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MILESTONES IN INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER THE BELMONTE ADMINISTRATION

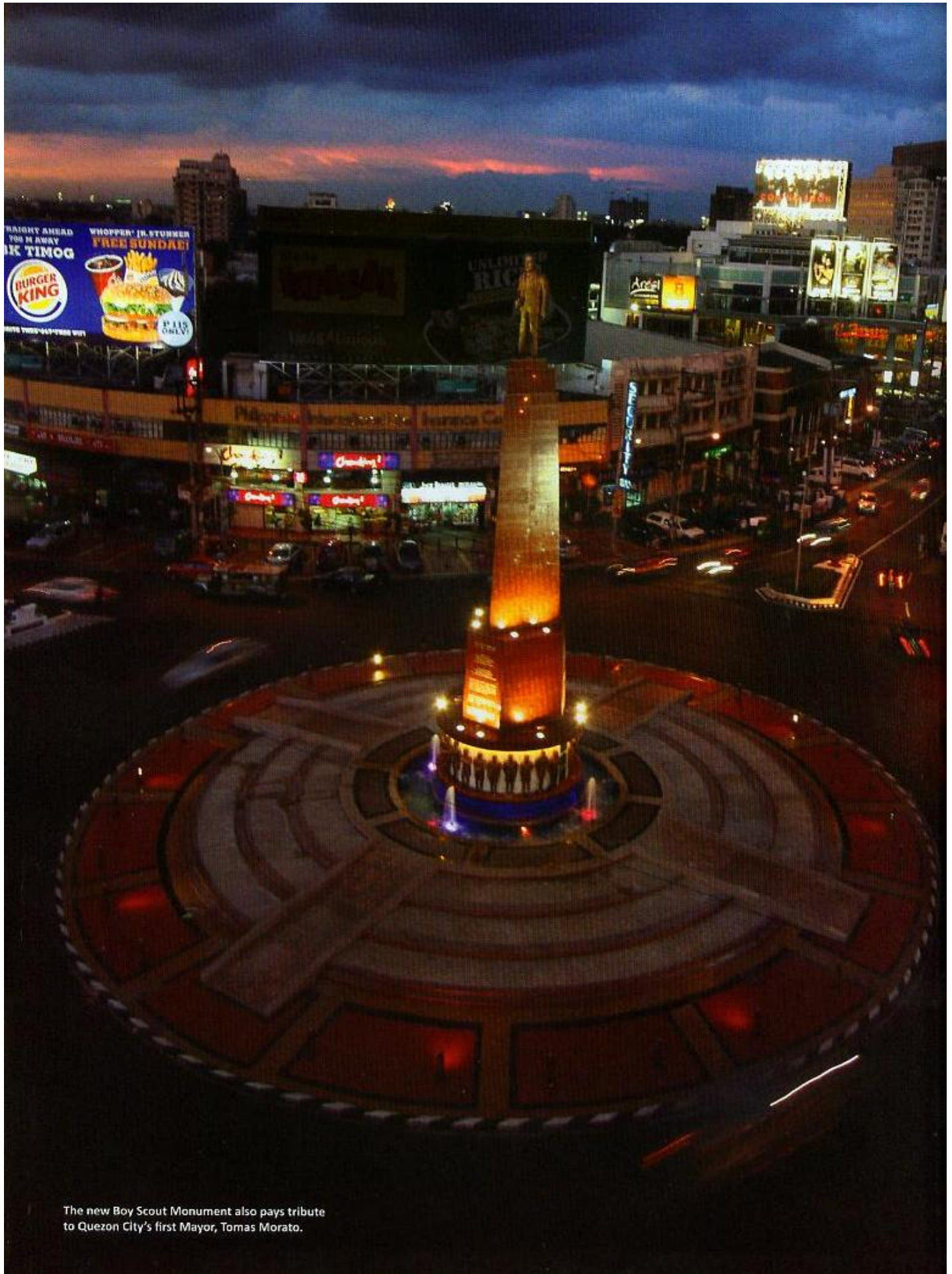




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Quezon City at 70



The new Boy Scout Monument also pays tribute to Quezon City's first Mayor, Tomas Morato.

Pamama



**MILESTONES IN INFRASTRUCTURE
UNDER THE BELMONTE ADMINISTRATION**



PUBLISHER

Engineer Joselito B. Cabungcal

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Michelle A. Bogarin

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Gregorio T. Bañacia

EDITORS

Johannes L. Chua
Christopher A. Datol
Raymund Magno Garlitos

WRITER

Mae Lorraine S. Rafols

PHOTOGRAPHER

Romeo Mariano

ART DIRECTORS

Bong Bundang
Robbie Villegas

LOGISTICS

Arch. Virgilio Regala, Jr.
Engr. Sabina Santos

STAFF

Esmeralda Azarcon
Crisaldo Suarez

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Elliptical Road, Quezon City



Quezon City Public Affairs and
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15/F High Rise Building, Quezon City Hall
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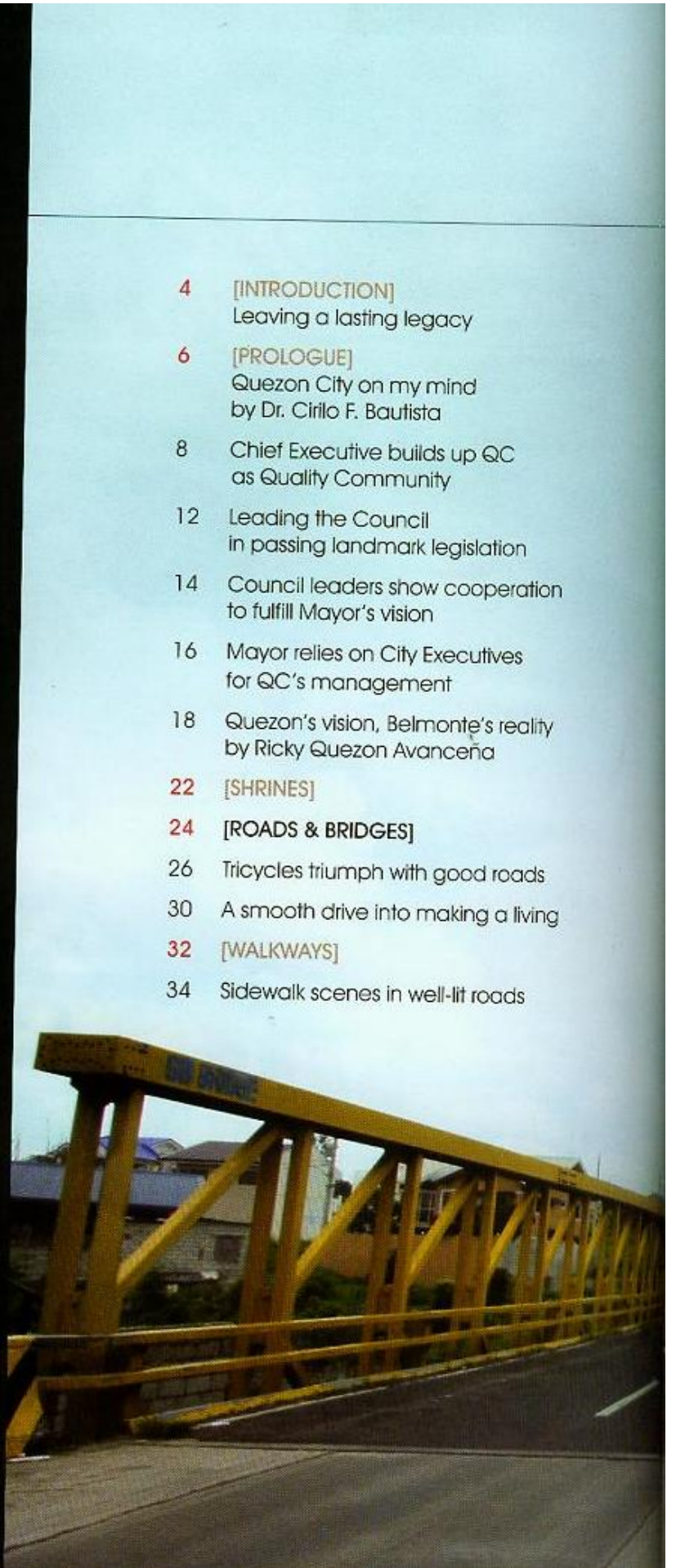
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moistcom@yahoo.com

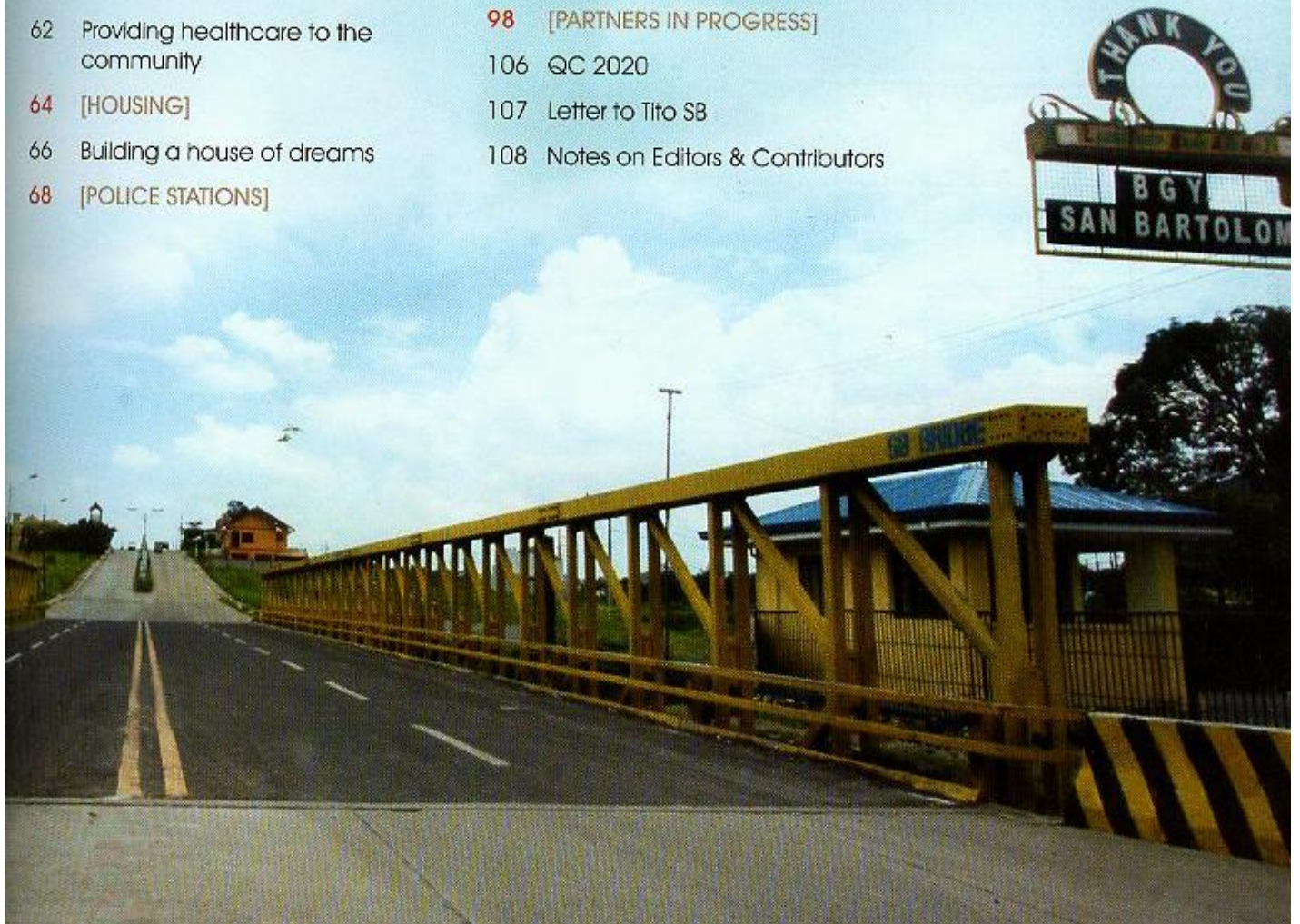


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Leaving a lasting legacy

"Cities are malleable habitats for life. They can be molded, guided, equipped, strengthened and fine-tuned to achieve goals like employment innovation and growth."

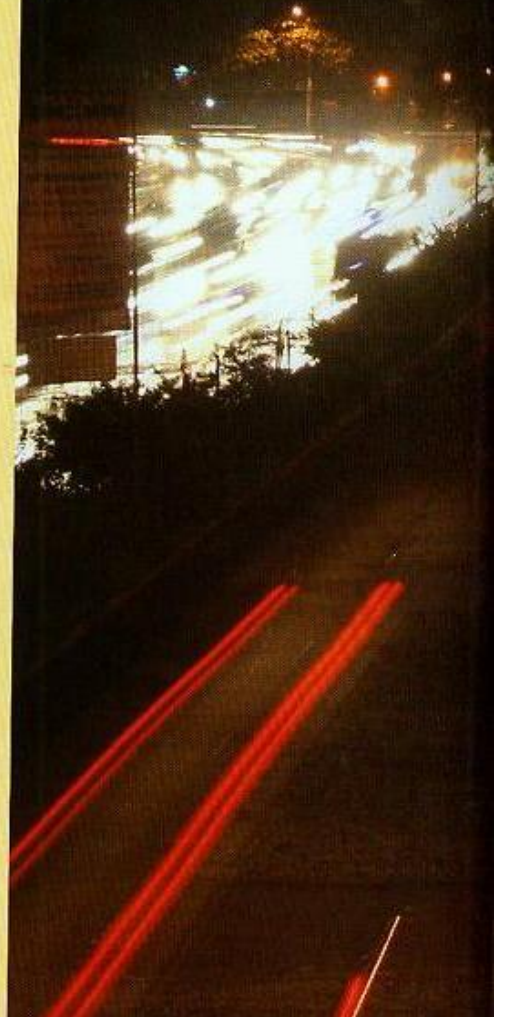
Such words of wisdom we could expect from some philosopher or sage of ages past, but they come from no less than a venerable man whose local governance is effectively anchored on the present and whose achievements are markers of a better future — Feliciano 'Sonny' Belmonte, Jr., three-term mayor of Quezon City whose leadership has created an indelible impact on his constituents. And with his wise governance, the people have witnessed a transformation of a city that is gifted with well-built infrastructure meant to benefit the future generation.

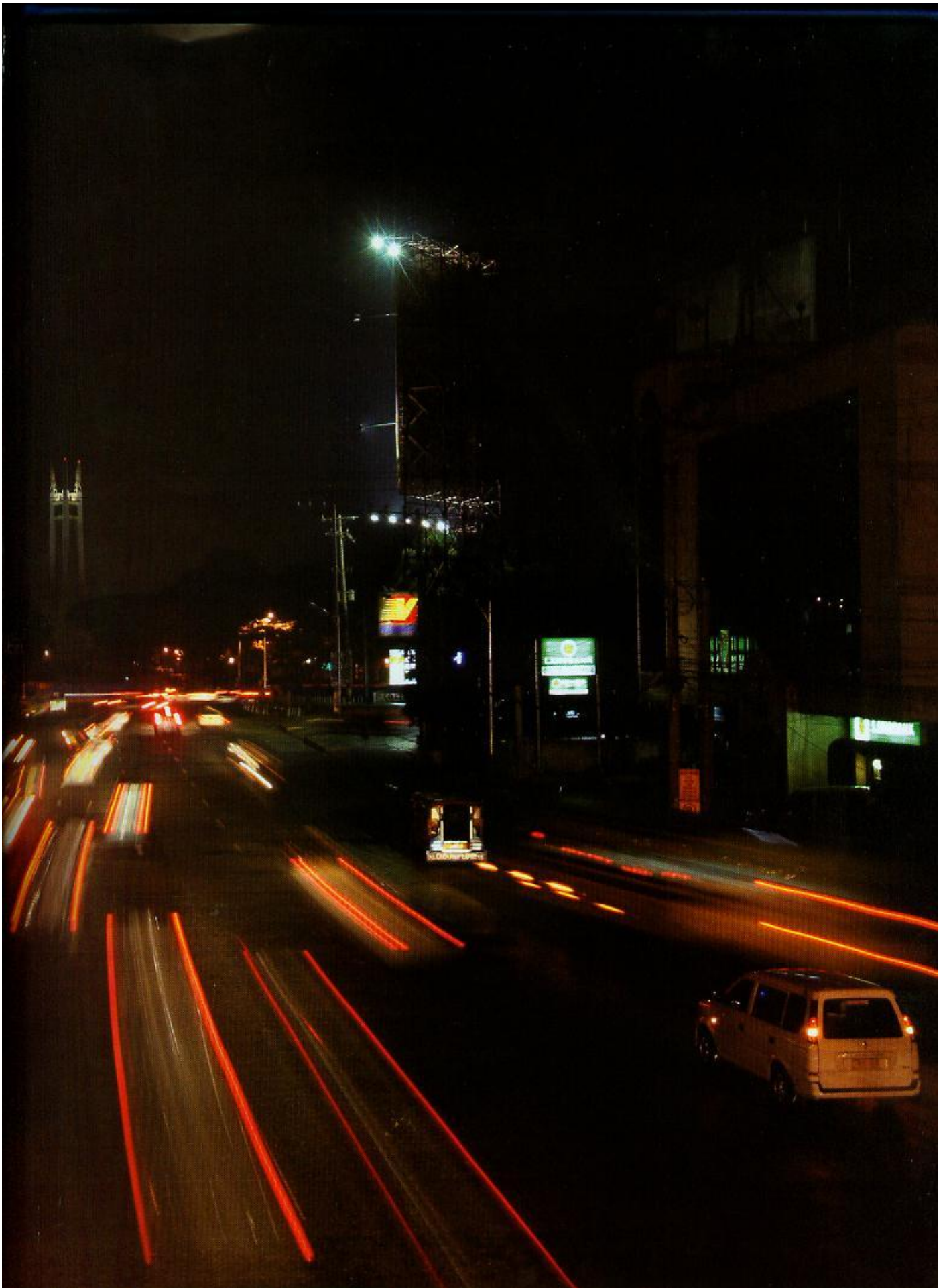
It is with the same guiding words of wisdom that *Pamana — Milestones in Infrastructure under the Belmonte Administration* is similarly conceived. This book is a testament to the many palpable structures established by Belmonte that are intended for use now and in many years to come. Quezon City is the realization of the dreams of a great President, Manuel Luis Quezon, who envisioned it 70 years ago to be the premier city of the country. Today, that great aspiration is being continued by Belmonte, who assumed leadership in 2001 and has effectively steered it for almost a decade, with effective governance, toward becoming one of the most strategically planned cities of the future. Today, Quezon City is the seat of modern and comfortable living in the country, leading in revenues and ceaselessly improving its landscape.

In this book are stories and images of people and places that have witnessed and gained most from this vision. The results speak for themselves: improved roads and bridges translate to better income and improved livelihood of drivers and operators, enhanced sidewalks mean more pathways for safety of the citizenry and venues for businesses to prosper, revitalized places of recreation like parks and sports venues provide people with areas for self-improvement and wellness, an improved police force equate to more efficient crime fighting, additional school buildings and classrooms endow the students not only with a better quality of education but also a better future, better hospitals signify better healthcare and welfare, and more housing programs restore the dignity of the Filipino family.

These stories do not only denote accomplishments — they underline the importance of infrastructure as it transforms the lives of people who use them (for they are meant to be used, after all) and bring about a better quality of life to all the residents of this city, effectively saying that living and working in Quezon City is the best option.

While a good leader serves his people through charitable acts in order to improve their state, a wise leader builds a thriving community for his people to live in for them to fashion lives of dignity and self-actuation. With this book, we hope to see a people motivated by one man's selfless aspirations so that, in the larger scheme of things, we see Quezon City more than just a metropolis of achievements, but also a sanctuary where all dreams come to fruition.





Quezon City on my mind

by Dr. Cirilo F. Bautista

Gawad Manuel L. Quezon Awardee for Literature, 1996

Change and Progress — these are the twin banners of development for Quezon City. As a resident for more than 40 years, I have seen how it nurtured and nourished its capital wealth to achieve a prime position among the local governments of the country. The present city administration has succeeded with a simple blueprint of action — combine infrastructure with ecology-based, people-oriented programs that will have maximal benefits for the citizenry. This involves the study and assessment of existing resources and directing them to more positive accomplishments. After years of application, the fruit of this attention to man and nature as building blocks of advancement is seen in the new, sparkling topography delineated by fine hotels, high-rise business centers, condominiums, schools, hospitals and natural parks. They pull together the colorful and varied elements of a thriving city.

Until the early 1980s, however, Quezon City was one vast sprawling conglomeration of idle tracks of land, ricefields, and government housing projects. If you were a student living in Manila, the State University seemed to be on the far side of the mountains, reachable only by private cars or by one bus line. Going there was more like embarking on an excursion — you passed by some groups of houses, fields overgrown with cogon grass, solitary factories, and empty lots where trees struggled to survive against garbage and an unmerciful sun. The difficulties of distance and expenses involved in getting to U.P. discouraged me from enrolling there.

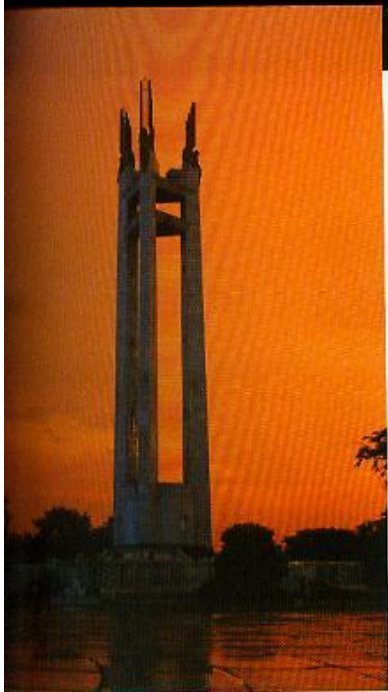
On the other southern side, with the city hall as reference point, the Cubao area was an equally distant place, dotted with few residential structures and many pieces of empty land before the advent of the Araneta commercial center with its imposing dome. Eventually the

Araneta area became the common venue for most big athletic and civic events in the country. I used to take the De Dios Transit to get to a friend's house in New York Street, and in those times it seemed to me a long and uninteresting journey. Just after the junction of Tomas Morato Street and E. Rodriguez Avenue I would see Jolo Lema Happy Valley, a popular swimming resort regularly advertised over the radio.

