



## Coexistence with communities

### JR-West Group's approach to coexistence with communities

The JR-West Group has been working with local communities along its train lines to develop areas into places where people want to visit and live through the revitalization of local industries and the enhancement of local resources.

With the rapid changes in lifestyle in recent years, there is a greater need to create prosperous communities that match the circumstances of each area along our lines and to create vibrant local economies that are resilient to disasters and environmental changes.

Through the Group's businesses, we play a role in connecting people, connecting people to communities, connecting real places such as stations and towns to

digital information, and connecting communities along our lines.

By providing solutions that help revitalize each region, we will resolve community issues and realize lifestyles of well-being.



Focus on people's tastes and preferences, support fulfilling leisure activities

Provide lifestyle services utilizing digital technologies such as MaaS and regional point programs

Provide easy-to-use and sustainable regional passenger transport services

Contribute to an environmentally friendly and sustainable lifestyle

Together with local residents, refine and promote the appeal of regions and local products

### Promoting prosperous communities and local businesses

#### Forest Festival of the Arts Okayama: Clear-Skies Country

Northern Okayama Prefecture is an area of beautiful scenery, culture, and attractive regional resources, including the magnificent nature of the Chugoku Mountains, historical towns that flourished as castle towns and post-station towns along old highways, traditional performing arts that have been passed down for centuries, and a wide variety of agricultural products. With the Forest Festival of the Arts Okayama: Clear-Skies Country, we hope to use art as a novel perspective through which to broadly convey the appeal of the region's scenery, culture, and history.

Furthermore, by promoting tourism centered around art, and by developing local products, such as bento packed meals and mizu yokan (a soft, adzuki bean jelly) using local ingredients, we hope to heighten the region's appeal and, thereby, increase tourism-related spending and visitor numbers throughout the region. We are convinced that interaction with artists and tourists will help residents rediscover their region's potential and feel an even greater sense of local pride.

#### ■ Forest Festival of the Arts Okayama: Clear-Skies Country

Period: September 28 to November 24, 2024

Participating areas: 12 municipalities in northern Okayama Prefecture (the cities of Tsuyama, Takahashi, Niimi, Maniwa, and Mimasaka; the towns of Kagamino, Shoo, Nagi, Kumenan, and Misaki; and the villages of Shinjo and Nishiwakura)



Mori no Irodori parfait



Coffee-flavored mizu yokan jelly

#### Freight business using passenger trains

With the primary aims of creating value together with various regions and companies and contributing to regional revitalization, we are operating a freight service that utilizes the vacant space on passenger trains throughout western Japan. By capitalizing on key features of Shinkansen and limited express trains, i.e., same-day delivery, high travel frequency, and low vibration, this service is gaining attention and attracting customers as the first of its kind in the world. It is also helping to address social issues, such as the so-called 2024 problem in logistics and environmental protection.

We have adopted the brand name Fresh West to refer to attractive products from western Japan that are delivered on the same day, in excellent condition, via passenger trains, such as the Shinkansen and limited express trains, and we are working to expand sales channels for local products as well as to disseminate information about the local regions. From fiscal 2025, six JR railway companies will work together to utilize the Shinkansen network to establish a nationwide network that encompasses all companies' service areas and expand business.



### Creating an easy-to-use and sustainable transportation system

Since our company's founding, we have worked with local communities to promote use of our local lines for improving transportation and encouraging tourism. At the same time, however, the social and physical environment surrounding local train lines is undergoing major changes, such as population decline, low birthrates and an aging society, road improvement, and increasing urban development centered on roads. We believe that there are lines where certain key features of railways are not being fully utilized, in terms of mass transportation, and that the advantages that railways offer in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are not being demonstrated.

In light of this, and in order to foster more concrete discussion with local residents, in April 2022 we began releasing information on the business status of lines with a transport density of less than 2,000 people, and we are currently pursuing dialogue about this.

As further population decline and other environmental changes are expected to continue in the future, we believe that, in order to achieve sustainable local communities, it is necessary to work with local residents to create an optimal regional transportation system that is easier to use than the current system, taking into account the differences in the characteristics of each line and the travel needs of each area, and that is tailored to the development of local communities.

Additionally, we are developing solutions related to various means of transportation. We wish to work together with local residents to utilize the power of innovation in exploring and realizing sustainable regional transportation systems.

#### ■ Example 1: Johana Line and Himi Line



For the Johana Line and Himi Line in Toyama Prefecture, together with the prefecture and cities along the line, we have compiled a railway business restructuring plan to improve convenience and comfort, including the introduction of new railcars and IC cards, in order to realize sustainable public transportation that will contribute to future urban development. This plan was approved by the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism in February 2024. (February 9, 2024 morning edition of the Toyama Shimbun newspaper)

#### ■ Example 2: Geibi Line



The first meeting of the restructuring council for the Geibi Line, which runs from Okayama to Hiroshima prefectures (between Bitchu-Kojiro and Bingo-Shobara), was held in March 2024. Discussions are underway with local parties, including the Chugoku Transport and Tourism Bureau, Okayama Prefecture, and Hiroshima Prefecture, to realize a sustainable transportation system free from any specific preconditions.