape Districts (Aesthetic Landscape Districts, Aesthetic Landscape Promotion Districts) Design Standards Illustration

- Historical city aesthetic landscape district
- Roadside aesthetic landscape district
- Historical heritage aesthetic landscape district
- Roadside aesthetic landscape promotion district
Kyoto claims many magnificent views – Japan’s assets that are unique to Kyoto, admired even in ancient poems. In 2007, Kyoto was the first city to establish a Vistaed View Creation Ordinance to conserve 38 magnificent vistaed views and borrowed landscapes.

- **Selected from 597 literary and citizen opinion sources**
- As urban areas approach historical assets including World Heritage Sites, vistaed views and borrowed landscapes are in danger of being lost unless new regulations for height controls and design are formed
- 38 Locations selected by committee
- City Ordinances on the Preservation of Vistaed Views
- Building height controls and design regulations / suggestion system

- **Temple Views** 14 World Heritage Sites, Kyoto Imperial Palace Park, Shugakuin Imperial Villa, Katsura Imperial Villa
- **Street Views** Oike St., Shijo St., Gojo St., Sanneizaka, etc.
- **Waterfront Views** Hori River, Uji River, Biwa Lake Sluice
- **Background view of garden** Entsuji Temple, Shosei Garden
- **Mountain Views** Higashiyama and Kitayama from Kamo River, Nishiyama from Katsura River banks
- **Bonfire Character Views** Gozan no Okuribi as seen from Kamo River, Kitayama St., Funaokayama, etc.
- **Lookout Views** Arashiyama range as seen from Togetsu Bridge downriver
- **Bird's Eye Views** Cityscape seen from Daimonjiyama

Vistaed view of Daimonji seen from Kamo River right bank
Areas that require preservation and generation of vistaed views are designated Vistaed View Preservation Zones. Vistaed Viewed Preservation Zones are classified by the three zones below according to the regulations they need.

- **Vistaed View Preservation Zone**: Zones where building altitudes are set and may not be exceeded in order to leave the viewing element unobstructed from the viewing spot.
- **Close View Preservation Zone**: Zones where shape, design and palette are regulated so that buildings within view from the viewing spot do not blemish the magnificent vistaed view.
- **Distant View Presentation Zone**: Zones where the palettes of external walls and roof tiles, etc. are regulated so that buildings within view from the viewing spot do not blemish the magnificent view.
Outdoor Advertisement Restrictions

City scenery is formed from not only nature and buildings, but all city activity. By regulating outdoor advertisements across all of Kyoto City, dignified beautiful scenery can be formed.

- **Outdoor Advertisement Restrictions**
  - Restrictions on display location, size and palette on outdoor advertisements
  - Prohibit outdoor advertisements on roofs throughout the entire city
  - Prohibit all outdoor advertisements using flashing lights
  - Stiffen restrictions on display location, size and palette on outdoor advertisements
  - Prohibit side signboards that protrude over roads near centrally located artery roads

- **Introduce Quality Outdoor Advertisements**
  - Extend permit periods, relax permit standards, promote quality outdoor advertisements, etc.

- **Implement illegal outdoor advertisement measures**
Outdoor Advertisement Restrictions (Example Images)

Prohibit rooftop signs to form a good skyline and generate a beautiful city landscape.

Display height for signs will be set at bottom 2/3 of a building or by regional standards, whichever is the lowest.

Signs protruding beyond road thresholds will be prohibited in some areas in order to open up the sky above roads and form good road landscape.

Signs overlapping window openings and walls, detracting from building design, will be prohibited.
Preserving and Improving Historical Townscapes

Kyo-machiya houses convey Kyoto's historical building style and lifestyle, forming a platform for historical city Kyoto landscape. Their preservation, outer repair and improvement are aided.

- **Use of District Designated Systems**
  - Preservation Districts for Groups of Historic Buildings (Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties)
  - Cityscape Environment Development Program Districts (National Subsidiary Projects)
  - Historical Landscape Preservation and Improvement Districts (City Ordinances on the Betterment of Urban Landscapes)
  - Community Scenic Betterment Districts (City Ordinances on the Betterment of Urban Landscapes)

- **Preservation Policies for Single Structures**
  - Important Landscape Structures Designated (Landscape Act)
  - Historical Design Structures Designated (City Ordinances on the Betterment of Urbanization Landscapes)
  - Kyo-machiya House Development Fund for Renovation Promotion Model Program
Areas where historical urbanscapes remain are designated as districts, and buildings in these districts are preserved while aiding their repair and improvement.

