

# NINOMIYA Town

## Age-friendly City Action Plan



## 1. Age-friendly City and Action Plan

As populations around the world continue to age and urban areas expand, it is becoming increasingly important to create societies that are friendly to older people so that everyone can fully benefit with their longer lifespans. The World Health Organization's new guidebook National Programs for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities presents a clear framework showing the kinds of programs that countries can establish and sustain to speed the development of age-friendly environments—places that are better for people to grow up in, live in, work in, enjoy, and grow old in.

This Action Plan establishes the basic philosophy and goals for creating an age-friendly city and concurrently sets forth measures for their realization.

## 2. The Situation of Older Residents in Ninomiya Town

As of October 2023, Ninomiya Town's aging rate stands at 35.5%, which is higher than the national average. Although the overall number of older residents has been declining since 2022, the number of people aged 75 and over continues to rise, now making up about 60% of the town's older residents.

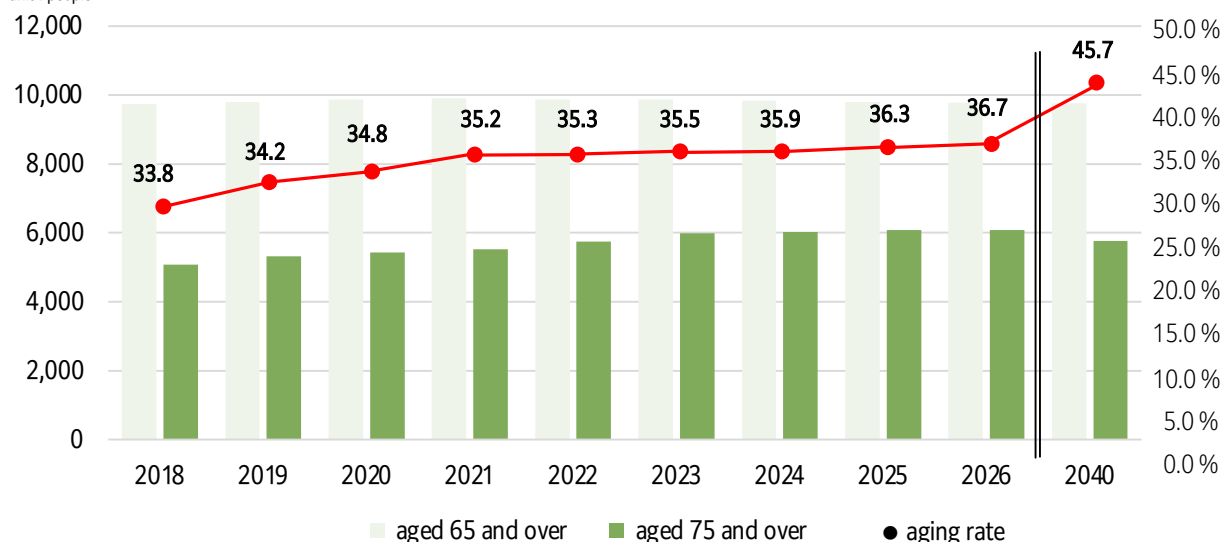
Looking ahead, while the total number of older adults is expected to remain generally stable, the aging rate is projected to exceed 45 percent by 2040 due to the continued decline in the population under 65. At the same time, the number of older people living alone or in households made up only of older members is expected to increase. These trends make it especially important to create a community where older residents can live with purpose and peace of mind, supported by a wide range of services, including long-term care.