Quezon Avenue, from the Welcome Rotonda to EDSA, was lined with hardware stores, medical clinics, restaurants, movie houses, schools, churches, and commercial establishments dealing in house materials, cars and car accessories, and books. I frequented Alemar's with



Construction of the pylon of the Quezon Memorial Shrine.



its wide stocks of books and educational materials at reasonable prices. For movies, I would drive to Delta Theater or Circle Theater. Traffic was light mostly anywhere and crimes against persons and properties dropped significantly, especially during the Martial Law period. On Sundays, families trooped to the Parks and Wildlife Center for rest and relaxation, having picnics under the spreading trees and watching the zoo animals.

By the late 1980s, however, the great wind of change was blowing over the city. Martial rule was over; widespread optimism gave fresh vision to the stakeholders in the different levels of concern; a new constitution was perceived to be an agent of a new life. Development needed to keep up with the increasing population, so the administrative planners had to redesign an updated agenda for progress, one that was both rational and visionary. It took a long time, political will, and patience before that progress could be re-

alized, but now we see it pervading the city landscape.

An invigorated commercialism has turned idle lands to profitable business ventures. Novaliches emerged as a boom area whose various subdivisions sheltered a new social class culled from diverse origins and abilities. To a large extent, infrastructure has redirected the life and leisure of citizens in the areas of Cubao, Quezon Avenue, Timog, and Libis, to mention a few. Banawe Street now is home not only to many car shops but also to rows of first-class restaurants. With the rise in land value brought about by a deep sense of property and related taxes, the engendered wealth benefits more and more people, pushing the wheels of commerce forward. A network of road connection links the major business, residential, and medical areas, increasing population mobility and cutting travel time to and from any point in the city. The underground passage from the City Hall to the Quezon Circle has eased the flow of vehicles and deloaded foot traffic above ground. The enhanced natural garden in Quezon Memorial Circle provides a most welcome oasis of leisure and reflection for citizens.

But what I like most in this new Quezon City is the prevailing infrastructure set-up geared towards small self-reliant communities. Whereas before they were dependent on downtown establishments for their life necessities, now they can procure them without leaving the ambit of their location. In Sta. Mesa Heights where I live, for instance, our residences are surrounded by clusters of establishments dealing in practically all kinds of concerns — convenience stores, markets, restaurants, fast food franchises, hospitals, cargo forwarders, pharmacies, banks, schools, churches, car shops, bakeries, barbershops, digital shops and plant nurseries, to mention a few. Self-contained and independent, these communities save residents much time and effort in purchasing household items and obtaining personal care services. They are a great help in these times of traffic gridlock for multi-tasking professionals and parents, because almost everything now is within their reach.

In my mind, Quezon City takes care of the total human person in its drive to harness the products of its progress.

“ AS A RESIDENT FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS, I HAVE SEEN HOW QUEZON CITY NOURISHED ITS CAPITAL WEALTH TO ACHIEVE A PRIME POSITION AMONG THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF THE COUNTRY. THE PRESENT CITY ADMINISTRATION HAS SUCCEEDED WITH A BLUEPRINT OF ACTION.”



Future perspective of the Quezon Memorial Circle.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr.

Chief Executive builds up QC as Quality Community

In almost nine years in office, Quezon City's Chief Executive has transcended his role as the city's highest-ranked official.

He has acted as a Father who sees to the needs of his children — the constituents living under his jurisdiction.

He has evolved into a planner, carefully taking into account all requirements for the implementation of his projects and delegating the right parties to accomplish these tasks.

He has become a builder, working together with well-chosen organizations focused on efficiency to put up infrastructure that will enhance the cityscape.

This all stems from day one of his assumption of duty. Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. has always been a visionary with one goal in mind: to transform the city into a Quality Community.

Transforming the cityscape

The quest for urban transformation was made possible by, among other efforts, posting the highest investments for infrastructure development.

"Growth is stimulated by an efficient infrastructure network and well-planned communities. That is why Quezon City, beyond its current operating expenses, generates the highest percentage of savings among local government units (LGUs) to fund infrastructure development, now going on at a rate never experienced by the city before," Mayor Belmonte said.

The City Government's average annual infrastructure investment growth rate is pegged at 71.3%. From a mere P315 million in 2001, the city's funding for infrastructure development has risen by more than tenfold over the past seven years.

Mayor Belmonte cites his accomplishments in his 8th State of the City Address: "Our physical transformation has come at an investment of P16.68 billion thus far, at a pace faster than our city has ever experienced. This represents an average infrastructure investment of P2 billion annually from 2002 to 2009. Now we have 160 square kilometers of greenery, highways and urban landscapes that are turning into attractive places to live in and thriving areas of commerce."



The Mayor tops off the QC Civic Center.



Mayor Belmonte confers with City Treasurer Dr. Victor B. Endriga.



The Mayor inspects the construction of QC's first underpass with OIC City Engineer Joselito Cabungcal and Arch. Virgilio Regala, Jr. of the Engineering Department.



“GROWTH IS STIMULATED BY AN EFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK AND WELL-PLANNED COMMUNITIES. THAT IS WHY QUEZON CITY GENERATES THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF SAVINGS AMONG LGUs TO FUND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT.”

Through his initiative, depressed areas were given new life and purpose. Payatas, Novaliches, the Batasan area, among others — through new infrastructure and public centers, these formerly blighted areas have emerged into quality communities, and restored dignity and hope to the lives of its residents.

From a sleepy city banking on its initial function as a “dormitory of workers,” Quezon City is also fast catching up to its neighbors to become a modern, cosmopolitan destination for commerce and leisure — a “City of the Future.”

Transformation has begun at the North and East Triangles, setting the stage for further growth. The development plan aimed to establish the 250-hectare Quezon City Central Business District (QC CBD) into a well-planned, mixed-use environment, model community with business, residential and institutional components.

Another recent development is the 38-hectare UP-Ayala Land Technohub along Commonwealth Avenue, which began operations in 2008. Following the success of the pioneering cyberpark in Eastwood City in 2001, Quezon City now has 30 Philippine Export Zone Authority (PEZA)-registered information and communications technology (ICT) parks and buildings. The impressive growth of this industry in recent years prompted national government agencies and businesses to dub Quezon City as the “ICT Capital of the Country.”

These are complemented by continuing improvements along the major thoroughfares by way of urban setting enhancements. Four of the city’s major thoroughfares — Timog, West, Visayas, and Tomas Morato Avenues — as pilot sites of the city government’s sidewalk redevelopment programs, now boast of wider, more aesthetically pleasant sidewalks, well-delineated parking areas, and new streetlights that combine to re-energize these areas as conducive centers for business and recreation.

Ninety percent of the city’s road network has been improved, cleared and expanded at an investment cost of P7.34 billion. Working with funds generated by his beefed-up bureaucracy, Mayor Belmonte made sure to put the city’s resources to good use.

Working with the government

Through road infrastructure projects done in conjunction with the plans of the national government, Belmonte’s team focused on the bigger picture: to serve as a catalyst for progress within and beyond the boundaries of Quezon City.

These developments include the linking of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) to the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX), the improvement of Quezon Boulevard, the completion of Congressional Avenue Extension, and the extension of Commonwealth Avenue to Quirino Highway.

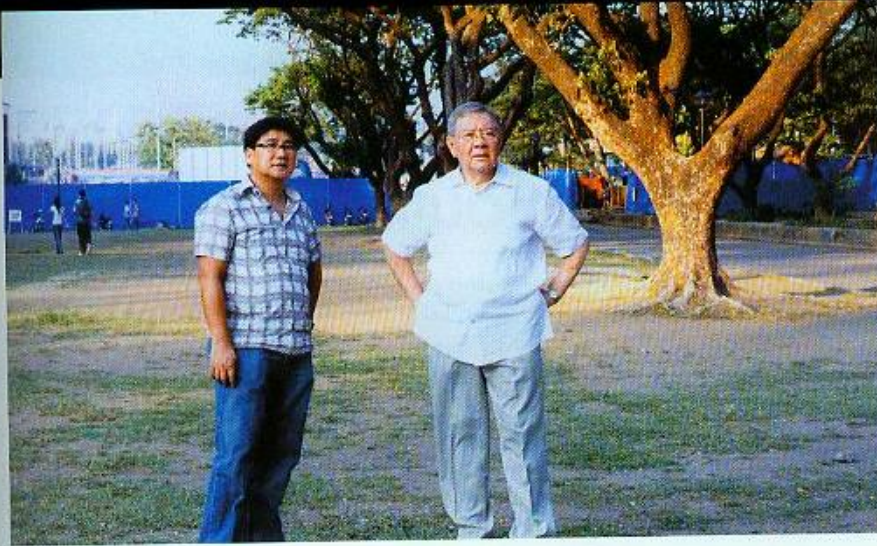
“The goal is to provide short access points between high population communities and main thoroughfares. That is why from 2001 to early 2009, the city invested P6.64 billion for the improvement and expansion of the city’s road networks, as well as the rehabilitation of bridges and



At the 8th SOCA.



Unveiling a health center.



Mayor Belmonte with OIC City Engineer Joselito Cabungcal.

sidewalks. This is equivalent to almost 582 kilometers of roads, bridges and sidewalks that have already been concreted or asphalted and improved," the Mayor noted.

Centers for service

With regard to service establishments, Mayor Belmonte supplemented his social development programs with physical infrastructure. To address the growth rate of enrolment by 2 to 3% each year, 98 school buildings have been built, containing 1,624 new classrooms at a cost of P2.8 billion. To enhance the service capacity of the city's healthcare system, the city government constructed 19 new health centers and repaired or renovated 21 others since 2001.

The City Hall complex itself has been under various infrastructure improvements. New structures have been introduced to the compound, including the soon-to-be-completed twin tower eight-storey structures, and the extension of the City Hall Annex which will house the City Treasurer's Office and Accounting Department. These additional facilities are designed to enhance public service efficiency.

Public parks have been carved out to support efforts in greening the city. About 89 have been significantly upgraded and redeveloped while 276 others were effectively repaired. "And of course, we have made substantial contributions for the development of the 33-hectare La Mesa Ecopark, and the 26-hectare Quezon Memorial Circle which we are now managing. *Ngayon, dahil sa ating pagpapayayos, pinakikinabangan ito ng nakararami, bata man o matanda* (Now, because of the improvements, they benefit everybody, young and old alike)," Mayor Belmonte added.

The city's noble heroes are also being honored with fitting monuments. Well-known artists have been commissioned to render designs for the 1,000 sq. m. Tandang Sora Shrine near the site of the heroine's in Banlat; the new Ninoy Aquino Monument, as well as new monuments for national heroes Jose Rizal and Andres Bonifacio and former President Corazon Aquino.

"These monuments are not only odes to greatness but reminders of the heights of achievement that are possible for all of us," Mayor Belmonte said.

Service for the people

Based on the latest available land use survey, more than 5,000 hectares of land in Quezon City are yet to be developed. This has attracted the attention of large-scale developers wanting to put up integrated, mixed-use communities. Quezon City has become the location of choice for outsourcing and offshoring business. Its vast areas available for development and large human resource assets are key attractions for both foreign and local investors.

Cited as the "Most Competitive City" in Metro Manila and ranked as an Asian "City of the Future", with a reputation as a model of best practices both locally and abroad, Quezon City rides on a momentum of transformation and unprecedented progress.

This, he has made possible, and even more. When he relinquishes his position, Mayor Belmonte, will go down in history for abiding by what his initials stand for: *Serbisyon Bayan*.



Mayor Belmonte receives the Galing Pook Award for Payatas from President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.



At the groundbreaking of the UP North Science & Technology Park.



At the inauguration of a bridge that will benefit residents.

Vice Mayor Herbert M. Bautista

Leading the Council in passing landmark legislation

The Belmonte-Bautista tandem has overseen the evolution of Quezon City through three consecutive terms spanning nine years. But more than just being a silent partner, Vice Mayor Herbert M. Bautista is considered by Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. to be a crucial component of the city government.

Among the Vice Mayor's most important roles is that of Presiding Officer of the City Council. This position, established through the 1991 Local Government Code, is a revolutionary tool for local development. It has allowed the peaceful exchange of ideas between each member of the Council and ultimately led to the creation of relevant ordinances and resolutions for the benefit of the city and its constituents.

Among these policies are the landmark legislation that set the stage for the infrastructure development of the city. And throughout the Belmonte years, Bautista lived up to his role enthusiastically, as an active and loyal partner of the Mayor and the City Council.

"If we compare our infrastructure development to previous administrations, we could cite asphalt overlays and concreting of roads, and construction of school buildings and *barangay* halls. But there was a lack of funds at the time, so not all areas were benefited. Through our Revenue Code, we made it possible to generate income for the city coffers. This enabled the Mayor to work with more funding and provide more services for the people," he said.

Legislation also made possible the approval of the city's annual appropriations or budget, a big bulk of which was allocated to the various infrastructure projects of the Mayor.

"It is important for Mayor Belmonte to implement our Comprehensive Drainage System Plan which includes the proper cementing of roads and fixing the drainage system and side-



Vice Mayor Bautista (center) with Joy Belmonte - Alimurung (4th from right) at the inauguration of the Yakap Daycare Center in Brgy. Escopa 3, Project 4.



walks. Now, our road network is 80 to 90% concretized and completed," the Vice Mayor noted.

Among the areas that benefited dramatically from all this development is the Payatas District, which formerly hosted a dumping site. Today, most of the roads have been cemented, restoring dignity to the lives of its indigent residents.

"Our infrastructure projects have also motivated the residents to improve their own lives, starting with their homes and communities. From there, small enterprises were put up and the communities have become more vibrant. People from the area now say, with dignity, that they are from Payatas," Bautista said.

Anticipating all the growth that the city has been experiencing, Bautista revealed that they are presently working on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan of Quezon City which is set to be passed on December 2009. Areas have been identified and classified as residential or commercial.

"At the rate things are going, and much as we would like to accommodate as many businesses as possible, we have to observe the proper zoning ordinances to maintain certain areas as pristine as they are. Quezon City, after all, was envisioned by former President Manuel L. Quezon to be a residential city."

Bautista is likewise a proponent of urbanism, which promotes the live-work-play concept for satellite cities. This theory also espouses walkable districts, where zoning enables the efficient traffic of both vehicles and pedestrians. Because of the aggregation of leisure and business centers near areas of residents, people don't need to travel far.

The Vice Mayor has also been pushing for new concepts in public management which are being used in Australia, the United States, United Kingdom, and other European countries. These concepts promote a very strong partnership between the private sector and the local government, and espouses re-engineering bureaucracy, among others.

The city has been acknowledged both locally and internationally for its enormous strides in progress. Bautista added: "Since the start of the Belmonte administration from 2001, we have been building institutions and putting programs and developments in place. That is why in 2010, regardless of who wins, what is important is what has been planned collectively by its people. I believe that the type of politics that the people need and want is a continuous progress which Quezon City has earned for the past several years under the Belmonte administration."

Bautista also hinted that despite the pace of progress that Quezon City has experienced, there are still plenty of things to look forward to: "As we walk through the process of legislation and planning, we are all excited for what is to come. We are confident that we can do it. Welcome to the 21st century Quezon City."



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Council leaders show cooperation to fulfill Mayor's vision



An old adage claims that two heads are better than one, but in Philippine politics, agreement is one difficult subject especially among policy-makers set on pursuing their own agenda.

Within the local government of Quezon City, there are 24 elected City Councilors who represent the four districts of the national capital's biggest city. The majority are associated with the ruling party, while the minority or the opposition fulfills the crucial role of fiscalizing the system.

With someone like Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. as their Mayor though, the 24 City Councilors are defying the norm and effectively working together to help their leader achieve his vision for Quezon City.

This symbiotic relationship also speaks well for all the citizens, who ultimately are the beneficiaries of all these impressive efforts.

ARIEL INTON, *Majority Floor Leader*

Councilor Ariel Inton, who holds the record of being the longest-serving Majority Floor Leader of the Quezon City Council through three consecutive terms of office, is equally proud of his contributions to the Belmonte administration.

"The Councilors have been very supportive of the programs and vision of Mayor Belmonte. I don't recall any incidence when the Mayor had a problem with the Council in terms of ordinances and resolutions that support the executive and legislative agenda," he said.

Among these measures is the approval of the city budget every year, which is always passed ahead of time, Inton noted. When it comes to infrastructure projects, they are always supportive of ordinances that the Mayor endorses.

But he is quick to add that just because the ordinances are executive-sponsored does not mean that the Council will give them special attention.

"The Mayor trusts his Councilors. Contrary to a lot of views that he dictates to the Council, it is quite the opposite. If he wants something passed, he goes through the process by presenting the merits of the ordinance, and consults with me as his Majority Floor Leader. But he would not twist arms, or dictate upon us. He respects us as equal bodies of local government."

Initiatives from the Councilors have likewise paved the way for other projects that helped improve the landscape and economic profile of Quezon City. He even hinted that just to complete certain infrastructure projects, they go to such lengths as approving loans from the national government to complete road networks that are joint ventures with Quezon City – the only city which can afford to do such, he claimed.

Inton and the rest of the Councilors are also thrilled with the prospect of Quezon City progressing into a hub for information technology through the establishment of the Quezon City Central Business District (QC CBD).



"THE COUNCILORS
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BELMONTE."



The Councilors of the 17th Quezon City Council.

As his final term comes to a close in 2010, Mayor Belmonte will also leave with him nothing but cherished memories with the Councilors, Inton said.

"I thank the Mayor for the confidence and trust that he has given me in leading the Council. Those nine years have yielded an enlightening and very smooth working relationship that would be difficult to match."

JESUS "BONG" SUNTAY, *Minority Floor Leader*

As Minority Floor Leader, Ex-Officio Member of all standing committees, and "fiscalizer" of the Quezon City Council, Councilor Jesus "Bong" Suntay is focused on his role to ensure that all proposed ordinances and resolutions will redound to the benefit of the people.

Even if he leads the minority bloc, he affirms that he is never disruptive about the actions of Mayor Belmonte, since everyone concedes that the good leader has been always concerned about the betterment of Quezon City.

"The Mayor has done so much for QC, and we can all see that. He turned it around and transformed it into the richest city, while making sure that the benefits reach the people," Suntay said.

He said that those coming from the upper income levels, and even the poorest of the poor, are satisfied with what is happening to the city. Problems are being adequately addressed by the local government, which is quite a feat in itself for the largest city in Metro Manila with the biggest population.

He also acknowledged the cooperation of all members of the Council both from the majority and the opposition, which have led to the success of QC.

"Even if we belong to opposition, it does not mean that everything from the administration should be blocked. We are here to make sure that the services our constituents need will be delivered and I believe that they are being sufficiently addressed, so we seldom oppose the measures from our mayor. Even the budget, which is approved by the Council, is recommended by the Mayor. So when he submits the annual budget of the city, we allow the lump sum appropriation for the infrastructure projects. I believe that this is good proof that we are working hand in hand with Mayor Belmonte," Suntay explained.

"QC is growing exponentially. When investment goes in the city, then it means more services to be provided to our constituents. We trust the Mayor in doing what is good for the city. We are all here to serve, and I believe all of us are doing it properly."



"WE TRUST THE MAYOR IN DOING WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE CITY. WE ARE ALL HERE TO SERVE, AND I BELIEVE ALL OF US ARE DOING IT PROPERLY."

Mayor relies on City Executives for QC's management

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. relies on dependable people to carry out his plans, among them two notable executives in his government who work as diligently as any elected official. Assigned to their positions, the City Administrator and the Secretary to the Mayor both deserve credit for living up to the expectations of Mayor Belmonte in terms of managing the city. Both offices have ensured that the Mayor's vision is implemented effectively, redounding to the benefit of the constituents who also expect only the best from their local government.

ATTY. PAQUITO OCHOA, JR., *City Administrator*

The Office of the City Administrator assists the Mayor in the management and administration of the Quezon City government. Headed by Atty. Paquito N. Ochoa, Jr., the office has the crucial task of developing plans and programs as well as strategies and implements them, particularly those which have to do with the management and administration-related programs and projects.

"We are tasked to provide assistance to the Mayor in the supervision and monitoring of programs and activities of the different agencies of the city government down to the *barangay* level," Atty. Ochoa said. "For the past nine years, we have shared in the pride of the city as it evolved into a model of governance both locally and abroad."

As the city administrator, it is also Atty. Ochoa's function to recommend to the city mayor certain operating systems and procedures that can help streamline and upgrade the organization.

"Since he assumed the role of Mayor, he has always run the city as a corporation. We have always admired his professionalism, while his dedication inspires us to fulfill our own duties for the city's benefit and its constituents," Atty. Ochoa added.

In addition, the office also provides direction in personnel management and coordinates with their counterparts in the national government as well as other local government units in Metro Manila for matters in the nature of public concern and service.

The office may be considered as the Mayor's principal advisory, monitoring and coordinating arm relative to general operation and the city's financial administration.

TADEO PALMA, *Secretary to the Mayor*

The Office of the Secretary to the Mayor primarily functions as the mayor's arm in the implementation of the city's various projects and services.

Headed by Tadeo M. Palma, this unit provides recommendations and endorsements to the Infrastructure Committee as to what infrastructure projects need prioritization.



"FOR THE PAST NINE YEARS, WE HAVE SHARED IN THE PRIDE OF THE CITY AS IT EVOLVED INTO A MODEL OF GOVERNANCE BOTH LOCALLY AND ABROAD."

The office also attends to the requirements of the Presidential Management Staff (PMS) in the various affairs scheduled and attended by the President whenever she is in Quezon City.

