Government District Built by Mishima

The present-day main street of Nanokamachi—known as the stage of the Hanagasa Festival—was the first government district developed under the leadership of Mishima Michitsune.

Before coming to Yamagata, Mishima had experience working on the reconstruction of Kagoshima Castle Town and later served as director of the Ginza Brick Town project in Tokyo. Because of this experience, he was chosen to promote modernization in the Tohoku region.

In 1876, he established the prefectural office at the former site of Mannichiji Temple, located at the end of the main avenue. Between 1877 and 1879, he constructed a number of major public institutions: the teachers' college and police headquarters on the eastern side of the district, the city hall and museum on the western side, and the prefectural hospital Saiseikan nearby.

Most of these buildings were designed in the *Giyo-fu* (pseudo-Western) style of architecture and incorporated the latest construction technologies of the time.

Following Yamagata's defeat in the Boshin War, Mishima—who had been dispatched by the central government—believed it was necessary to visibly demonstrate both the authority of the new Meiji state and Yamagata's transition into the modern era. The construction of a modern government district was intended to symbolize this new age.

Examples of similar architecture from the same period still survive in present-day Tsuruoka, including the former Nishitagawa District Office and the Tsuruoka Police Station. These buildings remain valuable examples of early Meiji-era *Giyo-fu* architecture.