(1) Trends in the town's aging rate

unit : people

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2040
Total population ①	28,814	28,639	28,378	28,195	27,934	27,782	27,399	27,005	26,628	21,360
Population aged 65 and over ②	9,744	9,797	9,870	9,912	9,874	9,863	9,829	9,792	9,778	9,767
Aging rate (②/①)	33.8%	34.2%	34.8%	35.2%	35.3%	35.5%	35.9%	36.3%	36.7%	45.7%
Population aged 75 and over ③	5,075	5,319	5,438	5,524	5,738	5,979	6,029	6,076	6,083	5,757
Composition ratio (③/②)	52.1%	54.3%	55.1%	55.7%	58.1%	60.6%	61.3%	62.1%	62.2%	58.9%

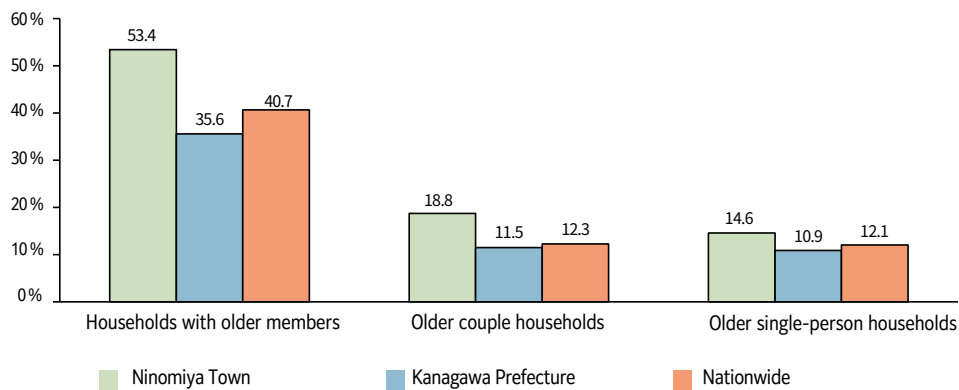
unit : people



Source: Population data up to 2023 is based on the Basic Resident Register, and estimates based on the Basic Resident Register are used for 2024 and beyond (as of October 1 of each year)

## (2) Household status of older people

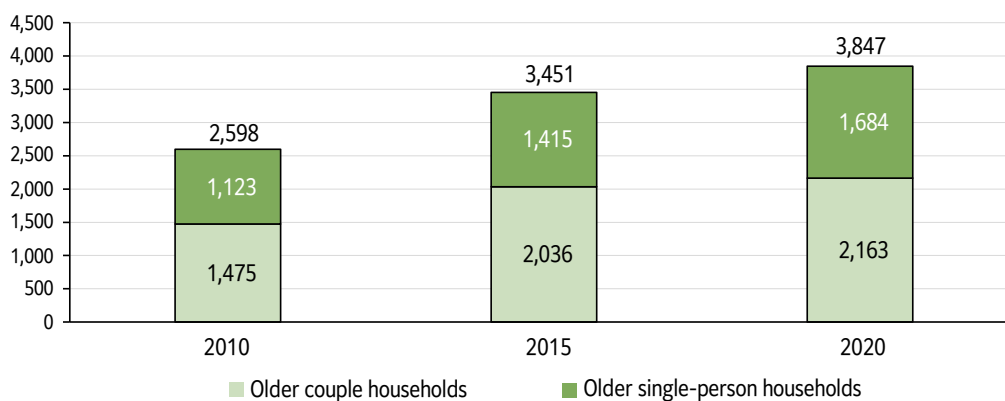
## ○ Comparison of the proportion of households with older people



Source: National Census (as of October 1, 2020)

## ○ Trends in the number of older households

(Households)



Source: National Census (as of October 1, 2020)

### 3. Basic Philosophy and Goals for Promoting an Age-friendly City

#### Basic Philosophy

#### Basic Goal

#### Policy Directions

Creating a Town Where People Can Live Full Active Lives in the Communities, They Know Best in Their Own Way

**[Basic Goal 1]**  
Deepening and Promoting the Community-Based Integrated Care System Aimed at Realizing a Community-Based Inclusive Society

- (1) Strengthening the Functions of Community Comprehensive Support Centers
- (2) Promoting of Mutual Support within the Community
- (3) Enhancing Daily Living Support Services
- (4) Strengthening Coordination between Home Medical Care and Long-Term Care
- (5) Supporting Caregivers
- (6) Ensuring Housing for Older Residents
- (7) Creating a Safe and Secure Community

**[Basic Goal 2]**  
Promoting Preventive Care in Cooperation with Health Promotion

- (1) Enhancing Support for Health Promotion
- (2) Expanding Accessible Care Prevention Services