"We also handle the medical services of the Mayor in coordination with the city's Barangay Operations Center (BOC) and the Social Services Development Department (SSDD). We are actively involved in all his activities, and we are truly honored to work with such a great Mayor and a brilliant man who will always be remembered fondly by his constituents and everyone who has worked for him in City Hall," Palma enthused.

Considered as the mayor's political arm, Palma's unit likewise handles the community mortgage program of the city in coordination with the Urban Poor Affairs Office (UPAO), Presidential Commission on Urban Poor and the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC).

Quezon City may be the biggest urban area in the national capital, but with efficient executives like Ochoa and Palma backing the Mayor, the rest of the population can be assured that the city is always well-served and managed, with the lives of its residents geared towards a promising future.



"WE ARE HONORED TO WORK WITH SUCH A GREAT MAYOR AND A BRILLIANT MAN WHO WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED FONDLY BY EVERYONE WHO HAS WORKED FOR HIM."



Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. and Vice Mayor Herbert M. Bautista with the Chief of Departments and Offices and Task Forces. Not in photo are Conrad Buenaventura (Assistant OIC of Amoranto Sports Complex), Lino Illera (OSCA), Bobby Baruelo (Fire Marshal, QCFD), Nestor Velasquez (Warden of QC Jail), Esmeralda Azucena (Wardress, QC Female Dormitory), Salvador Enriquez, Jr. (Head, TAC), Jose Castro (OIC, Office of the City Assessor), Marian Orayani (City Budget Officer), Aproniano Boongaling, Jr. (Senior Adviser to the Mayor), Elias Jesus Santos (Land Titling Unit), Eden Villanueva (OIC, Administrative Management Office), Nena Ordonez (Project Officer, QC-BACO), and Adriano Apostol (OIC, Amoranto Sports Complex).

Quezon's vision, Belmonte's reality

by Ricky Quezon Avanceña

W

are truly a fortunate people to have had the first nationally elected president of the Philippine Commonwealth as founder of our city — Manuel Luis Quezon was a visionary. Equally blessed are we to have had a mayor like Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte, Jr. — a man who gets things done. We owe to these two men both the substance and form of Quezon City today.

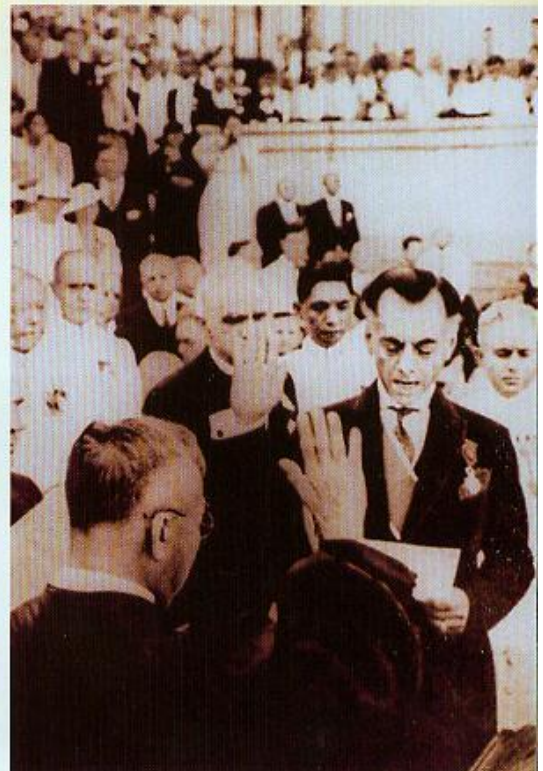
Quezon's vision of the establishment of a premier city remains to this day the driving force, the heart and soul, the very essence of the body of infrastructure that Mayor Belmonte has created. This infrastructure has provided flesh and bone to the spirit of an undying and unwavering dream.

The centers of civilization, commerce and housing that had been created by the Spanish colonizers — Intramuros and the surrounding areas, had become woefully inadequate to service the ever-growing needs of a burgeoning metropolitan population. The succeeding American colonizers had attempted to provide the much-needed public infrastructure — some of which can still be seen to this day in all their neo-classic glory: the old Legislative building outside the walls of Intramuros, for example. By the time Quezon assumed the presidency, however, it became clear to him that Old Manila would be unable to accommodate the demands of the times. In his inaugural address as President, he declared, "We shall build a republic not from the ashes of the past but from the standing materials of the present." And thus was conceived our shining city on a hill.

"QUEZON'S VISION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PREMIER CITY REMAINS TO THIS DAY THE DRIVING FORCE — THE HEART AND SOUL, THE VERY ESSENCE OF THE BODY OF INFRASTRUCTURE THAT MAYOR BELMONTE HAS CREATED."



Famous picture of President Quezon as he sat solitary on an empty expanse of land in an area where today stands Camps Crame and Aguinaldo.



Inauguration of two visionaries:
President Quezon and Mayor Belmonte.

There is a famous picture of President Quezon as he sat solitary on an empty expanse of land surrounded by *cogon*, an area where today stands Camps Crame and Aguinaldo. He was in his field clothes – riding boots, khaki pants tucked in, with matching khaki shirt. Quezon was wearing his *bastopol*, a hat that resembles a bowler but is made not of cloth or fabric but hard plastic (a “stylized” construction hat). In that photo, Quezon gazed at the emptiness in front of him, but his eyes betrayed an intensity that one does not normally encounter with someone who is daydreaming. It is as if the man is actually seeing his city of the future in his mind’s eye. It was also the picture of a man who understood the enormity of the task that lay ahead.

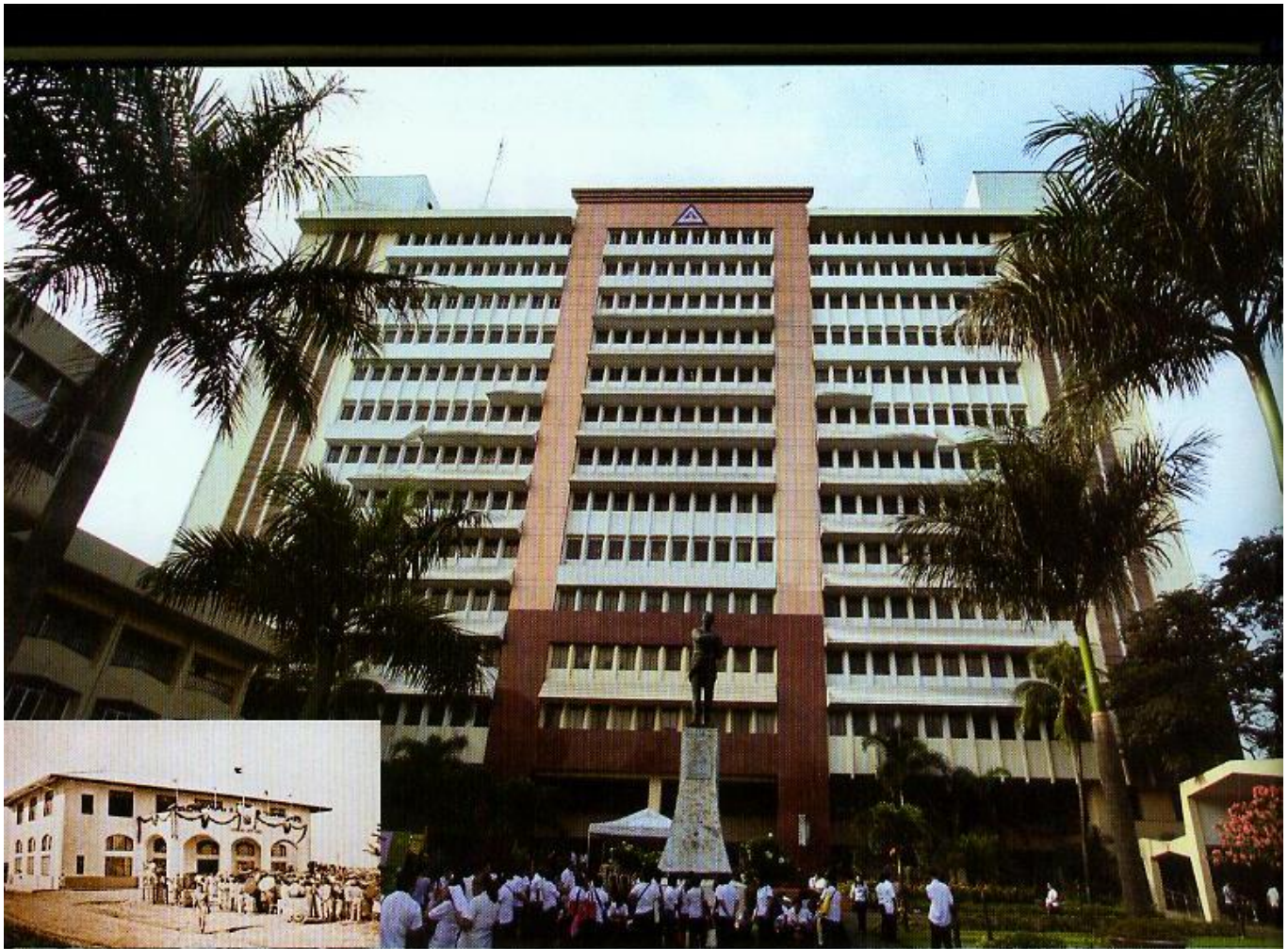
Quezon’s realization of Old Manila’s eventual overcrowding, wherein archaic national government offices would soon be insufficient to effectively provide services to the people, and residents were forced to live in substandard housing, or endured a long commute to and from surrounding towns – the President’s critics would pillory him mercilessly in his attempts to address these problems.

When the President declared that the University of the Philippines campus would be transferred to the Diliman area, many people thought it was downright stupid. Diliman literally means a dark place in Filipino and sure enough, in those days it was a dark, secluded and empty area. But Quezon knew the Manila campus would not be able to accommodate generations of Filipinos who would be in need of a first-rate state-run University.

Quezon’s critics then derided his dream city by claiming it was but another massive public works project meant to feed his massive ego and penchant for self-aggrandizement. The avenues and boulevards Quezon sought were much too wide and had too many lanes, considering the amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic then. Today, less than a century after Quezon City’s founding, it has taken the political will, resourcefulness, and can-



Quezon and Belmonte have always
considered the welfare of the youth.



The Quezon City Hall; the first City Hall (inset).



The vibrant Araneta Center today; the Araneta Coliseum in the 1970s (inset).



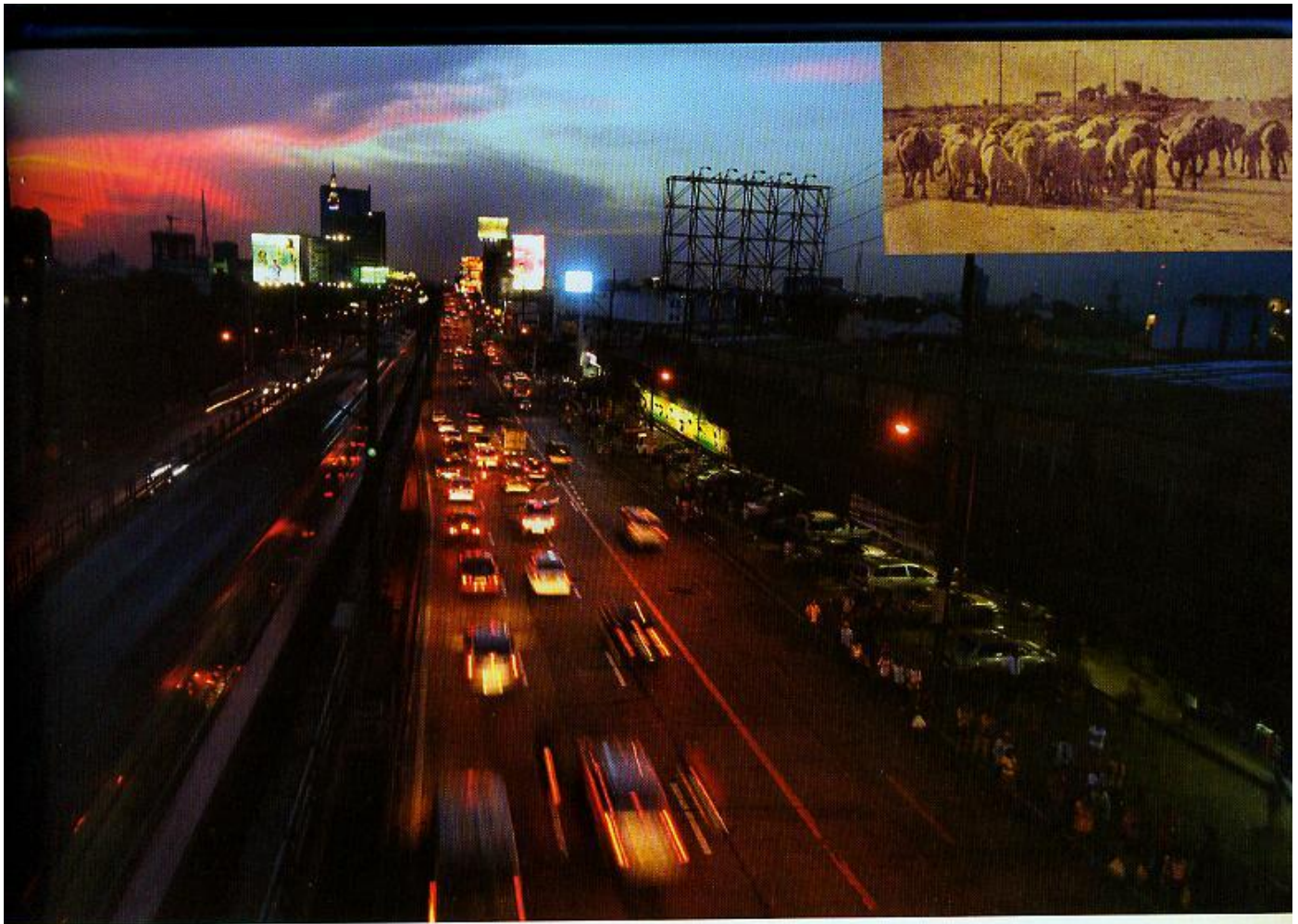
do attitude of Mayor Belmonte to add and implement much-needed infrastructure in order to keep pace with the greatest cities in the world – just as what Quezon had envisioned.

After Quezon's assumption to the presidency, the increased workload that his position entailed aggravated his worsening illness of tuberculosis

which then, before the advent of antibiotics, had no cure. Exposure to clean, fresh air and rest was all that the doctors could advise their patients to alleviate the malady. Quezon therefore acquired a house in New Manila, in a subdivision being developed by Doña Magdalena Hemady.

At that time, the area was still quite secluded and surrounded by empty fields and rolling hills. This country retreat on Gilmore Avenue would be Quezon's first house in Quezon City. Before becoming Malacañang's first Filipino resident, Quezon lived with his wife and children in Roberts Street in Pasay.

As a gift to his wife Aurora, Quezon also acquired a property in what is now the Phil-



Present-day Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (EDSA), earlier known as Highway 54, as shown during the 1950s (inset).

ippine School of Business Administration (PSBA) campus. The lot had a commanding view of the sunrise which aptly stands for "aurora" – the dawn.

This gift of love to his wife would eventually play an important part in our nation's history. After the attack of the Japanese on the Philippines, it was considered too dangerous to hold meetings in the

Palace as the national officials would be like sitting ducks awaiting a Japanese air attack. Malacañang is easily visible from the air since it is situated on the banks of the Pasig River, with no cover.

An air raid tunnel constructed in Quezon's property, and under the clusters of mango trees outside, was where the final Cabinet meetings were held. This is where they decided what plans of action to take and who would go with Quezon to Corregidor. Soon after, Quezon would leave for Corregidor, and from there go to the United States via Australia. Quezon died in exile in America just before the war ended. He would never see his beloved country again nor the fulfillment of the city of his dreams.



The bustling commercial district of Timog and Morato Avenues; it used to be a grassland in the 1960s (inset).



Tandang Sora Shrine



Boy Scout Monument



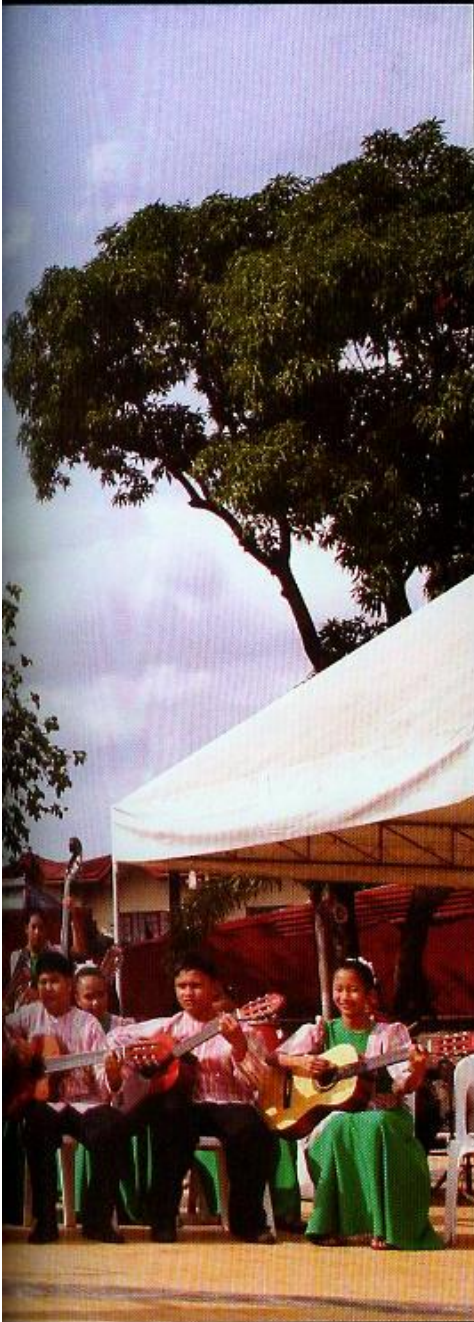
Mabuhay Rotonda



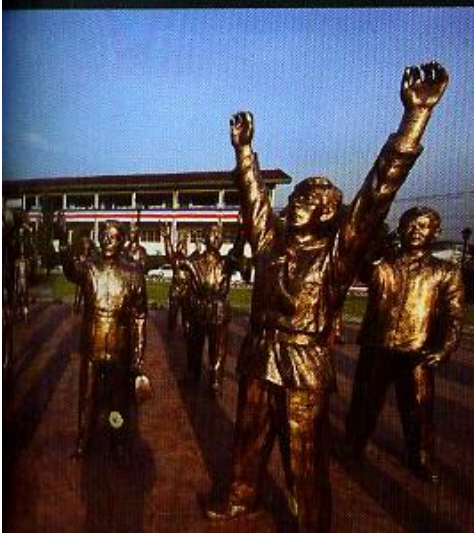
Cry of Pugadlawin Shrine

HISTORY LIVES ON IN THE MONUMENTS AND SHRINES THAT PAY TRIBUTE TO GREAT MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE MADE THEIR CITY PROUD. UNDER MAYOR FELICIANO BELMONTE, JR.'S ADMINISTRATION, VARIOUS SHRINES AROUND THE CITY HAVE BEEN REFURBISHED TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF POPULAR HEROES AND HISTORIC EVENTS, AMONG THEM REVOLUTIONARY HEROINE TANDANG SORA AND THE CRY OF PUGADLAWIN. THESE SHRINES SERVE AS MORE THAN JUST PHYSICAL SYMBOLISMS OF HEROISM – THEY DEFINE THE CITY'S IDENTITY WHILE INSPIRING THE PEOPLE TO BE JUST AS NOBLE.