Use District Designation System

Preservation Districts for Groups of Historic Buildings (4 Districts)
- Sanneizaka 8.2ha
- Gion Shimbashi 1.4ha
- Saga Toriimoto 2.6ha
- Kamigamo 2.7ha

Historical Landscape Preservation and Improvement Districts (3 Districts)
- Gionmachi- minami 14.1ha
- Kaminokyo- Kokawa 2.1ha

Community Scenic Betterment Districts (7 Districts)
- Fushimi Minamihama 25ha
- Senryogatsuji 37ha
Preservation Policy for Single Structures

Designating structures as Important Landmarks imparts a permit system for changing their appearance while aiding their repair and improvement.

- Preservation, Repair and Improvement Aid through Single Structure Designation
  - Proactive Designation of Important Landscape Structures (Landscape Act) <26 designations>
  - Designation of Historic Design Structures (City Ordinances on the Betterment of Urban Landscapes)
    - Designations are current as of March 2009 <108 designations>

- Preservation and Improvement Efforts by Kyoto Center for Community Collaboration
  - Kyomachi House Development Fund for Renovation Aid Model Program

- Placing Important Landscape Structures at the core of areas to improve historic landscapes from points to lines, from lines to planes

Initial Period

- Important Landscape Structure
- Nominated for Important Landscape Structure through improvement and aid
- Other Kyo-machiya houses

Prevailing Period

- Improvement rules for Important Landscape Structures and neighboring areas (Landscape Agreement)

Important Landscape Structures

Yamañaka Cooking Oil (Kamigyo-ku)

Yoshida Residence (Nakagyo-ku)

Shibata Residence (Nakagyo-ku)
Preservation and Improvement of Kyomachiya Houses
(Single Structures Improvement – Kyo-machiya House Development Fund Use)

Kyomachiya House Development Fund is a fund established through Kyoto City and National support, and citizen donations for the preservation and improvement of Kyomachiya houses. It aids the renovation of Kyomachiya houses.

Kyo-machiya House Development Fund
(Set up in the Kyoto Center for Community Collaboration)

Donations

Citizens Enterprises Benefactors

Renovation Aid

National Government

Kyoto City

7 Structures in 2006 Model Program
12 Structures in 2007 Model Program

Designated Important Landscape Structure
Support System Outline

Kyoto City's Landscape Policy sets up a aid system for existing structures, and a support system for rebuilding condominiums.

Support for Maintenance and Rebuilding of Existing Condominium (Advisor recruitment system, loans for rebuilding)

Support for Kyo-machiya Houses (Seismic diagnosis, seismic retrofitting promotion)

Enriching existing condominiums policy

Objective: Proactively inducing proper maintenance of condos as quality stock while supporting smooth rebuilding.

- Established advisor recruit system for condominium rebuilding and large scale repair (from 2007)
- Established aid for seismic diagnosis for condominiums (from 2007)
- Established aid for seismic retrofitting for condominiums (from 2008)
- Established condominium rebuilding loan (from 2007)
- Established system for aiding rebuilding construction costs (for specific cases)
- Use of special height permit system to rebuild for good scenery or after damage due to disasters such as earthquake
Meaning of Landscape Policy ~So that Kyoto will always remain Kyoto~

The meaning of Landscape Policy is not merely to improve the city, but maintain and enhance Kyoto's city pulse – in other words, to enhance the value of Kyoto.

Landscape Policy bolsters the Kyoto Brand, adding value and a positive effect to the economy

In the face of a society declining in population, we have entered an age of city competition where each city appeals to its uniqueness to vie for allure as a city

Conservation and improvement of Kyoto's landscape generates a new added value of enhancement to city character and allure resulting in increased residents and population for interaction, concentration of excellent human resources, investment growth in local industry, tourist industry, knowledge-based industry, etc. therefore becoming a source for maintaining and enhancing city pulse

Enhancing Kyoto's Value

Effect Analysis of Provisions for Landscape Related Induction Regulations

The following cases gained statistically high land value, confirming the influence landscape over set land values

- Residential areas with many inclined roofs
- Commercial areas with few garish advertisements
- Historical townscapes with many machiya houses and tiled roofs or where the heights of many buildings harmonize with historical structures
So that Kyoto will always remain Kyoto