**[Basic Goal 3]**  
Promoting Meaningful Activities and Social Participation

- (1) Promoting Activities that Give Meaning to Life
- (2) Promoting Social Participation

**[Basic Goal 4]**  
Promoting Community Coexistence with Dementia

- (1) Promoting Dementia Prevention
- (2) Enhancing Consultation and Support systems for Dementia
- (3) Promoting the Protection of Rights

**[Basic Goal 5]**  
Promoting the Stable Operation of Long-Term Care Insurance

- (1) Securing Long-Term Care Workers, Improving their Skills and Raising Productivity
- (2) Ensuring Proper Operations of the Long-Term Care Insurance System

## 4. Action Plan for an Age-friendly City Based on Eight Interconnected Domains

An Age-friendly City is one that makes it easier for people of all ages to use essential services, take part in community life, and live to their full potential. To achieve this, we will take action across the following eight interconnected domains.

- I Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- II Transportation
- III Housing
- IV Social Participation
- V Respect and Social Inclusion
- VI Civic Participation and Employment
- VII Communication and Information
- VIII Community Support and Health Service

To create a society where older people can live active, fulfilling lives in the communities they know best, we will develop and carry out this action plan based on our basic philosophy : **Creating a Town Where People Can Live Full Active Lives in the Communities, They Know Best in their Own Way**. We will also continue to review and improve the plan over time.

### I Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

#### Basic Goal 1 (7) Creating a Safe and Secure Community

##### a) Promoting Barrier-Free Accessibility

- To help older people and others go out safely and move about with ease, we will work with relevant departments to improve barrier-free access at public facilities, along roads, in parks, and in other public spaces. Through these efforts, we aim to create a safer and more comfortable environment for everyone.

### II Transportation

#### Basic Goal 1 (3) Enhancing Daily Living Support Services

##### a) Mobility Support

- To ensure that older people who cannot go out on their own are still able to do so, we will provide subsidy vouchers for welfare taxis. In addition, as the number of people who have difficulty reaching bus stops increases due aging across the town, we will work with relevant policy departments to study and develop transportation support measures from a welfare perspective.

#### Basic Goal 1 (7) Creating a Safe and Secure Community

##### a) Promoting Paid Welfare Transportation Services

- This service provides paid transportation for people who have difficulty using public transportation, including those who require long-term care. It supports trips for medical visits, day care, and leisure activities. To ensure the service runs smoothly and is properly managed, we will work with NPOs and social welfare organizations to promote its use. We will also strengthen public outreach through websites and newsletters to raise awareness and help reduce the burden on caregivers.

### III Housing

#### Basic Goal 1 (3) Enhancing Daily Living Support Services

##### a) Garbage Disposal Support

- To assist older people who are unable to take their garbage to the collection site by the appointed time, support services will be promoted in cooperation with both the welfare and environmental departments.

##### b) Dispatch of "Hotto Anshin\* Helpers" (Note: *Hotto Anshin* means Feel Relieved in Japanese)

- To help older people living alone, or in households made up only of older members, to continue living independently at home without a decline in their quality of life, staff from the Silver Human Resources Center will be dispatched to provide household support. This includes services such as weeding and light maintenance work, services not covered by long-term care insurance.

##### c) Silver Emergency Notification System

- To help older people to live with peace of mind, the Social Welfare Council operates a monitoring service that allows them to be checked on at any time, day or night, and to easily send emergency alerts.

This system includes communication functions that work even without a landline phone, as well as temperature and humidity sensors to help monitor heatstroke. In the event of a disaster, it also receives regional emergency emails and provides voice guidance. Family members can receive emails confirming the older person's safety, making it possible to check on their well-being even from a distance. We will continue working to encourage wider use of this system.

#### Basic Goal 1 (6) Ensuring Housing for Older Residents

##### a) Providing Housing Suitable for Older Adults

- To help older people continue living safely in familiar surroundings, we will promote home modifications under the long-term care insurance system. For those who wish make home modifications during the period between applying for long-term care insurance and receiving certification, we will respond to inquiries, provide necessary advice, and support applications for home modification subsidies. When a justification document is prepared and the application is submitted on their behalf, the town will also subsidize the service provider's associated costs.