Shrines

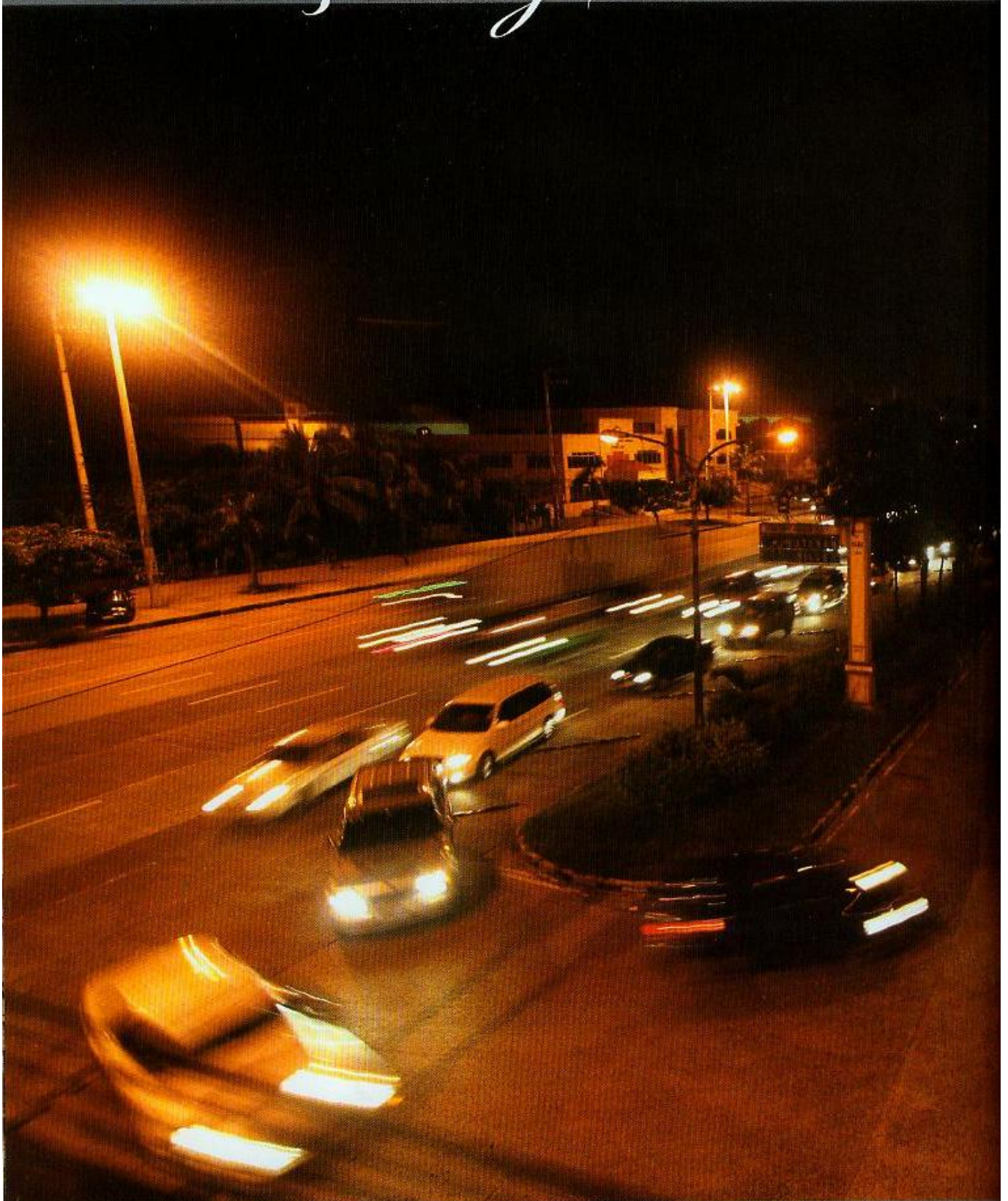


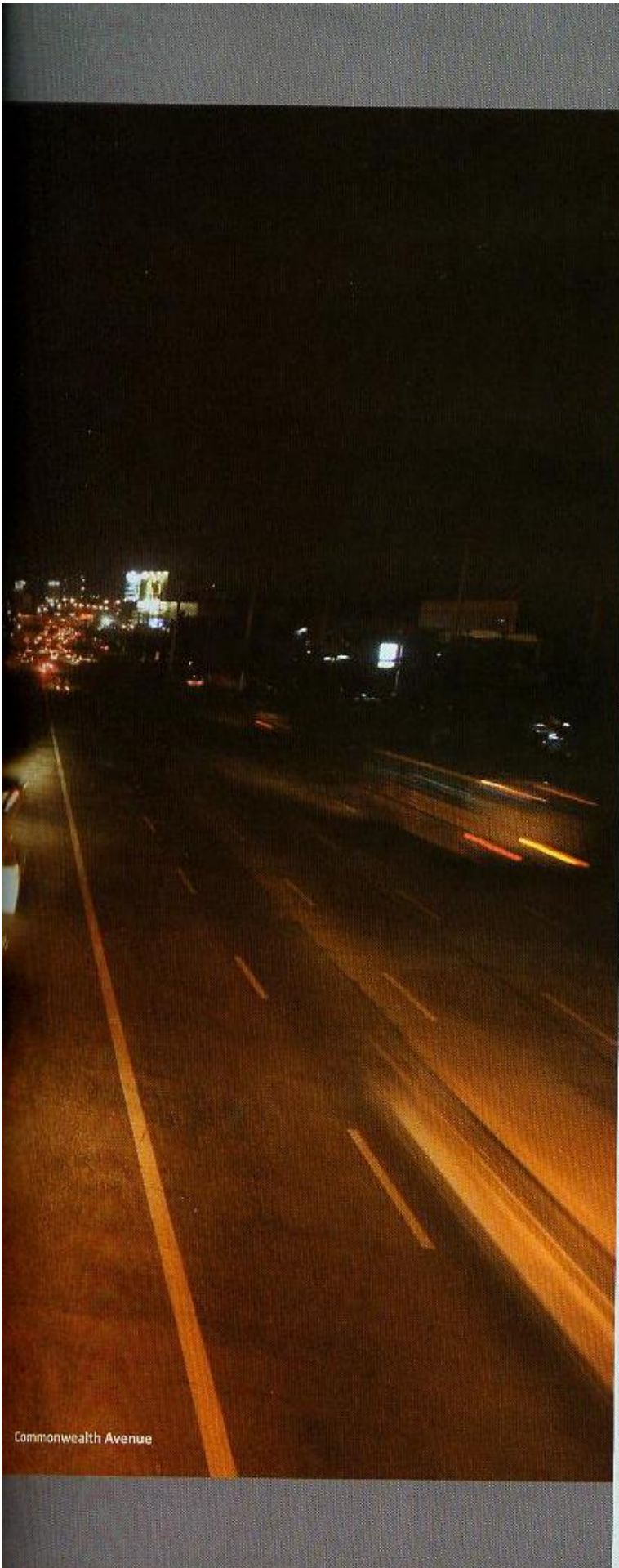
People Power Shrine



Our Lady of EDSA Shrine

Roads & Bridges





Commonwealth Avenue



GOOD STREETS AND BRIDGES LEAD TO OPPORTUNITIES

A well-maintained community is like a healthy human body. In the same way, streets and bridges are like the blood vessels that sustain its life. Without a well-designed network of passageways, community growth is hampered when the mobility of people and commerce gets impeded and the delivery of services put on hold. Since 2001, the Belmonte administration has endeavored to improve the condition of its thoroughfares through the construction, widening and repair of roads and bridges to make sure they are safe and convenient for passage. Now, many of the city's commuters and transportation workers benefit from this scheme, with roads and bridges becoming avenues for connectivity and livelihood opportunities.

Tricycles triumph with good roads

Since 2001, the Quezon City government has started an extensive and almost exhaustive effort to improve the condition of its streets and major thoroughfares by means of rehabilitating old ones, either by concrete or asphalt, and making sure they are free of hindrances.

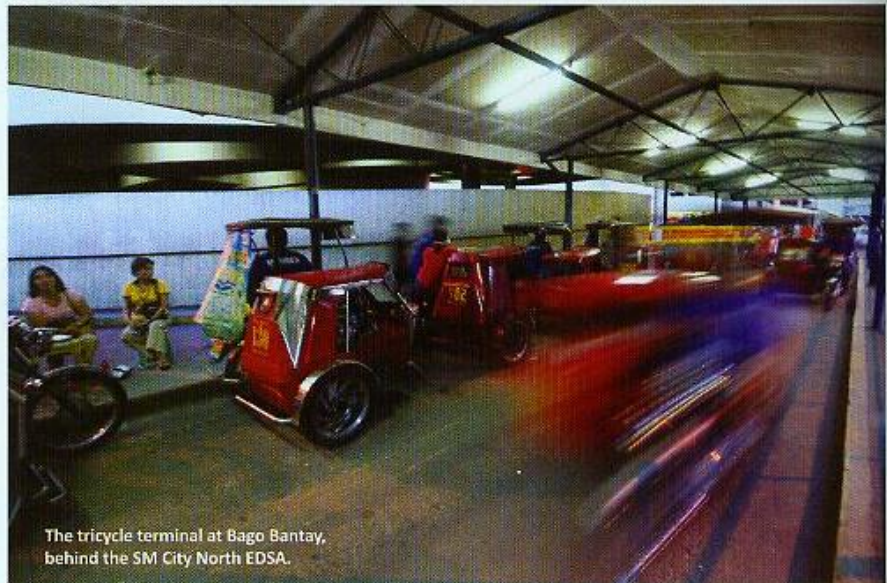
As we ascertain the fact that many lives depend on good streets, one form of public transport has been a visible image in the city streets — the tricycle. While a reliable means of transportation for many, it also competes for space with the jeepney and the taxi cab. At the same time, the proliferation and non-regulation of tricycles can also pose an unhealthy balance on the road. How do we balance their presence in the streets without compromising the tricycle driver's means of livelihood?

Dexter Cardenas, head of the city's Traffic Operations Unit (TOU) and officer-in-charge of the Tricycle Regulation Unit (TRU), knows that managing the different tricycle operations all over Quezon City is like walking on a tightrope. A visit to his office will reveal the queues of tricycle drivers and operators airing their grievances on many issues that affect their work. "Our goal is to systematize the tricycle systems in the city by providing better terminal areas and making the different tricycle operators and drivers' associations (TODAs) adhere to rules and standard fare rates," he said.

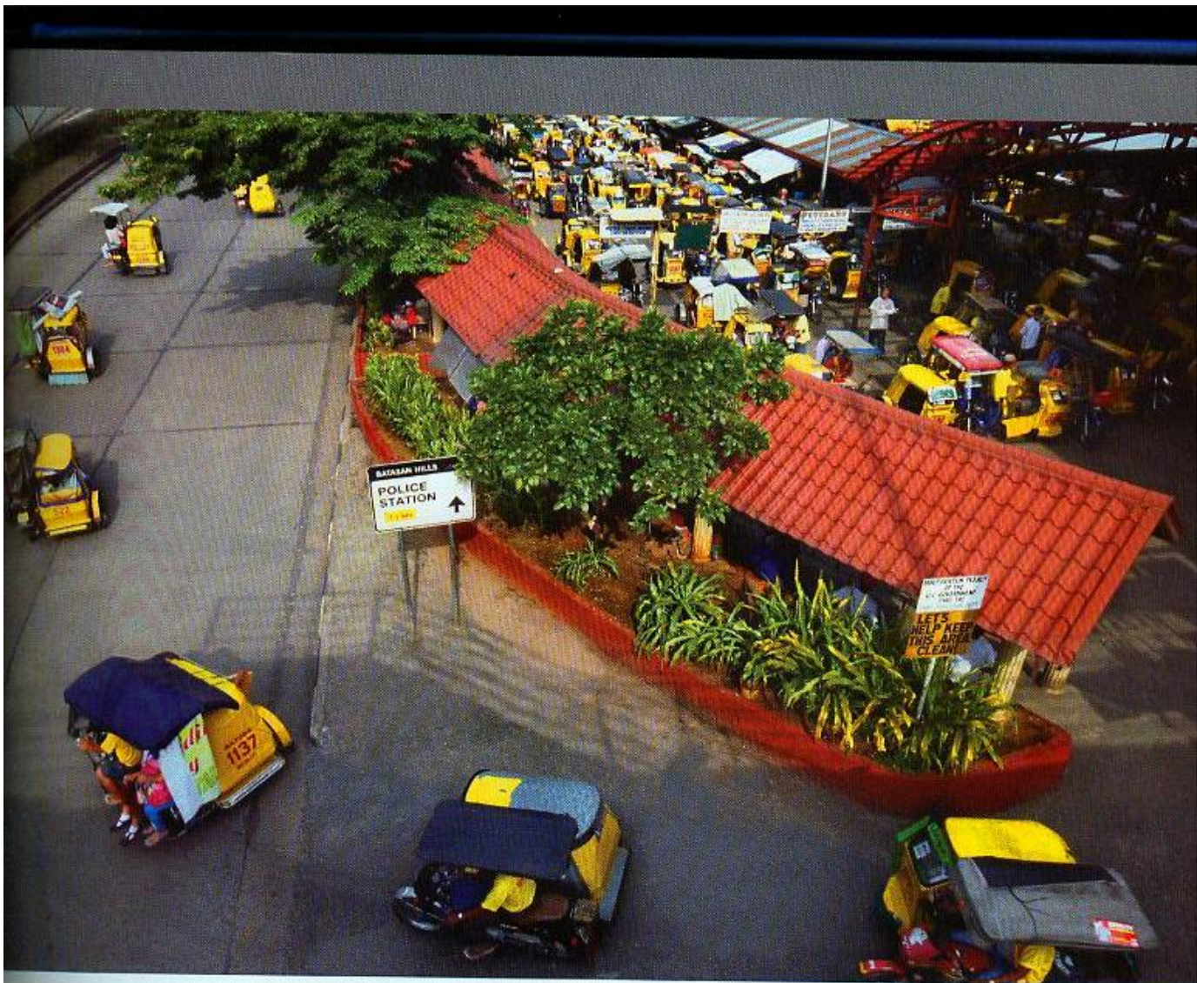
Cardenas added that the Quezon City government has made several improvements in road safety and traffic while carefully considering the concerns of the tricycle drivers and operators. They have successfully coordinated with the different *barangays* in designating areas for terminals and delineating boundaries by which they can operate. Markings on the tricycle units and uniforms have been standardized to give the tricycle drivers a respectable appearance.



Dexter C. Cardenas, head of the city's TOU and OIC of Tricycle Regulation Unit.



The tricycle terminal at Bago Bantay, behind the SM City North EDSA.



The TRU, according to him, has also made gains in regulating the different franchises in the city in order to prevent colorum tricycles from operating. Tricycles that violate the established rules and regulations are imposed stiff penalties that include not only fees but also possible suspension of their franchises and confiscation of their tricycles.

"The results show that efficient collection of fees and penalties have jumped more than a hundred percent within the one-year period, from June 2008 to June 2009," he explained as he showed that efficient implementation of rules and imposition of penalties have made the streets safe and convenient.

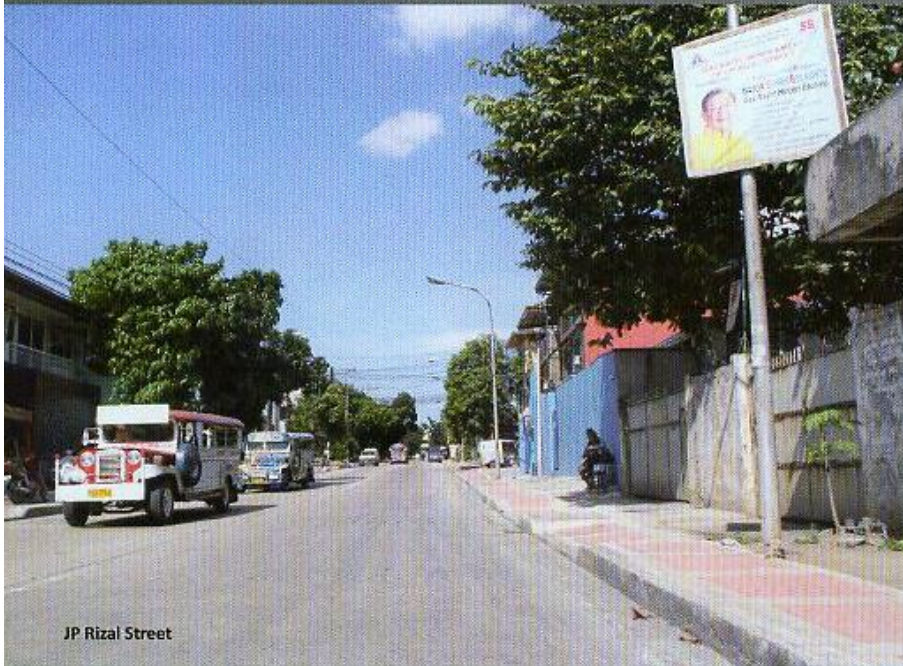
While these rules may prove to be a bitter pill to swallow for many erring drivers and operators, the results show that the improvements made will benefit people in the long run. Alejandro Q. Bautista or Mang Alex, an officer of one of the biggest tricycle groups in the city, the Batasan Tricycle Owners and Drivers Association (BATODA), said that while they compete with other forms of transportation plying the same routes, they now enjoy smoother roads. Accidents involving their units have significantly decreased.

"It is still a long way to go if you look at the way things are going now, but you can already see the positive results if you look further," he said, citing the new Batasan Road which is now wider and removed of its obstacles, with traffic from both sides smoothly flowing on most days.



Tricycles come and go at the BATODA terminal, considered as the city's largest.

Alejandro Q. Bautista, officer of the Batasan Tricycle Owners and Drivers Association (BATODA).



JP Rizal Street



“ROADS ARE THE LIFELINE OF A COMMUNITY. UNDER THE DYNAMIC MISSION AND VISION OF THE QUEZON CITY GOVERNMENT UNDER MAYOR FELICIANO BELMONTE, JR., STREETS AND THOROUGHFARES ARE REVITALIZED AND IMPROVED, MAKING THEM SOME OF THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY. IN TURN, THEY HAVE TRANSFORMED THE WAY ITS RESIDENTS LIVE, AFFORDING THEM CONVENIENCE AND EASE OF TRAVEL.”

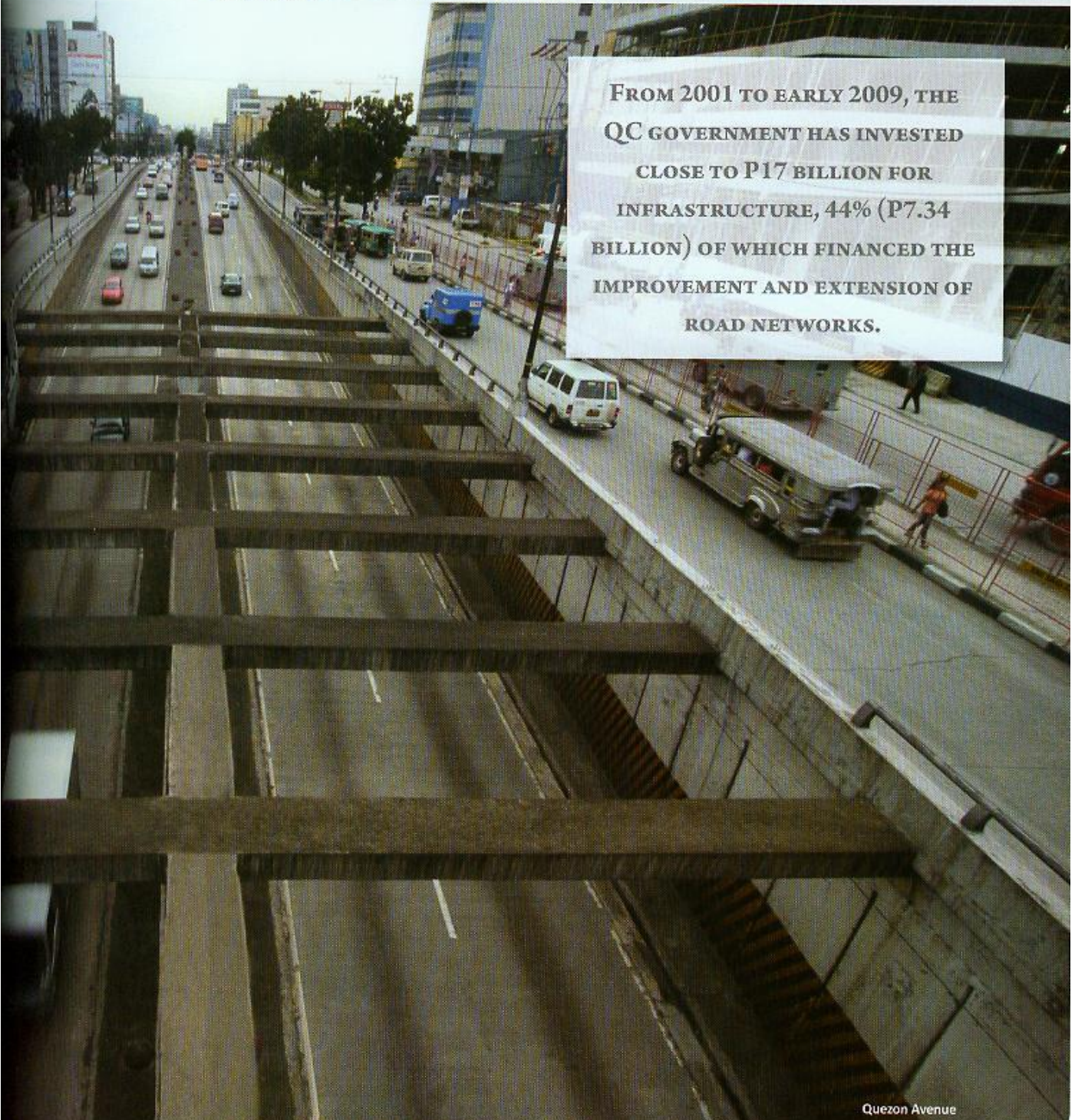




Mindanao Ave. Footbridge



Tunnel leading to Eastwood



FROM 2001 TO EARLY 2009, THE QC GOVERNMENT HAS INVESTED CLOSE TO P17 BILLION FOR INFRASTRUCTURE, 44% (P7.34 BILLION) OF WHICH FINANCED THE IMPROVEMENT AND EXTENSION OF ROAD NETWORKS.

Quezon Avenue

A smooth drive

into making a living

The roads and highways of Quezon City are perhaps the best in the metropolis, and they keep getting better.

Constructed from the beginning with wide road networks, driving around Quezon City is an enjoyable experience. There is usually more room for traffic to move, and the well-paved roads are kinder to vehicles.

During the term of Quezon City visionary mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., many of Quezon City's road networks were rehabilitated and improved – even opening inner streets for better traffic flow. Road construction became one of his priority projects, as good roads often mean better access to most of the area's business and lifestyle hubs, thus improving livelihood opportunities to its residents.

The improvement of the roads was more beneficial to local public utility vehicles (PUVs) drivers who ply the roads on a daily basis. Various transport associations felt the immediate improvement brought about by good roads.

For members of the Mindanao-Tandang Sora Transport Association Incorporated (MTSTAI) for example, they were able to ferry more passengers who take their route on their way to different work destinations when the roads were rehabilitated.

"It cut travel time by almost 30%," said Edgardo Arzadon, MTSTAI member.

Aside from their usual route (roads leading to the North Avenue station of MRT), Arzadon also shared the positive sentiments of his fellow drivers.

"There were so many improvements during the time of Mayor Belmonte. Problem roads like Quirino Highway leading to Novaliches and the North Luzon Expressway definitely took a turn for the better," he said.



With seamless roads, public FX drivers now have an easier time making a living.



President Arroyo and Mayor Belmonte lead the inauguration of the Atherton Bridge.

What used to be a typical 30 to 40 minute trip from Novaliches to the MRT station via Quirino Highway and Mindanao Avenue has gone down to 20 to 25 minutes — and that includes traffic due to vehicle volume.

Arzadon said that the road widening project, as well as using cement instead of the usual asphalt road cover made most of the drivers' jobs more convenient.

