

Whole City Award 2011

Abstract of Yilan County, Republic of China (Taiwan)

The Population : 459,349 (Whole City Submission Category E)

Yilan County is located to the northeast of Taiwan, covering an area of about 2,143 square kilometers. Slightly triangular in shape, it is girt by mountains and hemmed in between the Xueshan Range and the Central Mountain Range, whilst facing the Pacific Ocean on the East. Prosperous and modern, Yilan commands a highly concentrated population. Since the opening of the Xueshan Tunnel in June 2006, it now takes only 40 minutes to cover the distance from Yilan to Taipei, providing even more ease and convenience of access.

1. Natural and Cultural Landscape Improvement Indicators

In 1997, the Yilan County Government resorted to the collaborative force of community involvement and ecological engineering technology to build the Yilan Riverside Park, which winds around the Yilan City.

In the times preceding 1975, the zigzag Dongshan River was prone to disastrous flooding every year. Ever since the widening and straightening of the river, the flood situation has vastly improved. In 1980, a Forest Park was planned for the upper reach of the Dongshan River, a Water Park for the midstream, and a Waterfront Park at the downstream, which turned the Dongshan River area into a water eco-tourism model.

There were many wetlands and protected areas for wetlands waterfowls. In 1993, through the efforts of conservationists from local bird protection society, a sanctuary for tailless birds was planned for the area.

2. Arts, Culture and Heritage

Yilan County actively preserve the unique features and characteristics of Yilan's local culture and that of its surrounding regions by the guiding principles of encouraging cultural pluralism and diversity, with an emphasis on folk and local cultures. In addition to focusing on keeping a designated registry of the tangible and intangible cultural assets, dedicated efforts have been made to the research, restoration and rescue of excavated ruins of the area. Devise a multi-dimensional development plan aimed at enriching the cultural practices of the Yilan County, and work towards the preservation of our cultural heritage and meeting the sustainable development goal.

3. Best Practices for Environmental Protection

In 1986, Taiwan's Formosa Petrochemical Corporation chose Yilan as the site for building the Sixth Naphtha Cracking Factory, and it gave rise to widespread public concern among the local residents. County Magistrate of that time Mr. Chen, Ding-Nan also publicly opposed the factory after learning of the potential environmental pollution it could cause.

After the campaigning against the entry of the Sixth Naphtha Cracking Factory, in 1992, pursuit of sustainable development, Yilan County initiated "The Constitution of Environment Protection". Furthermore, in 1993, "The Yilan County Environmental Policy Guidelines" was established to serves as the guiding principle for the overall development of the ecological environment in Yilan. The application of the county environmental protection legislation becomes the policy vision and goals for the county.

4. Community Involvement and Empowerment.

Yilan is often referred to as a "Holy Land of Democracy", and that is because it has produced a number of Taiwan's leading political opposition figures. At the same time, thanks to the excellent achievements through local public governance, Yilan has earned the good name as an exemplary city referred to as the "Yilan Experience". It is demonstrated in its good quality public works, a very forward-looking planning and the follow-through of local area development, and the citizens of this place's collective sense of honor and pride.

5. A Healthy Lifestyle.

Yilan is a LOHAS city, with an aim to seek leisure and pleasure. To that end, we actively created a suitable living environment for the residents and tourists to roam at leisure. Actively promoting sports activities and improving sporting facilities, we have initiated the construction of forest trails to provide an environment for both exercise and leisure. Also, in view of the ageing population in the county, we worked on strengthening the social welfare and medical system in order to improve care for the residents and enable them to lead a healthy life.

6. Strategic Planning

Aimed at building Yilan into a LOHAS city, Yilan County Government has set up three strategies to help achieving this goal: turning Yilan into an "Ecological City", a "Creative City" and a "Friendly City", which work in tandem with six major policies: (1) "Economic Growth", (2) "Safe Community", (3) "Holistic Education", (4) "Urban and Rural Harmony", (5) "Environmental Conservation" and (6) "Multiculturalism".



Dongshan River



Yilan County Hall



Scarecrow



International Children's Folklore and Folkgame Festival