##### b) Housing Support for Older People

- The Registration System for Serviced Housing for the Elderly is intended for older people who face difficulty renting private housing due to their age. Through this system, a prefecture-designated registration agency lists rental properties whose owners accept older tenants and provides this information to the public. Our town will continue to share this information through lists of nearby long-term care facilities, paid care homes for older people, and written pamphlets.

##### c) Support for Residents of Care Homes for Older People

###### • Nursing Homes

Nursing homes temporarily accept and care for people aged 65 or older who cannot receive care at home due to physical, mental, financial, or living-environment reasons. Even after the introduction of long-term care insurance system, these facilities continue to operate under *the Elderly Welfare Act*, and our town will continue to support residents who live there.

###### • Residential-Type Paid Nursing Homes

Residential-type paid nursing homes are a form of paid nursing home that provide daily-living support, and where residents may choose to use nursing care services as needed.

###### • Serviced Housing for the Elderly

Serviced Housing for the Elderly offers barrier-free living spaces for couples or for those living alone. These homes are connected to nursing care and medical services, and residents may choose to use care services as needed.

## Basic Goal 1 (7) Creating a Safe and Secure Community

### a) Promoting Fire Prevention Measures

- To help older people living alone stay safe, we will promote the installation of residential fire alarms and the Silver Emergency Notification System. We will also raise awareness of these services and review the operational guidelines to make the system easier to understand and use.

## IV Social Participation

### Basic Goal 3 (1) Promoting Activities that Give Meaning to Life

#### a) Support for the Senior Citizens' *Yume* Club (Note: *Yume* means Dream in Japanese)

- The *Yume* Club actively promotes health and preventive care, and serves as an important place for social participation, friendship building, and providing a sense of fulfillment for older people. It also functions as a foundation for senior activities and a basic platform for community involvement.

As membership is gradually decreasing, we will support efforts to increase participation and revitalize the organization by offering appealing activities, sharing information, and conducting publicity campaigns.

### Basic Goal 3 (2) Promoting Social Participation

#### a) Use of Community Gathering Facilities

- We will promote the effective use of existing facilities—such as senior centers, children's centers, and community disaster-prevention centers—as places where older people can socialize, take part in community welfare activities, learn new skills, and engage in club, group, and volunteer activities.

#### b) Community Farm

- To prevent farmland being neglected and to encourage residents to make good use of their free time, we will continue the Community Farming Project.

#### c) Providing Spaces for Learning and Sports Activities

- We will improve the management and operation of cultural and sports facilities, such as *Radian* and gymnasiums, so that learning programs and club activities can take place more easily.

#### d) Support for Learning Activities

- We will support lifelong learning by organizing programs such as the Ninomiya Town Citizen University, assisting organizations involved in social education, and sharing information about learning and cultural opportunities.

## V Respect and Social Inclusion

### Basic Goal 1 (2) Promoting of Mutual Support within the Community

#### a) Registration of Emergency Medical Information Sheets (List of Residents in Need of Assistance in Evacuation)

- For people who need regular monitoring—such as individuals aged 75 or older who live alone, households made up of only older adults, and people with disabilities—we distribute Emergency Medical Information Sheets so that help can be provided quickly during emergencies or disasters. Registration is encouraged through commissioned welfare volunteers, commissioned child welfare volunteers, care managers, and other related staff. In everyday situations, these information sheets are used by commissioned welfare and child welfare volunteers for regular check-ins, by welfare and fire departments during emergencies, and by district leaders and volunteer disaster-prevention groups during disaster preparedness activities to confirm the residents' safety.

### **Basic Goal 1 (7) Creating a Safe and Secure Community**

#### a) Promotion of Measures to Prevent Elder Abuse

- To prevent elder abuse, we will raise awareness of consultation services and the Act on the Prevention of Elder Abuse. By working together with community comprehensive support centers and care service providers, we aim to detect and resolve cases of elder abuse at an early stage. We will also promote awareness through group guidance and operational guidance for care service providers.