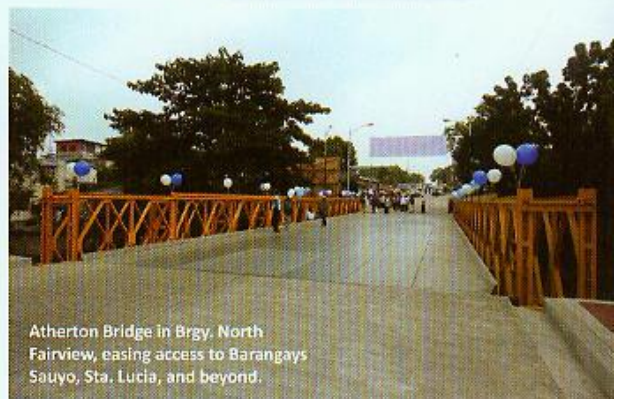
"There used to be so many potholes on Quirino Highway which affected the suspension of vehicles, particularly older cars. But when they finished cementing the highway, people enjoyed a smooth drive everyday," he said.

Opening small streets that lead to other cities greatly improved traffic flow, as well. For those going to Caloocan for example, from areas such as Project 6 and Novaliches, travel time has been cut to more than half because of the introduction of the SB Road — a special access route that offers a more scenic view towards the next city.

In front of the Quezon City Hall, vehicles can now ply the road at a smoother pace since they no longer have to worry about pedestrians crossing, thanks to the city's first underpass which ensured both the safety of commuters and motorists alike.

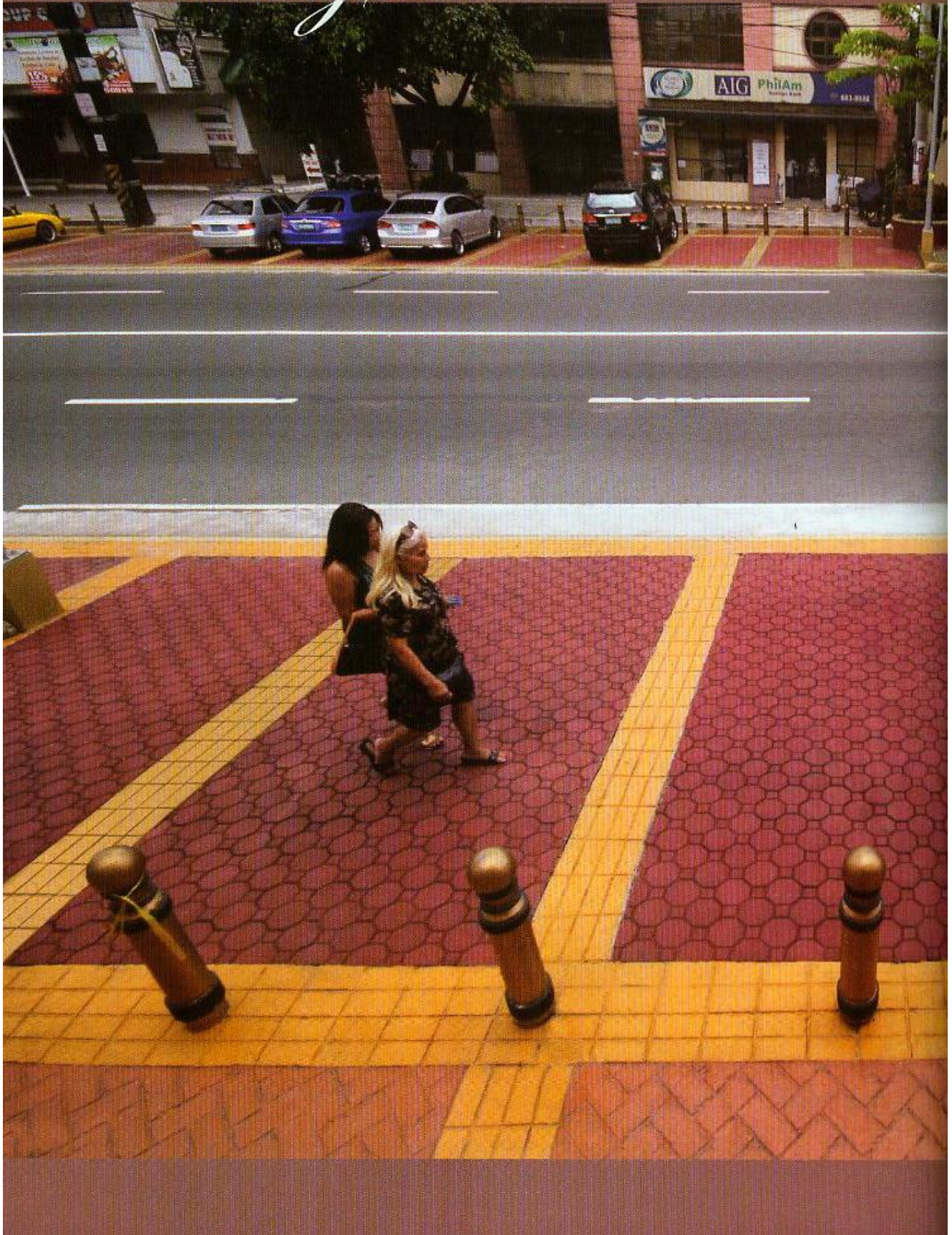
And the improvement doesn't stop with the road condition alone. Arzadon said that streets and highways that used to be very dark are now illuminated with modern streetlamps and electric posts.

"It's not just about having beautiful roads, but safer ones that benefit most of the Quezon City residents. We appreciate the better roads a lot because it makes our lives so much easier," he said.



Atherton Bridge in Brgy. North Fairview, easing access to Barangays Sauyo, Sta. Lucia, and beyond.

Walkways





WALKWAYS SHOW THE PATH TO SAFETY AND ILLUMINATION

Walkways not only provide a safe path to people from vehicle-dominated streets; they also reflect a community's aesthetics. Sidewalks in Quezon City, well-lit and marked, are proof of the Belmonte administration's success in complementing road improvement, through the installation of lampposts and street signs. Recently, the construction of the underpass from the City Hall to the Memorial Circle does not only offer convenience and security; it also walks the pedestrian through history with pictures that chronicle the city's progress. These walkways remind us that the city will always be clear as we reach our destinations.

Sidewalk scenes in well-lit roads

The strip of Tomas Morato Avenue in Quezon City is more than just a major thoroughfare of people going around the area. Its endless line of restaurants, food stalls, cafés, delis and novelty shops makes the place a certified food mecca.

Whether it is lunch or dinnertime, people from all walks of life are attracted towards the wide road of Tomas Morato for a satisfying meal. There is a choice for everyone — Filipino, American, Italian, French, New Age, Fusion — even just for a bite of sweets.

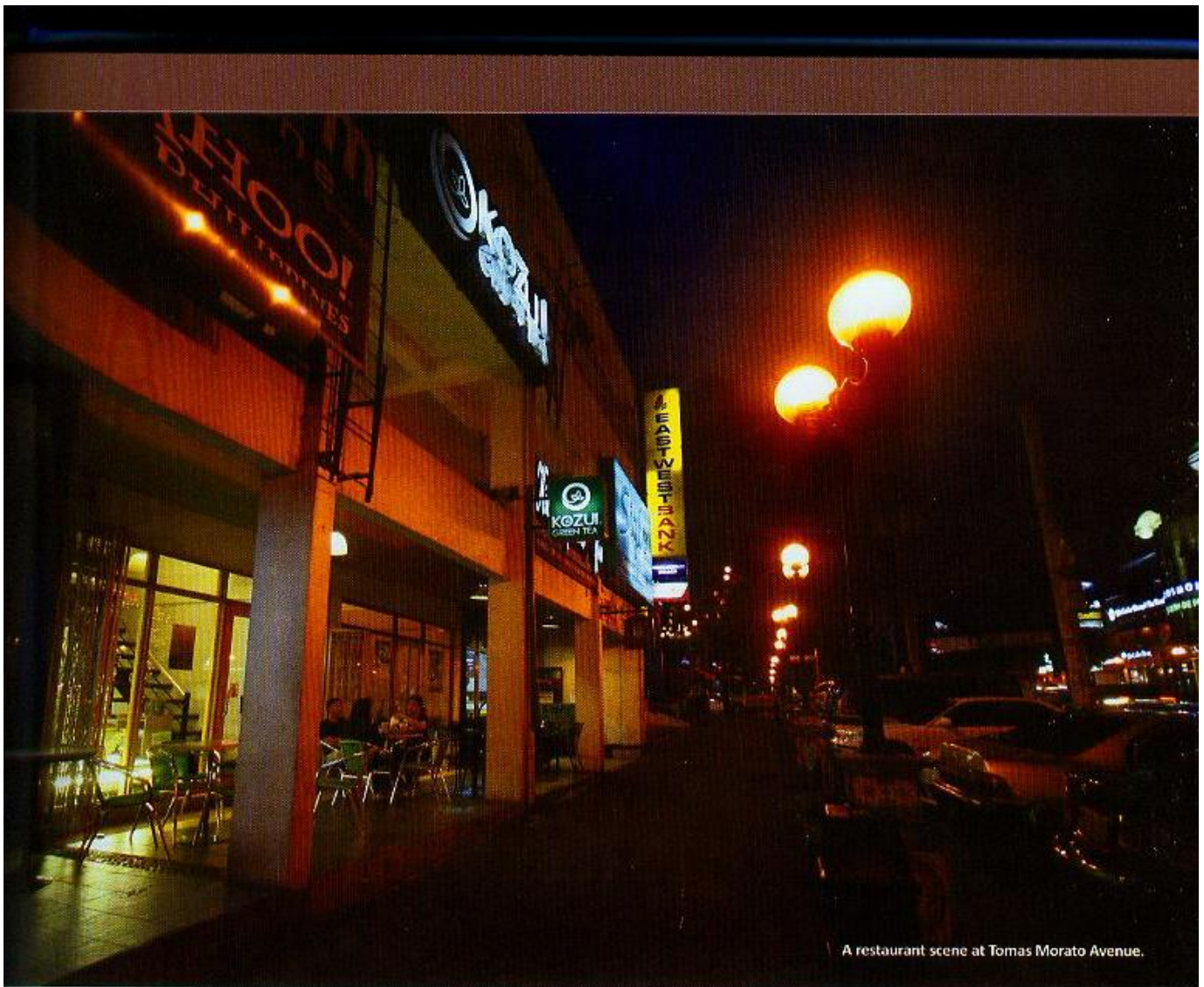
At dusk, the streets come alive with the glitter of restaurant signs all declaring what they have to offer.

Its image as an extraordinary food hub has prompted the Quezon City Government to promote the area as its official dining destination. This is why Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. has initiated major renovations and significant improvements around the area.

Beautiful Victorian-inspired streetlights illuminate the street with a surreal, romantic glow while sidewalks have been turned into impressive paths of terra cotta bricks and guarded for safety with metal grills.

The scenery invokes an experience of dining in other classy cities of the world such as Paris, New York, Hong Kong or Singapore. People enjoy the pleasure of walking around for some serious restaurant-hopping. The choices are indeed endless: Italian for dinner, Spanish for dessert, Singaporean for coffee, and contemporary for a night cap. Whatever one decides, going around the area is a breeze — not to mention safe.





A restaurant scene at Tomas Morato Avenue.

Local law enforcers regularly patrol the area to make sure diners and their vehicles are secure.

The move has also boosted business around the avenue.

Jonathan Chua, owner of the popular Kitchen of Cakes & Coffee café, said the renovation has indeed been beneficial to restaurateurs like him.

"The renovation of the sidewalks in Tomas Morato has made the place look better and more scenic. It lets you enjoy walking around while feeling safe," he said.

He said most of his customers actually don't mind walking from one end of the Morato area towards his place just so they could enjoy his special brew of Java.

"They actually like the experience of walking, a lot of people find the activity very romantic, too."

He added that because of the novelty of Tomas Morato strip, even residents from other cities such as Makati or Mandaluyong frequent the place when on the lookout for a nice place to dine.

"You can see so many people from different areas coming here not only for the food but also for the feel of the place. We're happy because we get our share of customers. It's specially packed during the weekends," he said.

And since Tomas Morato is a major thoroughfare, going to the place is easy. Public transportation such as jeepneys and cabs are readily available for the diners. Parking is also available as there are local *barangay tanod* who will make sure vehicles are secure while diners enjoy their meal.

“THE RENOVATION OF SIDEWALK IN TOMAS MORATO HAS MADE THE PLACE LOOK BETTER AND MORE SCENIC. IT LETS YOU ENJOY WALKING AROUND WHILE FEELING SAFE.”

First public underpass chronicles QC landmarks

Quezon City's first public underpass is definitely no underachievement. Connecting two major institutions — the Quezon Memorial Circle and the Quezon City Hall — this infrastructure project stands as one enduring legacy of the Belmonte administration.

The P41-million underpass was inaugurated during the city's 68th founding anniversary on Oct. 2, 2007. It is considered a safer and more suitable option than an elevated pedestrian overpass, which could have ruined the scenic view of the Quezon Memorial Circle.

Since its completion, the number of accidents in the area has also been reduced. Pedestrians no longer need to play tag with passing vehicles just to cross the Elliptical Road from Quezon Memorial Circle to the City Hall or vice versa. This has greatly benefited City Hall employees and their visitors, tourists, park goers, joggers and other folk who pass by the area frequently.

Covering a length of 62 meters, the underpass is tightly guarded, well-lighted and well-maintained. Granite tiles on the steps are coated with monochromatic shades to add elegance to the pathway, while beige walls enhance the bright and airy feel of the tunnel.

But as to be expected with the country's number one local government unit, this structure serves more than its purpose as a typical pathway. Conspicuously placed at its center is a special tribute to the great founder of Quezon City, former President Manuel L. Quezon, along with other popular landmarks of the city.

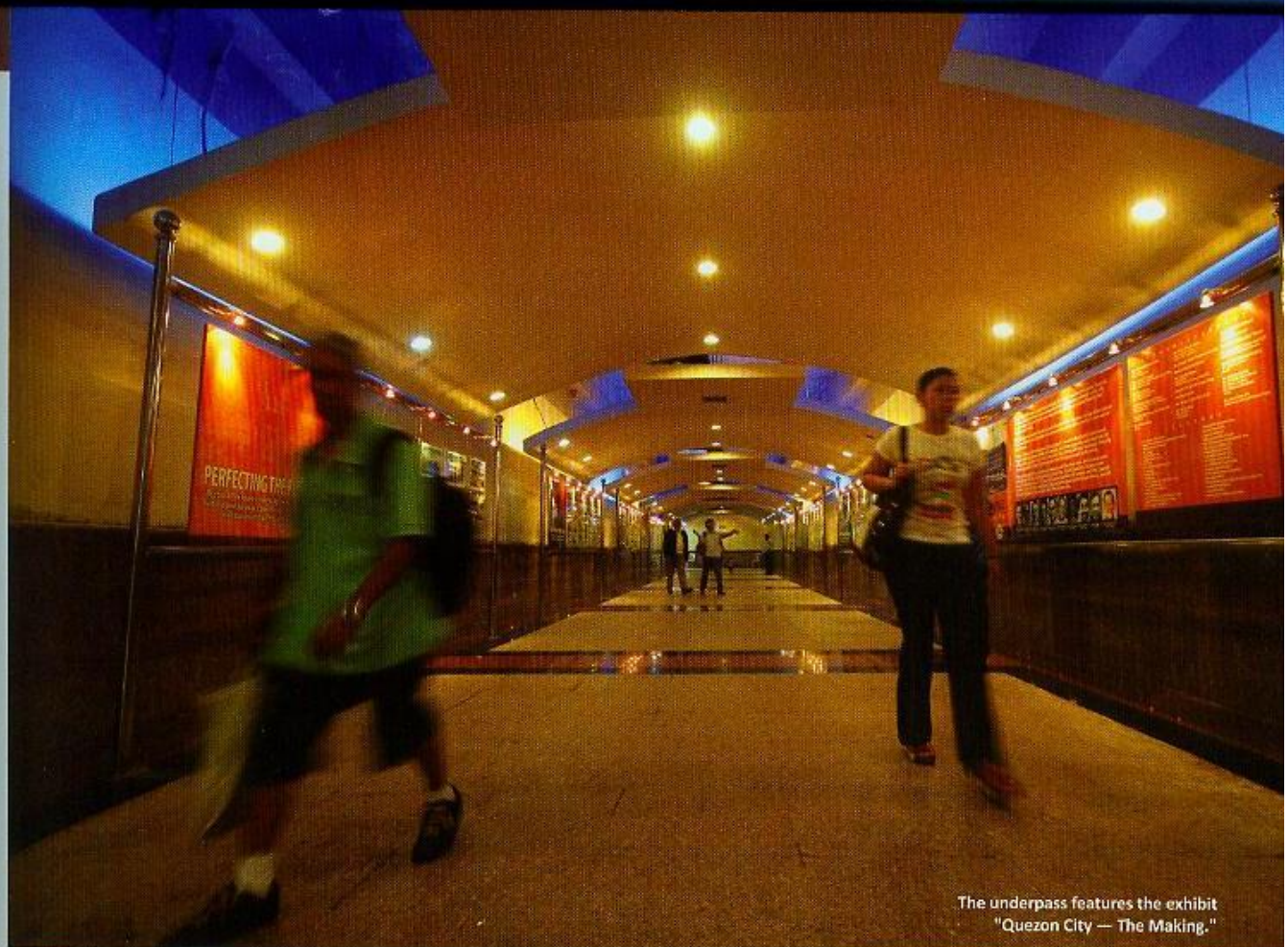
"Quezon City – The Making (A Photo Exhibit: Revisiting the Past, Perfecting the Future)" is a project initiated by the Engineering Department and the Public Affairs and Information Services Office (PAISO).

Unveiled in 2008, the photo exhibit is a permanent fixture that adds substance to the underground pathway while serving as a medium of public education and historical awareness.

Greg Bañacia, head of PAISO, said that about 100 photographs are categorized under four sections, selected in a way to honor President Quezon, Mayor Belmonte, and other great men and women who have contributed to the city's history and growth.

Old black and white photographs of Quezon were blown up and neatly aligned behind fiberglass walls, with captions detailing his various activities, from speaking be-





The underpass features the exhibit "Quezon City — The Making."

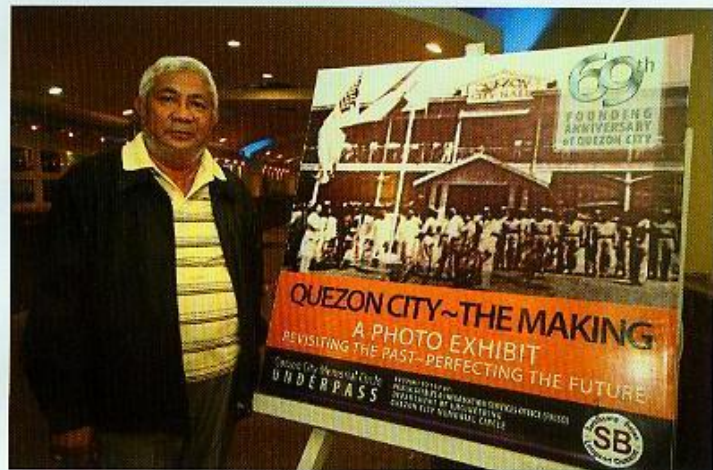
for his constituents to other simple tasks like planting rice or playing with children. Bañacia said that some of the photos were donated by Quezon's grandson, Enrique Quezon-Avanceña, from the family's personal collection.

Meanwhile, snapshots of the city's famous landmarks have been included to give citizens a glimpse of a bygone era. These structures include the *Mabuhay* (formerly known as Welcome) Rotonda monument, the Araneta Coliseum, Old City Hall in Cubao, Bernardo Park, Sulo Hotel, the old Balara Filtration Plant, and the Quezon Memorial Circle's barren landscape in the 1960s. The photos depict how the city looked like before progress changed its landscape.

The exhibit also features perspectives of the local government's future infrastructure projects, some of which are already in place. These include the New Treasurer's Office at the City Hall and the sidewalk rehabilitation of Tomas Morato, Timog, Visayas and West Avenues.

Through the exhibit, the city government has declared the underpass as a "time capsule of history" but more than that, it also signifies the major strides being undertaken towards the restoration of the Quezon Memorial Circle as the city's true "Central Park" and a symbol of collective pride.

After all, this was where everything started back in 1940 when the cornerstone was first laid for a grand monument befitting the city's founding father.



Gregorio Bañacia, chief of QC Public Affairs and Information Services Offices (PAISO).

Activity Hubs





PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IMPROVE THE CITYSCAPE

One of the perks of living and working in Quezon City is accessibility to places of recreation. Home to many parks and landmarks, the city offers venues that provide rest and relaxation. Even residents from other cities travel to Quezon City's parks and sports centers to meet people, engage in games and sports, or simply enjoy the surroundings. Bearing in mind their importance to people, the Quezon City government continues to build and upgrade facilities and maintain the upkeep of existing ones. The Amoranto Sports Complex, La Mesa Eco Park and more than 50 mini-parks serve as places of convergence to a city that aims to harmonize natural ecology and modern living.

A natural wonder in the city

The 2,700-hectare La Mesa Watershed in Quezon City plays

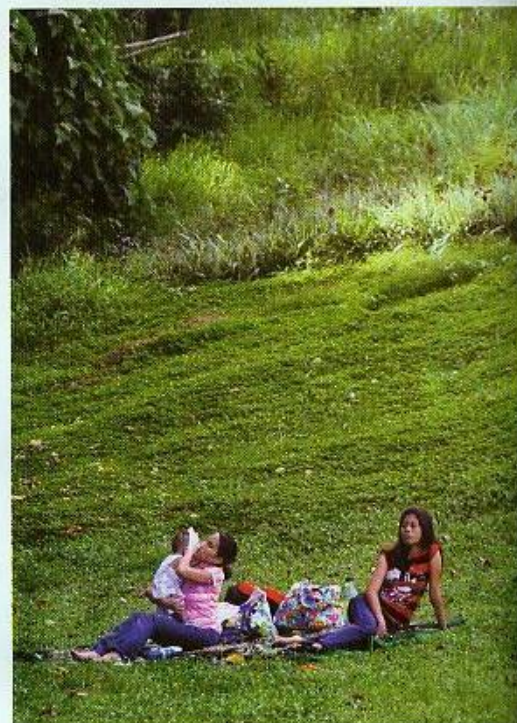
a very vital role for people living in the metro. Aside from being the source of drinking water for over 12 million residents of the city, the 2,000-hectare forest surrounding the water source also serves as a carbon dioxide filter of Metro Manila. It is the last forest of its size that still exists in an urban environment.

However, due to lack of funds, illegal settling, poaching and logging, the La Mesa Watershed almost fell into total destruction — with its ecosystem threatened.

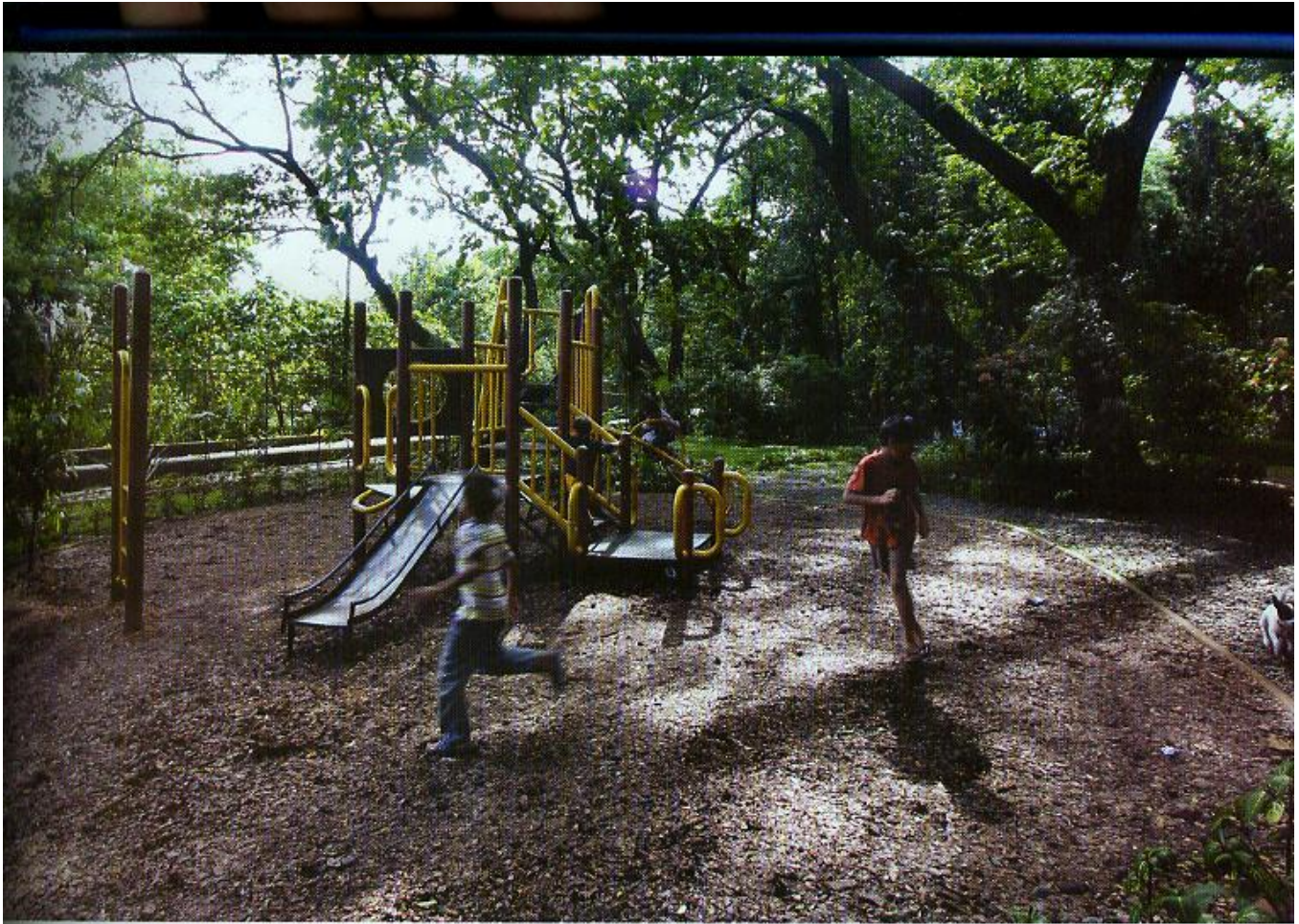
But in 1999, ABS-CBN Foundation Inc.'s Bantay Kalikasan teamed up with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS, owners of the watershed) to launch the Save La Mesa Watershed Project. It aimed to rehabilitate, reforest, preserve and protect La Mesa Watershed. Their strategy was to involve surrounding communities in making sure that the forest is protected. They also launched adopt/protect a tree/hectare programs that made sure the natural environment is well taken care of for years to come. The total area targeted for reforestation was 1,500 hectares. Today, eight years after the project started, only 158 hectares still need to be covered.

To sustain the Save La Mesa Watershed Project, Bantay Kalikasan worked with the MWSS and the Quezon City Government to help rehabilitate a 33-hectare public park located right outside the natural boundaries of the watershed and 40 meters below the reservoir. In September 2004, it was renamed La Mesa Ecopark and was reopened to the public. All revenues generated by La Mesa Ecopark are utilized for the continuous preservation and protection of the La Mesa Watershed.

The Ecopark and its forest serve as a natural laboratory and classroom for advocacies on nature. It is usually where schools hold nature awareness classes, with numerous field trips and immersion trips. It has also become a favorite destination of families who wish to spend time together with nature as backdrop.



“THE ECOPARK AND ITS FOREST SERVE AS A NATURAL LABORATORY AND CLASSROOM FOR ADVOCACIES ON NATURE. IT HAS ALSO BECOME A FAVORITE DESTINATION OF FAMILIES.”



There are various recreational facilities in La Mesa Eco Park that can be enjoyed by families.

At the crossroads of change

Krus na Ligas is a landmark in Philippine history. In the 1896 Revolution, revered hero Andres Bonifacio and his companions sought safety and relief in this place formerly called Gulod as they braved the bigger and capably-armed Spanish forces. Once part of Marikina, it was subsequently integrated to the newly envisioned capital city of Commonwealth president Manuel L. Quezon. It was a small community of old-timers who depended on farming and other simple means of livelihood.

As urbanization and migration swept the 1950s, people from other areas in and outside Quezon City relocated to Krus na Ligas, especially with the establishment of the main campus of the University of the Philippines adjacent to it. With the once peaceful *barrio* being invaded in all corners, more and more outsiders started building houses close to each other. Timoteo Baluyot, *barrio* lieutenant during the 1960s, remembers groups of families from Bago Bantay and other areas moving in.

“We lived simple lives and people did not mind the newcomers. There were little quarrels, yes, but nothing so serious.” As the population continued to rise, however, so did incidents of criminality. Petty thieves, drug dealers and other criminals took to its cramped spaces for shelter and evasion from the law.



The dramatic transformation of the Krus na Ligas community park was very evident, as it was once a neglected piece of land.



Children enjoy playing at the revitalized community park in Novaliches.

Just a few years ago, the Quezon City government conceived the idea of reclaiming spaces for the good use of its residents. A small portion facing C. P. Garcia Avenue, thick with *talahib* (wild grass) and once a dumpsite and meeting ground of vagrants and lawless elements was transformed into a mini-park and playground. The landscape was reshaped: the terrain was evened out and concrete walkways were created, trees and palms were planted and the wild grass was replaced with Bermuda grass. See-saws and slides were constructed and lampposts were installed.

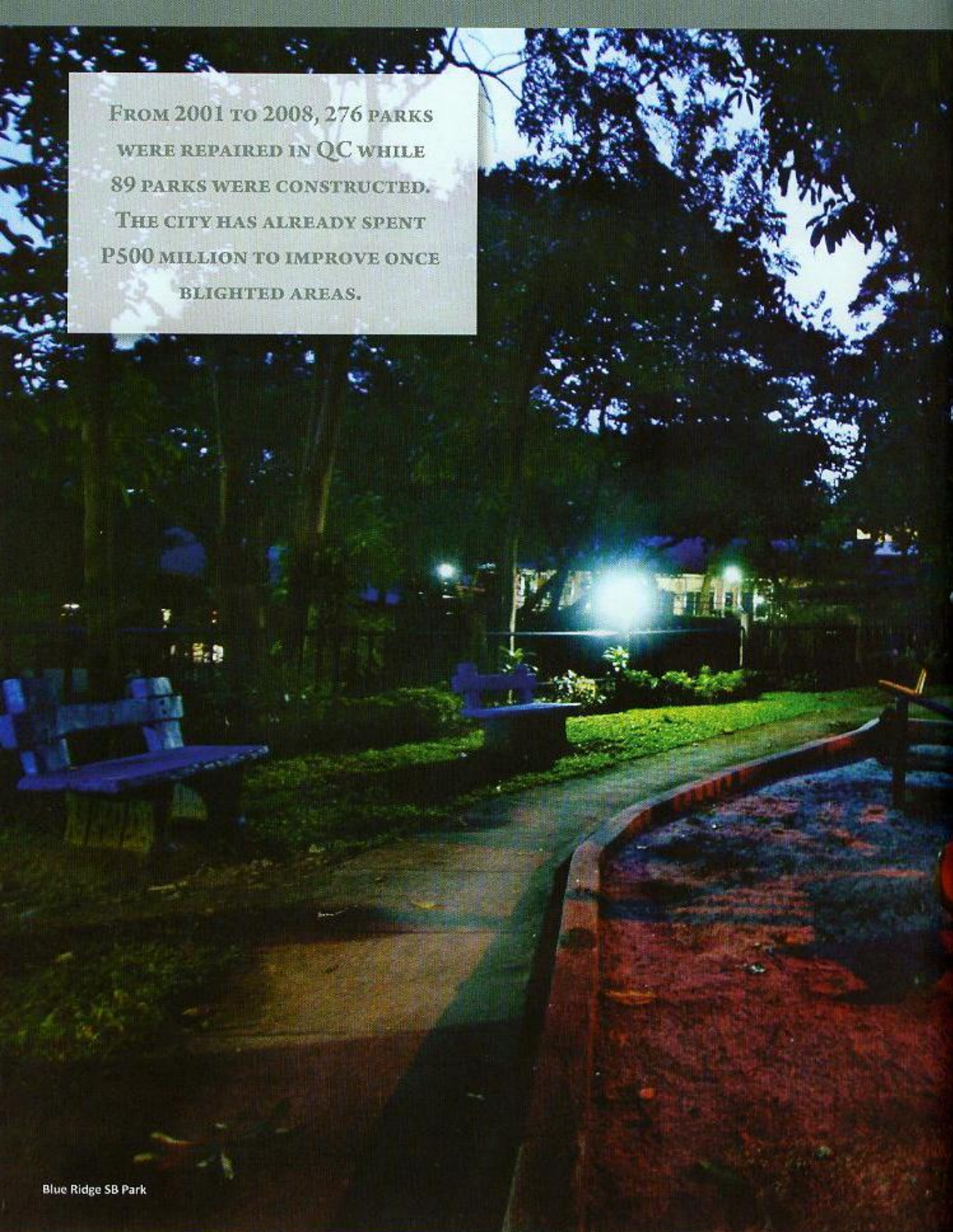
Once avoided for its unsavory reputation, the Krus na Ligas mini-park is now a favorite strolling place of nearby residents, even during nighttime. According to Mr. Fulgencio, a *barangay* peace officer and one of the original residents, the transformation has helped in significantly lowering the crime rate of the area.

"People who once feared for their safety whenever approaching the place are now spending time there to meet friends, play or relax under the shade of the trees," he elaborated.

With this, the spaces of Krus na Ligas are no longer a playground for the idle mind but a sanctuary of comfort and recreation.



Timoteo Baluyot, former *barrio* lieutenant of Krus na Ligas in the 1960s.



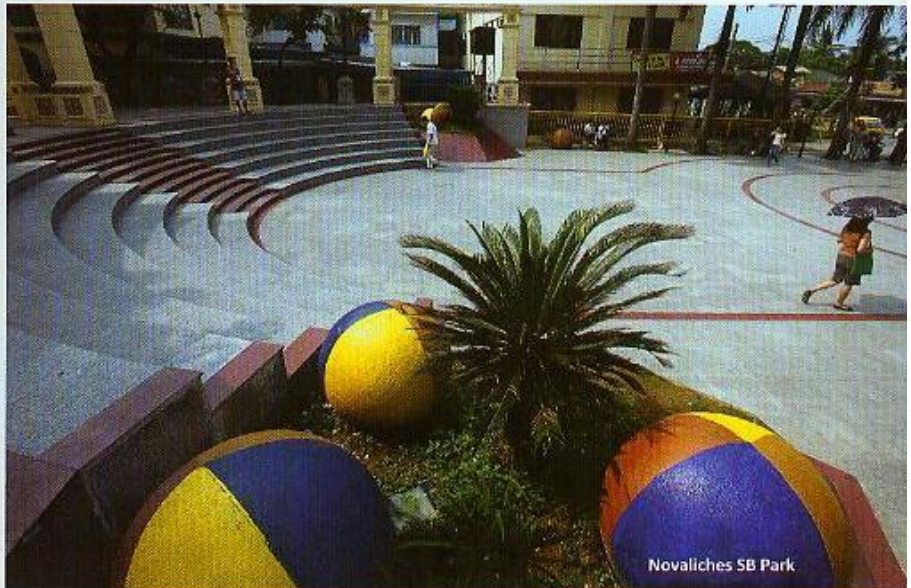
FROM 2001 TO 2008, 276 PARKS
WERE REPAIRED IN QC WHILE
89 PARKS WERE CONSTRUCTED.
THE CITY HAS ALREADY SPENT
P500 MILLION TO IMPROVE ONCE
BLIGHTED AREAS.

Blue Ridge SB Park



Batasan SB Park

“HOME TO MANY PARKS, QUEZON CITY OFFERS VENUES THAT PROVIDE REST AND RELAXATION. EVEN PEOPLE FROM OTHER CITIES TRAVEL TO THE CITY’S PARKS TO MEET PEOPLE, ENGAGE IN GAMES AND SPORTS, OR SIMPLY ENJOY THE SURROUNDINGS. BEARING IN MIND THEIR IMPORTANCE TO PEOPLE, MAYOR BELMONTE CONTINUES TO UPGRADE AND MAINTAIN THE UPKEEP OF EXISTING PARKS.”



Novaliches SB Park

Recreation finds a home

The Amoranto Sports Complex located along Roces Avenue in Quezon City has undergone a series of 'character changes' since it opened in 1966. A project of former president Ferdinand Marcos, the Amoranto Sports Complex was envisioned to become one of the most significant structures in Metro Manila — a place where the country's top athletes can converge in a state-of-the-art stadium that was deemed to become the benchmark of other sports arenas.

However, through the years, the Amoranto Sports Complex also went through the worst of times, specially when it comes to management of its facilities. From a sports complex, the area also served as a school, training ground and a police academy.

It was in 2001, during the term of Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., when the Amoranto Sports Complex was finally given the attention it deserves.

"Mayor Belmonte recognized the significance of the structure. It was one of the first major stadiums to be built in Metro Manila, so we were given the responsibility to revive its old glory," said Andy Apostol, officer-in-charge of Amoranto Sports Complex.

The order from Mayor Belmonte was simple: "Run Amoranto like a private firm," he said, with the team of Mr. Apostol rising to the challenge.

"There were so many things to be done during the first year alone like trimming the trees, cleaning the arenas, and once more filling up the pool which has turned murky and became a breeding ground for frogs. But Mayor Belmonte was all for keeping the place, so he made sure that everything was to be arranged and renovated, right down to the bathrooms," said Apostol.



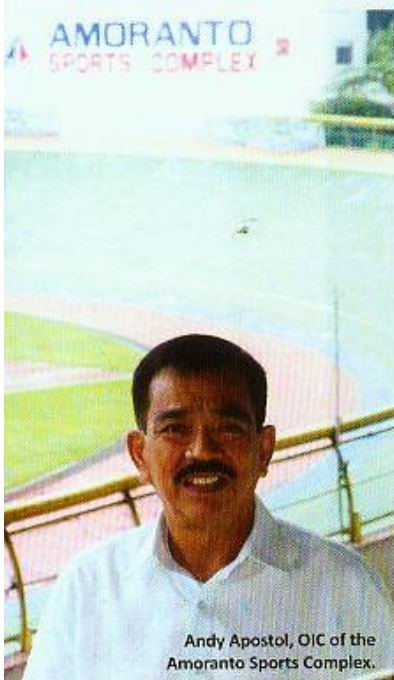
Two players enjoy a game of table tennis in the newly refurbished play areas of the Amoranto Sports Complex.



The Amoranto Sports Complex houses the only velodrome in the country.



The newly constructed badminton court now benefits many sports enthusiasts.



Andy Apostol, OIC of the Amoranto Sports Complex.

“VARIOUS SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS ESTABLISHED CLUBS AT THE AMORANTO SPORTS COMPLEX, WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TAKING IT UPON THEMSELVES TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR HEADQUARTERS. EVEN THE OLYMPIC-SIZE COMMUNITY POOL IS WELL-TAKEN CARE OF THAT IT WAS ONCE JUDGED AS THE CLEANEST AND CHEAPEST POOL IN METRO MANILA BY A MAJOR BROADSHEET.”

After a year, the Amoranto Sports Complex showed signs of renewed glory – all 18 arenas were brought back to life, such as the swimming pool, the basketball court, the fitness area, the badminton court, the table tennis room and the martial arts area. The velodrome or the cycling area was also restored – the only one in the country and one of the four in Asia.

The next step was how to attract visitors to the place. But the shiny, newly installed Amoranto sign encouraged QC residents to check out the new facilities.

“We were challenged by Mayor Belmonte to treat the place like a private enterprise so we went out of our way to offer our place to different groups,” Apostol explained.

Soon, the Amoranto Sports Complex was able to establish a stable number of patrons, most of which come from religious organizations, civic groups, private firms and schools looking for a venue to hold their activities.

"They hold large events such as sports fests and big celebrations in our area. Schools offering caregiving classes also need a place for the P.E. requirement of their students so they go here to hold their gym sessions," said Apostol.

A major breakthrough for the place was being able to encourage nearby communities to try out sports. "We hold various sports clinics and workshops to encourage nearby Quezon City communities to gather and engage in."

Aside from offering Amoranto as a venue, they were able to tap world-class athletes to serve as coaches or trainers, such as former Red Lion cager coach Pebo Rivera, Muay Thai coach Zhie Vallega and table tennis coach Zoilo Torres, Jr.

The endeavor proved to be a success as they were able to get more than their target students to register for the activities.

"Not only were we able to discover new talents in sports, but we also established a kind of camaraderie that's not usual in other communities."

Various sports enthusiasts established clubs at the Amoranto Sports Complex, with the local community taking it upon themselves to take care of their headquarters. Even the Olympic-size community pool is well-taken care of that it was once judged by a major broadsheet as the cleanest and most affordable pool in Metro Manila.

"Sometimes they volunteer to fix broken tables or change busted lights. They usually initiate to help, and so our ties with the community are definitely stronger."

Not only that, since it opened in 2002, the Amoranto Sports Complex was able to earn millions in revenue — a far cry from the previous P100,000 reported annually before.

Another major contribution of Mayor Belmonte to the Amoranto Sports Complex is the construction of a multi-purpose hall — home to the Quezon City Performing Arts Foundation. An advocacy of his daughter Joy Belmonte-Alimurung, the multi-purpose hall is used as practice and stage area of the foundation's 360 scholars — singers, dancers and stage actors who once roamed the streets, as out-of-school youths.

"The area used to be a basketball court. Now it has become a venue for ballet and musicals," said Apostol.

A sportsman by heart, Mayor Belmonte definitely has more plans for the beloved sports complex.



Joy Belmonte - Alimurung, chairperson of the Quezon City Performing Arts Foundation and the Quezon City Ladies Foundation.



Schools





SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS OPEN DOORS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Quezon City is not only a prime residential area and a prospering business district. It is also a major education hub as it hosts more than 65 colleges and universities and hundreds of private schools. It also has the biggest conglomeration of public schools, with 96 elementary and 48 high schools providing free education to residents of Quezon City and its neighbors. Recognizing this powerful tool, the Belmonte administration has allocated a large percentage of its funds for the construction and repair of classrooms to facilitate more opportunities for learning. The creation of the first city-run university also attests to the aspiration of establishing Quezon City as a thriving campus community in the country.

More classrooms = better future

Bearing in mind the importance of education as a poverty-uplifting and empowering tool, the Quezon City government puts an emphasis on the need for durable structures that will endow students with opportunities for learning and academic excellence. This lofty goal has already been made possible under the administration of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr.: Quezon City elementary and high schools now have more venues for its increasing student population with the construction of 90 new school buildings with 1,474 classrooms. Since 2001, his administration has invested more than P3 billion for the construction of new school buildings and repair of existing ones.