### **Basic Goal 4 (3) Promoting the Protection of Rights**

#### a) Rights Protection Services

- With Community Comprehensive Support Centers as the hub, we will provide support to older people to protect their physical, mental, and financial rights. We will work with related organizations to establish reliable consultation services for rights protection.

As part of end-of-life planning support, we will provide the booklet Ending Note where individuals can consider and record in advance matters such as funerals, graves, assets, and future care treatment. This booklet is made available on the town's website and at public facilities.

#### b) Support for the Use of the Adult Guardianship System

- We will promote understanding of the adult guardianship system through public awareness campaigns and lectures and provide consultations at Community Comprehensive Support Centers. We will also cooperate closely with related agencies to identify people who may need this system at an early stage and ensure they receive prompt support.

## **VI Civic Participation and Employment**

### **Basic Goal 1 (2) Promoting of Mutual Support within the Community**

#### a) Establishing a Community Watch Network

- To identify local issues at the neighborhood level and discuss solutions, the town has established the town-wide Mutual Support Promotion Council, as well as district-based groups such as the *Ichifuku*, *Isshiki* Elementary School District Welfare Council Clover's Smile, Harmony, and Circle, *Ninomiya* Elementary School District, and *Tampopo* (Dandelion) Support, Yamanishi Elementary School District. These groups work to raise awareness, organize community resources, and promote education related to daily living support.

### **Basic Goal 3 (1) Promoting Activities that Give Meaning to Life**

#### a) Support for the Silver Human Resources Center

- The Silver Human Resources Center serves as a key organization for supporting employment among older people. It provides opportunities for meaningful work and activities by making use of the experience and knowledge people have gained from years in the workforce. We will continue to support the center in developing new job opportunities and encouraging people to join.

## VII Communication and Information

### Basic Goal 1 (2) Promoting of Mutual Support within the Community

#### a) Kayoinoba—Community Gathering Places

- Community gathering places, known as Kayoinoba, provide nearby places where anyone—especially older residents—can take part in health activities, social interaction, and the sharing of information. These spaces are currently available at 18 locations across the town. Because participation declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, we will work to restore and increase participation while continuing to follow infection prevention measures. Our goal is to expand the number of participants so that these activities can continue long term.

#### b) Friendship Activities through the Yume Club

- The Yume Club, which supports health and personal fulfillment for older people in the community, carries out friendship visits to older people who live alone. Through these visits, the club offers companionship and provides consultation support for those who may need help.

#### c) Monitoring by Commissioned Welfare Volunteers and Child Welfare Volunteers

- To support households that include older adults, people with disabilities, or children, welfare and child welfare commissioners carry out regular monitoring activities. They also help ensure that families receive appropriate information and connect them to needed welfare services. In addition, they work as a bridge between the town government, schools, and local disaster prevention groups, and help connect residents with relevant support agencies so families do not have to face challenges alone.

### Basic Goal 1 (3) Enhancing Daily Living Support Services

#### a) Building a Living Support Service System

- We will consider regional activity services to support the diverse lifestyles of older people. We will update information on living support services on websites and at community gathering places so that it can be accessed at any time. We will promote awareness of existing living support services and, for additional support needs, establish a support system centered on living support coordinators to collaborate with diverse local entities to address these needs. We will advance the Mutual Support Promotion Council, a town-wide consultative body, and support the efforts of other local consultative bodies.

## VIII Community Support and Health Service

### Basic Goal 1 (1) Strengthening the Functions of Community Comprehensive Support Centers

We will strengthen cooperation between the Community Comprehensive Support Centers and relevant departments within the town office. This includes sharing information on regional issues, goals, and the current state of community-based care, and promoting more effective initiatives through collaboration with related organizations. We will work to improve both the overall quality and the functions of the Community Comprehensive Support Centers, and to strengthen their role as an easy-to-access one-stop consultation service.