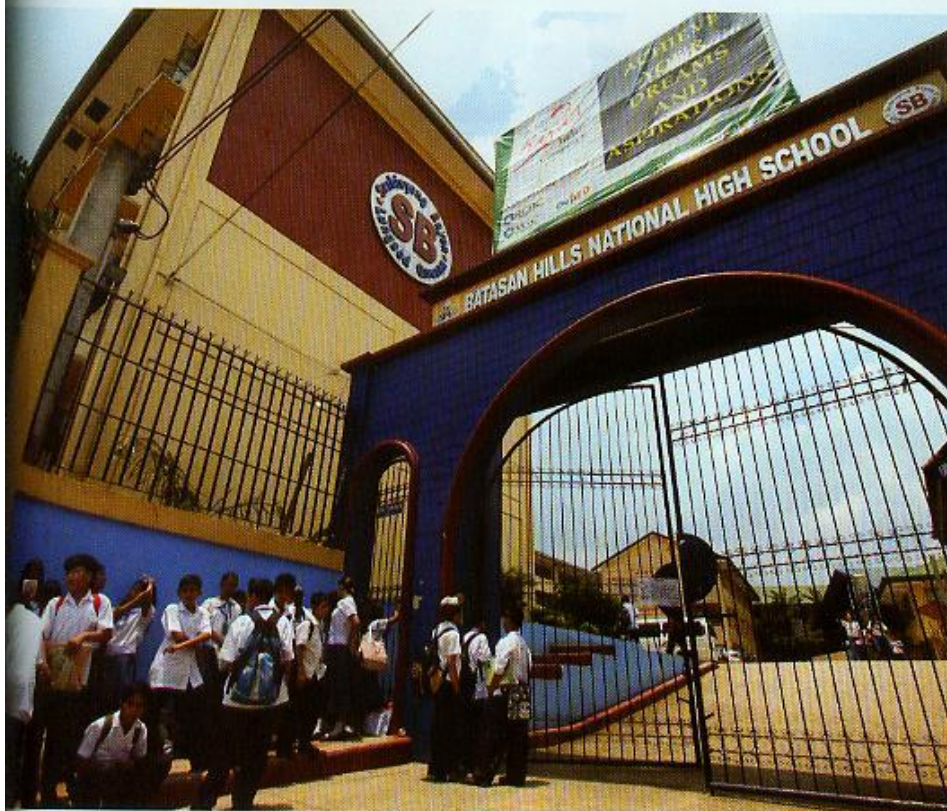
Batasan Hills National High School is a witness to these changes, according to its principal, Dr. Gil Magbanua. Since he assumed stewardship of one of the biggest high schools in the city three years ago, he has seen the steady influx of elementary school graduates from all over the city.

"With the construction of the new school building, students who live in nearby vicinities have no need to study too far from their homes. It is the goal of Mayor Belmonte to bring education closer to the people," he said.

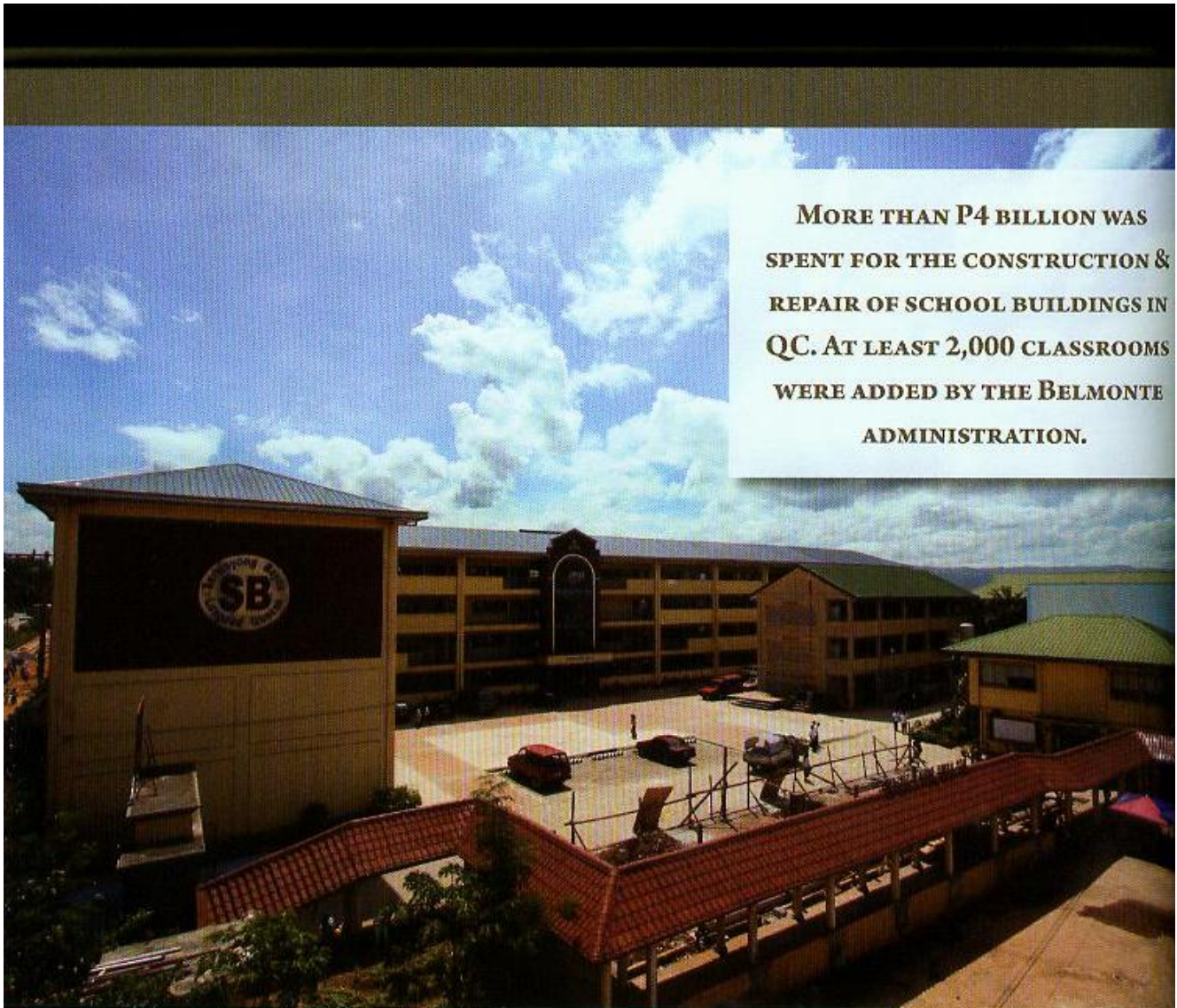
The new four-storey, 40-classroom building that he mentioned is a monumental feat in more ways than one. It stood on what was once undeveloped and unsightly estate, which has been developed into the New Batasan Civics complex where two schools, the Batasan El-



The new SB Building in Batasan Hills National High School stands as a major achievement of the Belmonte administration.



Dr. Gil Magbanua, principal of the Batasan Hills National High School.



MORE THAN P4 BILLION WAS SPENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION & REPAIR OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN QC. AT LEAST 2,000 CLASSROOMS WERE ADDED BY THE BELMONTE ADMINISTRATION.

“WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDING, STUDENTS WHO LIVE IN NEARBY VICINITIES DON’T NEED TO STUDY TOO FAR FROM THEIR HOMES. IT IS THE GOAL OF MAYOR BELMONTE TO BRING EDUCATION CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE.”

ementary School and the Quezon City Polytechnic University, provide access to affordable education. With the police station already in place, other structures like health center and mini-park are already realizing fruition.

Standing prominently in the campus, the new building has already been used by the school’s more than 11,000 students. Each classroom can accommodate a hefty average of 60 to 70 students, which is still problematic but typical class size average for public schools. “This does not deter us from providing excellent education to our students,” Magbanua said, adding that their students have recently won in various academic and non-academic competitions.

Nevertheless, the new building’s impact on the psyche of the students is also very evident. “You can see that the campus is very peaceful and students feel like they are studying in an exclusive school,” he proudly noted.

There is no denying this observation, given the smiles on the students’ faces, as if saying their future looks brighter more than ever.

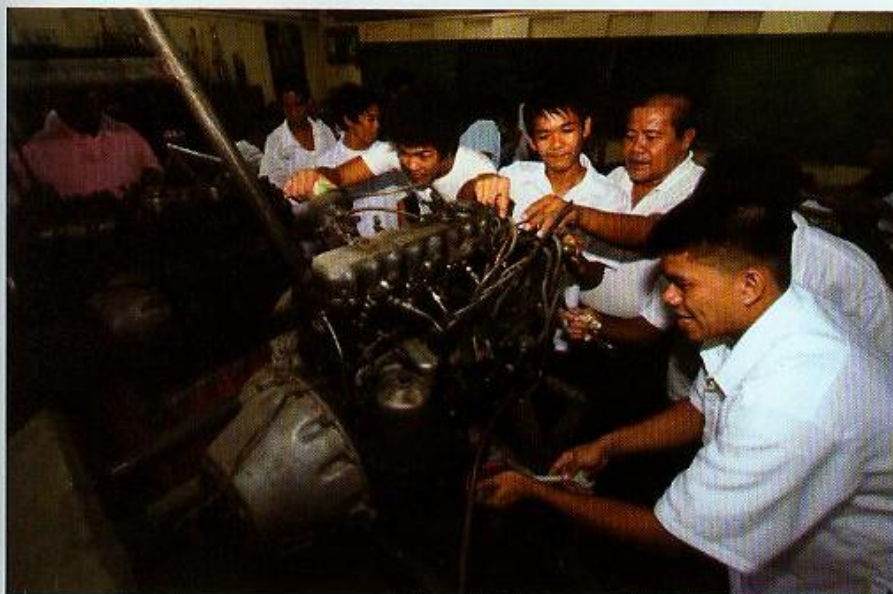
Setting the foundation for opportunities

Quezon City prides itself as a premier seat of higher education, as it hosts the two premier universities of the country — the University of the Philippines in Diliman and Ateneo de Manila University in Loyola Heights — and a number of public and private collegiate institutions. At the same time, it desires to provide more chances for free and quality education to a majority of indigent students residing in its boundaries. With this in mind, the Quezon City administration initiated the foundation of the Quezon City Polytechnic University in 2001.

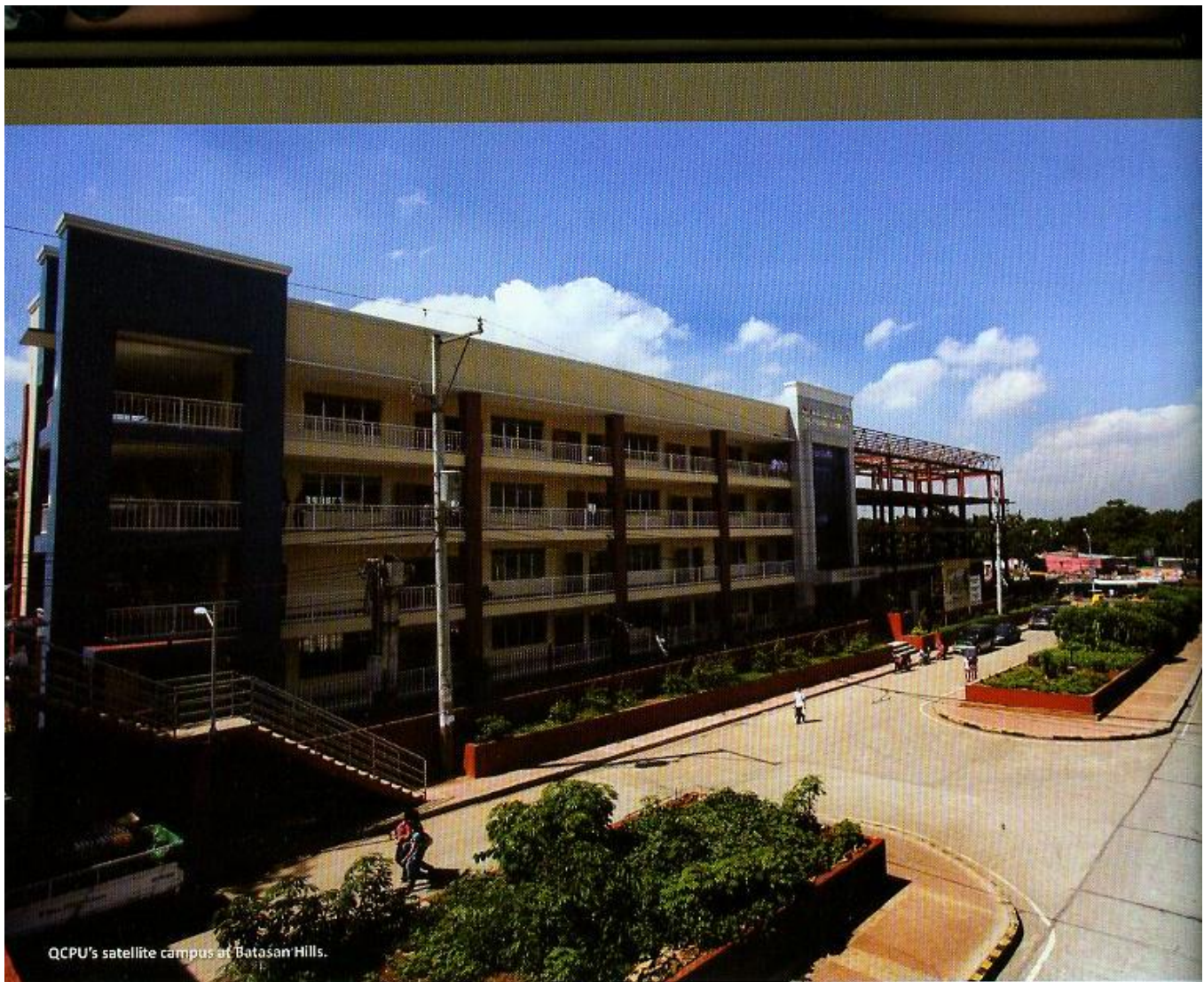
Relatively younger compared to other local government-run tertiary level institutions, it was initially mandated as a technical vocational institute. But Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. had higher aspirations for QCPU: to turn it into a university specializing in technology-based quality education and a tool for economic self-sufficiency and empowerment of its beneficiaries.

In 2002, three-year vocational and technical courses were opened and by 2005, QCPU began offering baccalaureate courses in information technology, industrial engineering, and entrepreneurial management. One-year programs and short courses were added to provide basic and remedial learning to residents who can make use their skills for immediate livelihood.

Proximity is essential to an educational institution, which is why the school is strategically made accessible to its students. Its main campus in Barangay San Bartolome at Novaliches is a 4.42-hectare compound that also houses the Korea-Philippines Information Technology Center (KorPhil), whose innovative facilities are made available to the university. It



QCPU students in an automotive class are assured of a brighter future.



QCPU's satellite campus at Batasan Hills.



QCPU students are given computer access for the improvement of their skills.

is also a venue to a newly-built four-storey building that houses 23 classrooms, already being used at the start of schoolyear 2009-2010. The satellite campus at Batasan Hills has a newly-constructed four-storey 19-classroom building at the Batasan Civic Center being developed by the Quezon City government in front of the House of Representatives. Another campus at Barangay Sto. Cristo is undergoing improvements of its facilities with the renovation of the school building, refurbishing of its library and upgrading of its communications systems, as well as the beautification of its environs.

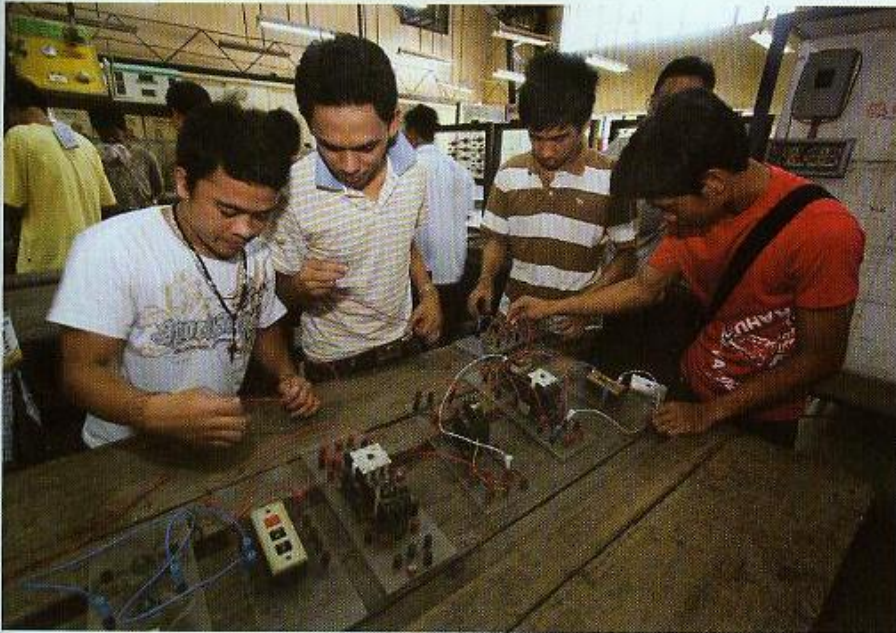
The Quezon City government has already infused more than P169 million in the physical development, improvement and expansion of QCPU, and the fruits of these efforts are already realized. By 2008, the Commission on Higher Education has granted QCPU accreditation and by 2009, the first batch of bachelor's degree holders graduated.

More Quezon City public high school graduates enroll at QCPU to further pursue collegiate studies without worrying about exorbitant tuition fees. Additional funding of P8 million has also provided for the acquisition of a hundred new computers, science laboratory equipment, school chairs and tables, provision for internet facilities and other tools, appliances and fixtures essential to the university's mission.

In years to come, QCPU is expected to take its place alongside other reputable institutions of higher learning, not just as a provider of highly-skilled manpower but also a center of excellence in science and technology research and development and other fields of learning. For now, it serves as bedrock to the ambitions of its students and future graduates and a stepping stone to ambitions of a better life.



Korea-Philippines Information Technology Training Center.



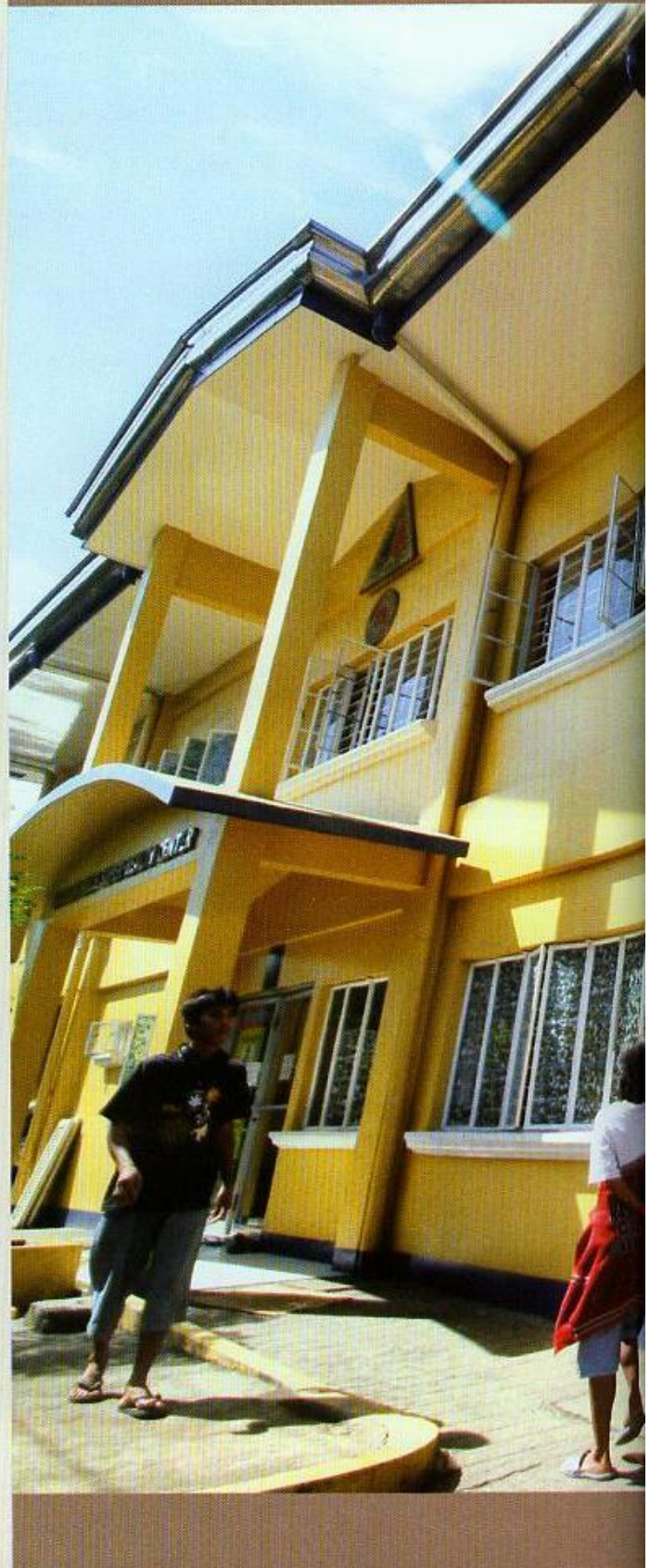
Students at QCPU in an electronics class.

” THE QC GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY INFUSED MORE THAN P169 MILLION IN THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION OF QCPU, AND THE FRUITS OF THESE EFFORTS ARE ALREADY REALIZED. ”



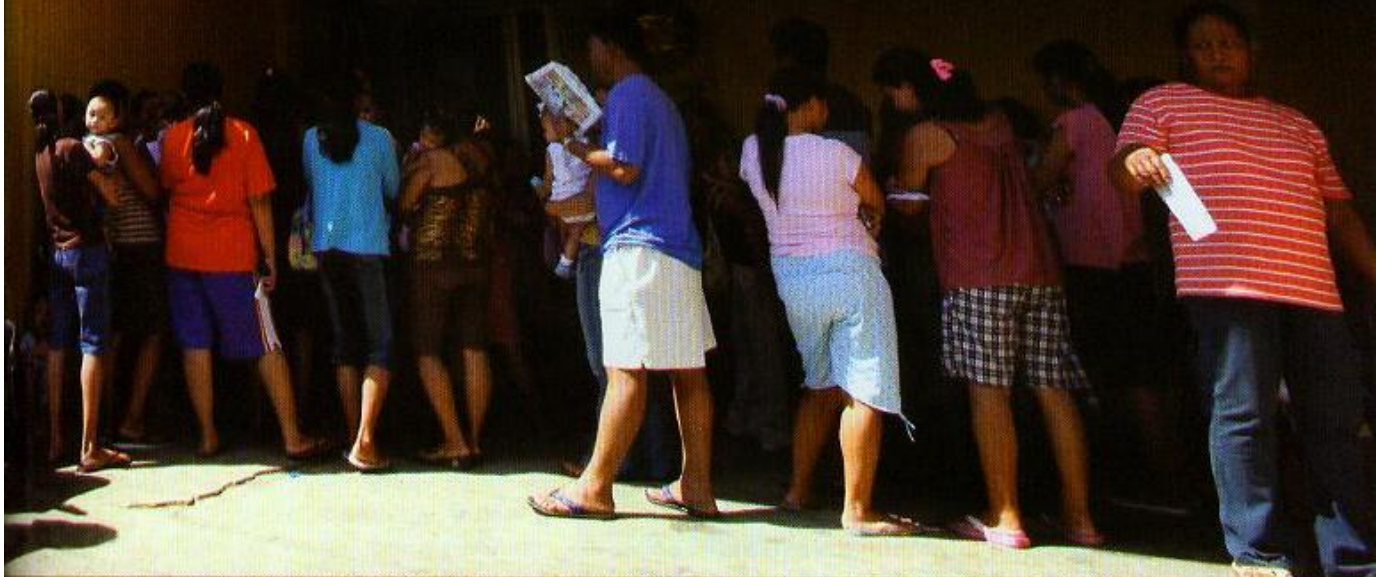
HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CENTERS CARE FOR COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Public health is an essential social concern; as such, the Quezon City government considers it a major priority. A significant portion of the budget is allotted to public health programs and infrastructure, from free immunizations and family planning to improving existing medical facilities. A newly-revitalized Quezon City General Hospital is expected to become a world-class hospital that aims to serve the city's indigents. Through the initiative of the Belmonte administration, Super Health Centers are also built in many barangays to bring medical care closer to the locale. The success of these programs is a manifestation of the city government's resolve to provide effective medical services to its constituents.