In addition, we will improve both the overall quality and functionality of regional care conferences by coordinating with consultative bodies. Through continued discussion and information sharing, we will address individual cases, identify community-wide issues such as gaps in local resources and services, and work toward putting practical solutions in place.

#### a) Strengthening the Network Centered on Community Comprehensive Support Centers

#### b) Enhancing Regional Comprehensive Support Centers

#### c) Strengthening Regional Care Conferences

#### d) Preventive Care Management

#### e) Comprehensive Consultation Support

#### f) Comprehensive and Continuous Care Management Services

### **Basic Goal 1 (4) Strengthening Coordination between Home Medical Care and Long-Term Care**

As the number of older people who need both medical and long-term care continues to grow, we will strengthen systems that allow medical care, long-term care, health services, welfare services, and daily-living support to work together smoothly. This will help older residents continue living in their familiar communities for as long as possible, even when they require support.

- a) Strengthening Coordination between Home Medical Care and Long-Term Care
- b) Promotion the Use of Family Doctors

### **Basic Goal 2 (1) Enhancing Support for Health Promotion**

We will create an environment that encourages residents to take an active role in staying healthy. Our efforts aim to prevent lifestyle-related diseases, reduce social isolation among people who tend to stay at home, promote independent living, and thereby help prevent dementia and long-term bedridden conditions. These efforts will support older adults in staying active and healthy for as long as possible.

As an early step in preventing lifestyle-related diseases, we will encourage residents to monitor their health through activities such as checking blood pressure and managing body weight. We will especially focus on using our health promotion stations, including the ME-BYO\* center Ninomiya.

- a) Group Health Education
- b) Health Consultations
- c) Specific Health Checkups
- d) Health Checkups for People aged 75 and over
- e) Health Promotion Stations (ME-BYO\* Center Ninomiya)
- \*Note: ME-BYO is a concept that refers to the transitional state between health and sickness.
- f) Health Guidance Following Checkups
- g) Prevention of Severe Health Conditions
- h) Integrated Health Programs for Older Adults and Preventive Care

### **Basic Goal 2 (2) Expanding Accessible Care Prevention Services**

We will work with related organizations to strengthen community gathering places and raise awareness among older adults about the importance of staying healthy and preventing the need for care. We will hold a variety of community lectures to share basic knowledge about care prevention, including ways to maintain physical strength and oral health.

We will also work with related organizations to promote joint efforts in health promotion and care prevention.

- a) Care Prevention Promotion and Awareness-Raising Programs
- b) Community Care Prevention Activity Support Program
- c) Integrated Health Programs for Older Adults and Care Prevention

### **Basic Goal 4 (1) Promoting Dementia Prevention**

As the population continues to age, the number of people with dementia is expected to rise. We will promote comprehensive dementia-related policies that aim to delay the onset of dementia, protect the dignity of people living with dementia, and support lives filled with hope and meaning. We will work to ensure that older people with dementia and their families can continue to live with peace of mind in their communities.

We will work to improve understanding of dementia by offering training for dementia supporters and holding learning sessions at local community gathering places. We will also strengthen cooperation with medical professionals, such as family doctors, to build a local network of healthcare and care workers who have the necessary skills to support older people with dementia. At the same time, we will continue to promote efforts to prevent dementia.

- a) Sharing Accurate Information about Dementia
- b) Supporting Activities that help Prevent Dementia
- c) Strengthening the Ability of the Community to Respond Appropriately to Dementia

#### **Basic Goal 4 (2) Enhancing Consultation and Support Systems for Dementia**

To help older adults with dementia and their families to live safely in their communities, we will continue to improve consultation services and make sure people know how to access them. We will support early detection and quick response when problems arise. We will also help ensure access to daily living support, opportunities for social participation, and support that reduces the physical and emotional burden on family members and caregivers. We will continue to strengthen cooperation between medical and care services, with Dementia Community Support Promoters at the center of these efforts. We will work to create dementia-friendly communities where people with dementia can continue living with dignity and where the community itself is renewed through shared understanding and dignity.

- a) Publicizing Available Consultation Services
- b) Supporting the Work of Early Dementia Response Teams
- c) Utilizing Dementia Care Pathways
- d) Strengthening Support Systems Led by Dementia Community Support Promoters
- e) Supporting Older People with Dementia and their Families
- f) Building a Community-Wide Support System, Including Dementia Supporters
- g) Creating a Town-Wide System Where Everyone Helps Look After the Older Residents

#### **Basic Goal 5 (1) Securing Long-Term Care Workers, Improving their Skills and Raising Productivity**

Having enough well-trained care workers is essential for keeping the long-term care insurance system running smoothly and for maintaining a community-based integrated care system. As the number of older people who need care increases, we will strengthen efforts to secure enough care workers.

We will also provide guidance and advice to care managers and care service providers to ensure high-quality care. Clear information will be provided to users and non-users about available services, service provider, and places to go with questions or complaints. We will also promote the use of digital tools in care settings to reduce workloads, improve efficiency, and create better working environments.

- a) Recruiting and Training Care Personnel
- b) Improving Care Quality and Daily Work Efficiency

#### **Basic Goal 5 (2) Ensuring Proper Operations of the Long-Term Care Insurance System**

To keep care costs fair and under control, we will standardize care needs assessments, improve care planning, and check medical information more carefully. These efforts will help ensure care costs remain appropriate, efficient, and financially sustainable.

- a) Project to Improve the Fairness and Efficiency of Long-Term Care Benefit Costs

The following initiatives extend across the town's eight age-friendly domains.

## Comprehensive Initiatives

### Basic Goal 1 (2) Promoting of Mutual Support within the Community

In our town, we use the *Mimamori Guide*, (Watching-Over Guide) to help residents, local groups, and organizations work together. This includes neighborhood associations, district social welfare councils, *Yume Club*, volunteers, the Mutual Support Promotion Council, Community Care Conferences, community comprehensive support centers, and other local facilities. By coordinating these groups, we connect many different networks into one shared system of support. These efforts are combined with everyday mutual help activities carried out by local residents and welfare organizations. Together, this creates a multi-layered support network that can better protect and assist people who are especially vulnerable, such as older people living alone and those with dementia.

- a) Building a community-based monitoring network
- b) Utilization of “*Mimamori Guide*”, the Watching-Over Guide

### Basic Goal 1 (5) Supporting Caregivers

Family caregivers include people of all ages—those caring for both children and older family members, older people caring for other older people, and young caregivers. Some of these caregivers carry an extremely heavy burden. We will strengthen support to reduce the physical, financial, and emotional strain on families who provide care for older people.

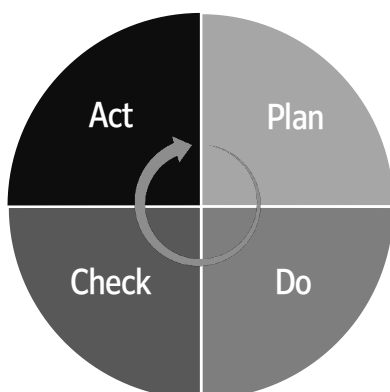
We will also improve how we share information about long-term care insurance, welfare services for older people, and available consultation services. This information will be made clearer and easier to understand, especially for family caregivers, by revising guidebooks and related materials so that support can be accessed when it is truly needed. Looking ahead, we will continue working to reduce the financial strain on caregiving families and to prevent people from having to quit their jobs because of caregiving responsibilities.

- a) Direct Support for Caregivers
- b) Improving Care Consultation Services
- c) Strengthening Consultation Support

## 5. Progress Management of the Age-friendly City Action Plan

To ensure that the action plan is carried out properly, we will continue to manage progress management through the PDCA cycle (Plan – Do – Check/Evaluate – Act). This allows us to make steady improvements by reviewing our actions and making corrections as needed.

### ○ PDCA Cycle Overview



Plan : Identify Issues and Create Plans

Do : Carry Out the Planned Action

Check : Review and Evaluate the results

Act : Improve and Update Actions Based on What Was Learned

## Ninomiya Town Age-friendly City Action Plan

December 2024

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