Hospitals & Health Centers

TWO 2-STOREY BATASAN HILLS SUPER HEALTH CENTER
Serbisyong Bayan THRU MAYOR
SONNY SB BELMONTE



QC General Hospital: A new lease on life

W

hen people think of public hospitals, they often come up with images of old, dingy buildings with antiquated, if not totally useless, medical instruments that the poor usually have to settle with. The Quezon City General Hospital (QCGH) used to evoke such notions, but not anymore.

Earlier this year, the Quezon City local government, headed by Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., awarded a P559-million contract for the provision of a new QCGH that will not only be first-class but modern in every way.

The changes are already apparent. What used to be a run-down compound that motorists from nearby communities often use as a shortcut to EDSA now boasts of an orderly area that will reflect the new face of QCGH.

The medical center will be a five-storey building that will occupy about 1.2 hectares of the 3.2-hectare Barangay Bahay Toro property of QCGH. The building will expand to about 10,000 sq. m. in floor area, and will accommodate up to 250 patients at a given time.

According to the Mayor, the new facility will expand the access of Quezon City's poor to modern, efficient yet very affordable medical care. The parameters for the design were the product of a special study team formed by Mayor Belmonte, composed of consultants from the Department of Health, as

well as doctors, architects and engineers of the city government.

The new hospital will surely be a big help for Quezon City's indigent residents. The old building has been through unfortunate events, including a major fire which almost razed the whole structure to the ground. QCGH is a significant health-care provider of the area because aside from providing affordable medicines, the people are assured of the competency and skills of its resident physicians.

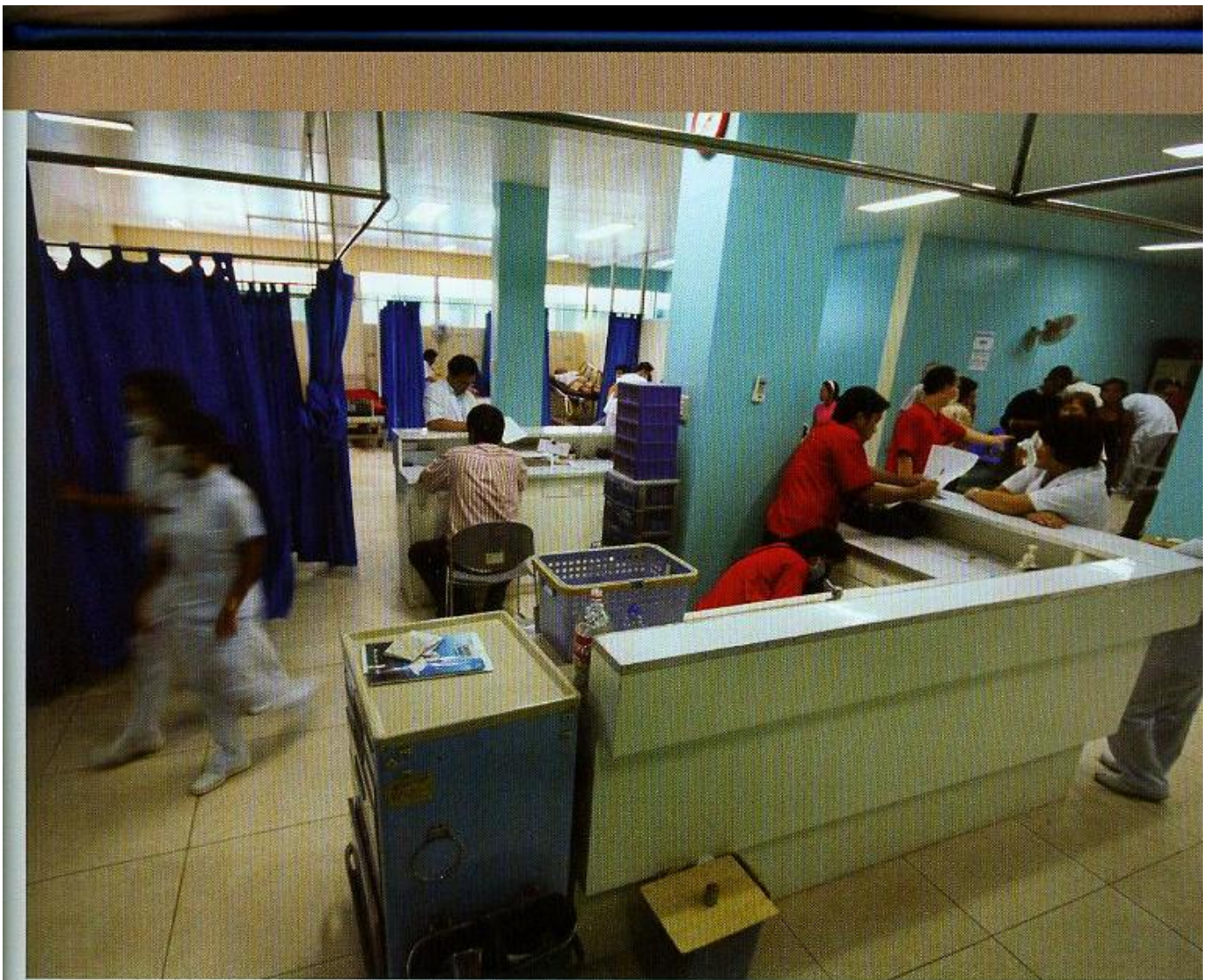
More than the in-patient spaces, the new building will also have a 40-bed emergency complex, operating rooms with eight-bed capacity, intensive care unit with a 26-bed capacity, centralized medical gas and vacuum system, full emergency



The emergency room features an acute care unit, resuscitation area, pediatrics, ambulatory care unit, and an observation unit.



Perspective of the future Quezon City General Hospital.



electrical power supply generator, vital auxiliary systems for communication, nurse call, and security and emergency systems, and modern sewage treatment plants and solid waste management facilities.

The city government's design parameters also ensure that it will have a safety-conscious building design and material finishes, with tight seismic and wind factor, fire-resistivity, non-toxic, anti-bacterial, hypo-allergenic, anti-static, sound-absorbent and non-slippery finishes.

When it comes to health and well-being, the Belmonte administration makes sure that the concern is always top priority. A big portion of the local government's resources have been allotted to medical care and distribution.



Mayor Belmonte leads city officials in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to inaugurate the P4-million emergency room of the QC General Hospital. Assisting the Mayor is hospital director Dr. Edgardo Salud (right). With them are Dr. Josephine Sabando, planning development education and research chief; Dr. Ruben Arevalo, assistant director for administration; Dr. Antonio Cabisas, assistant director for professional services and other hospital staff.



HOUSING PROJECTS PROVIDE SHELTER TO THE HOMELESS

A house is not just a structure composed of bricks, posts and roofs: it is, ultimately, a sanctuary to people and their families, a place to nurture their bodies and dreams while they go about their daily obligations. Cities, being locations of urbanization, are not spared from the tide of migration as people find a place to fashion decent lives and sustain their basic needs. The Belmonte administration acknowledges this fundamental right by providing respectable and affordable settlements to many of its residents. A number of programs initiated by the city government have not only resulted in the development of communities but also the fulfillment of dreams for many people seeking a respectable place they can call their own.



Housing



Building a house of dreams

To have a house of one's own is the aspiration of every Filipino family, a fundamental right that is countered by the reality of soaring real estate and construction prices. Highly-urbanized cities have become inundated with people from rural areas, thereby congesting the area. Quezon City is not spared from this, too: many of its workers making a decent living find it almost impossible to find an ideal residence with most having to contend with steep amortization or rental fees.

Yolanda Robles is no stranger to this predicament. Hailing from Aklan, her family moved to Metro Manila in order to find a better way of life and started taking odd jobs to meet ends. As expected, one of their biggest worries is paying rent.

"We moved in from one apartment to another, trying to find a place where we could eventually settle," she tearfully recalled. "By that time we already had children. Our worries were getting bigger."

As a contractual employee at the Quezon City Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department (EPWMD), Yolanda and her husband Paolo, who is a staff driver, found a solution to their woes. The Housing and Urban Renewal Authority (HURA) has started a low-cost housing program for employees like them. HURA Homes is a condominium-style housing community with Phase Two just recently completed in Barangay Vasra.

"When the opportunity came, we took the chance," Yolanda said, "since the monthly amortization is very low compared to the rental fees that we used to pay. Better yet, we get



Sec. Salvador M. Enriquez, Jr., President and General Manager of QC HURA. He is also senior adviser to the Mayor.



An elegant kitchen at a unit in HURA Homes.



to own it someday.” The savings she and her husband have made are now allotted to the education and health needs of their two children.

Living in HURA Homes also provides accessibility and safety, which are essential for those working in the city. It is a guarded and gated community, adjacent to the *barangay* hall, health center, and a major thoroughfare. Public transportation is also available. It is a stone’s throw away from Yolanda’s place of work. Her two daughters also study at Mines Elementary School, which is only a few steps away from home.

Aside from HURA Homes, the Quezon City government is also improving the settlements of many of its indigent communities not only by providing them affordable housing through its Community Mortgage Program (CMP) but also transforming former squatter areas into respectable residences through improved concrete roads and pavements, functional drainage and sewerage systems and street lampposts, according to Sec. Salvador M. Enriquez, Jr., President and General Manager of QC HURA.

These acts of commitment have translated into better ways of life for many of Quezon City’s more than four million residents. And as these commitments are continuously being materialized, people like Yolanda and Paolo know that a house is not just a home — it is the realization of the ideal life and dream.



Yolanda Robles and her daughters are now benefiting from living at HURA Homes.



POLICE STATIONS PROMOTE A CRIME-FREE SOCIETY

Law and order complement progress and sustainable living in Quezon City. This is made possible by a very efficient and responsive police force, the Central Police District, also known as the Quezon City Police District (QCPD), has effectively brought down crime rates and intensified security in many areas within the city. It has earned recognition from peers and admiration from the civilian populace. Cognizant of the QCPD's achievements, the city administration has constructed model police stations in strategic locations where police visibility is most needed and provided ample moral and material support to the organization, thereby boosting the morale of these men and women in uniform.



Police Stations



Model stations for men in uniform

Metro Manila's largest city, after earning recognition as the most affluent local government unit in the country, is also gearing up to become one of the most peaceful and safest localities. Crime rates are down, police visibility is up; even the tag of "carnapping capital" has been shed from the city's reputation. Credit goes to a spruced-up Quezon City Police District (QCPD) led by Police Chief Superintendent Elmo DG. San Diego.

Upon the directive of Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., District Director San Diego has extended efficient governance in the ranks of the city police, thereby continuing the improved status of the city's peace and order situation.

"All these efforts are directed at achieving Mayor Belmonte's vision for Quezon City to be a 'Quality Community' where people can live and do business peacefully," he said.

A major contributing factor to all these improvements stem from the dedication of Mayor Belmonte to clean up the QC police force in all aspects, including physical infrastructure of their bastion — the police stations.

The QCPD's 11 police stations which are strategically located all over the city have been rehabilitated to add integrity to the profession of these men in uniform.

San Diego cited the Batasan Station as a model police station — a three-storey edifice equipped with modern appurtenances that exemplify the force's credo as "Quezon City's Pride."

"FROM A DEBILITATED STRUCTURE, IT IS NOW A VERY ATTRACTIVE BUILDING. AND WITH A CONDUCTIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT, THE POLICE AND STAFF STATIONED THERE GET MORE MOTIVATED TO PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE EVERY DAY."

Mayor Belmonte inaugurates the Camp Karingal gate with former QC police chief Magtanggol Gatdula and a guest.





“From a debilitated structure, it is now a very attractive building. And with a conducive working environment, the police and staff stationed there get more motivated to provide quality service every day,” he added.

Other model police stations are located in Novaliches, Masambong, and Eastwood City.

The QCPD’s headquarters in Camp Karingal has likewise undergone major renovations, with more plans in the future. These include a firing range which will fulfill the training requirements of police personnel, as well as a 50-room Quarters Building where uniformed personnel can stay while assigned to the city.

The significant number of mobile units has resulted in heightened police visibility, thereby preventing the upsurge of crime incidences. Additional firearms were also provided to make the QCPD one of the districts with a surplus of armaments.

These advantages allow the QCPD to employ its various functions, most primordial of which is to ensure peace and order through the neutralization of criminal elements. QCPD also conducts various programs such as the “Tutok Bulabog Campaign” which involves the supervision of police personnel, the Campaign Against Robbery Hold-up, Increased Mobile and Foot Patrol, as well as anti-crime projects in partnership with the community and high-impact projects and special operations.

“What we lack in terms of manpower, the Mayor supplies through more than adequate resources. Among all the police districts in Metro Manila, we already have the most number of mobile units now numbering around 200. The Mayor also supplies us with several thousands of liters of gasoline to keep them running. He is really very extensive in providing us with resources,” San Diego noted.



Chief Supt. Elmo DG. San Diego,
Quezon City Police District
Director.



BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY BLOOM IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES

Where once idle land lay are places that now encourage commerce and investment. From Novaliches to Libis, the city's business districts are testimonies to successful transformation, the culmination of the Belmonte administration's efforts to turn the city into a center of industry and technology. With the creation of the Eastwood City Cyberpark, the Araneta Center, and the UP-Ayala Technohub, more and more companies are setting up offices in Quezon City because of its potential for expansion and as a source of competitive workers. Likewise, Payatas and Novaliches are palpable proof that nothing can diminish the indomitable will to dismantle the landscapes of poverty and turn them into progressive sites of development.



Paragons of Progress



Methane gas extracted from the Payatas dumpsite is used to generate electricity for lampposts and an ironing facility that residents can use for free.

Payatas rises to a new day

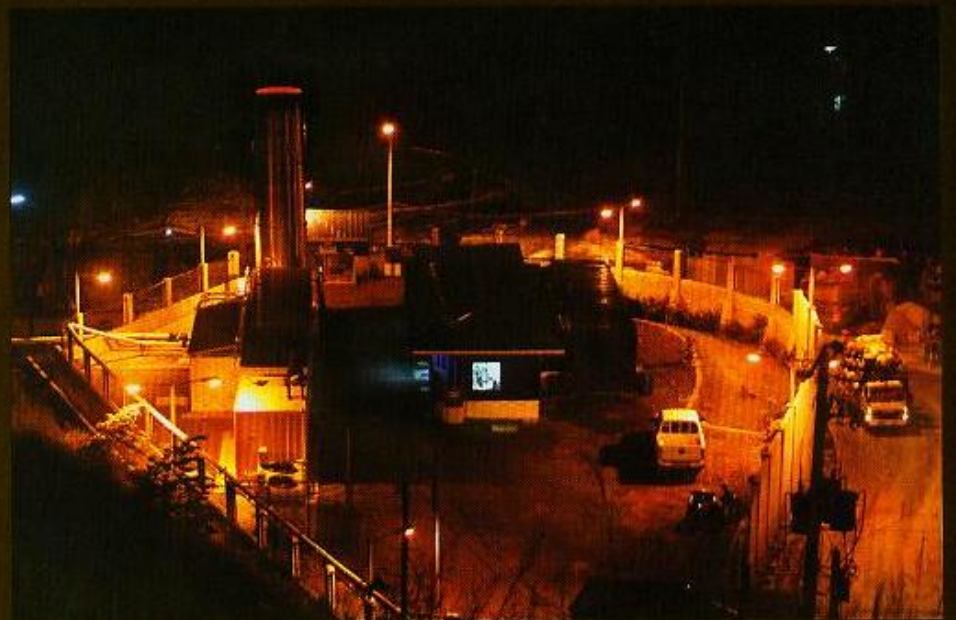
The name Payatas can be easily associated with stark and powerful images that are revolting to all the senses — a gargantuan hill thick with fumes and flies, scavengers rummaging through piles of newly-arrived garbage, dump trucks climbing up and down to unload more and more trash.

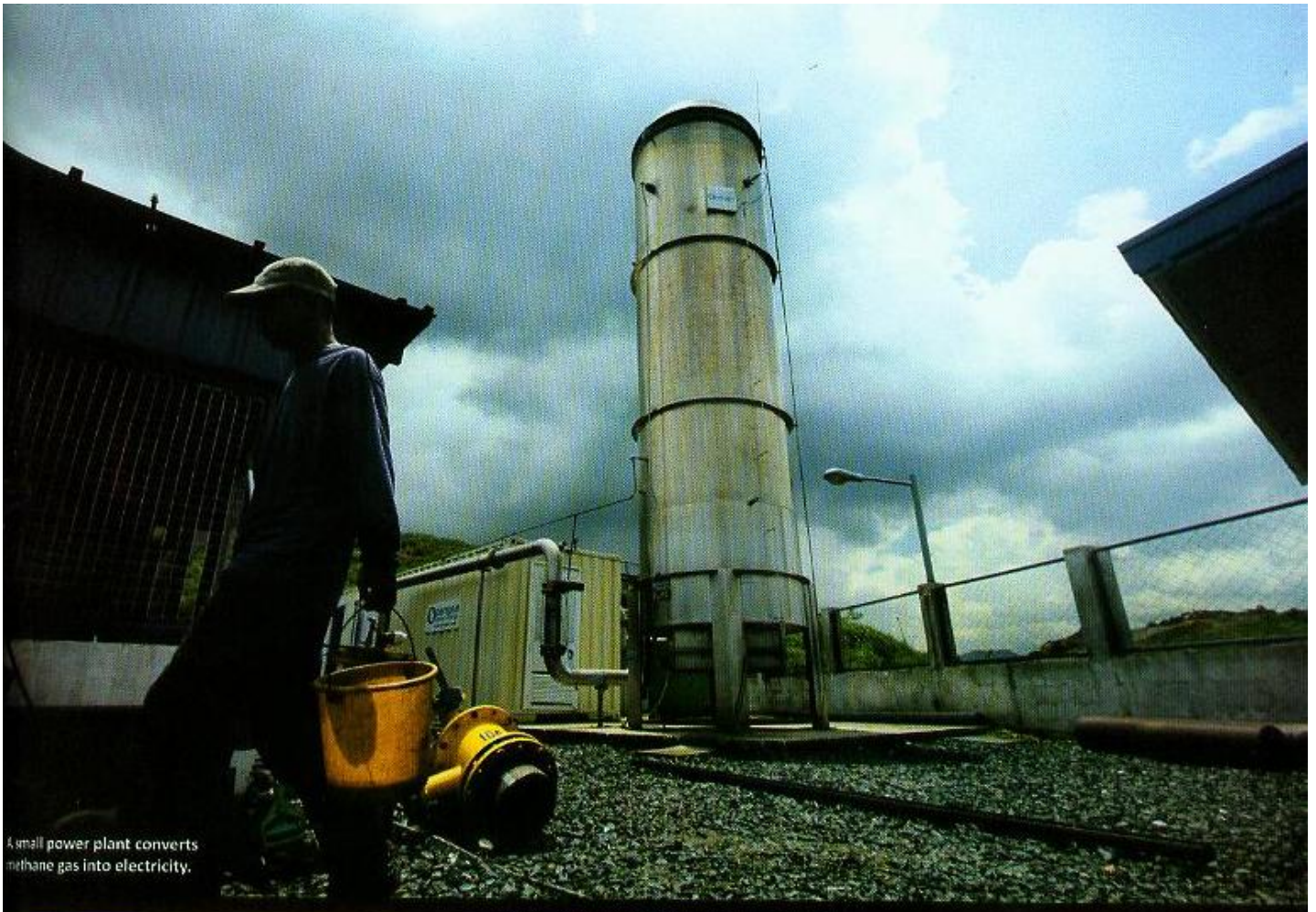
Once comparable to the legendary wasteland Smokey Mountain, it is also a painful reminder in recent history when, back in 2000, a portion of the garbage mountain collapsed on more than a hundred makeshift shanties clustered below the hill. Home to those who depend on it for survival and livelihood, almost 300 of these scavengers were killed, some of them completely buried under tons of trash and seemingly impossible to recover.

But what seemed to be the insurmountable task has proven to be a feat made possible by a determined leadership and community involvement. After the passage of Republic Act 9003 or The Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2001, the Quezon City government swiftly acted on the rehabilitation of the Payatas dumpsite, with the goal of turning the site into a controlled waste disposal facility and reclaiming the land for more useful purposes.

Col. Jameel Jaymalin, chief of the Payatas operations group that manages the area, is witness to the difficulties of this endeavor. "It was not very easy from the beginning, as there was resistance from those who depend on the dumpsite for livelihood."

With the help of the local government units and non-governmental organizations, the Quezon City government convinced the denizens of Payatas of the many benefits of rehabilitating the dumpsite: compliance with the law, environmental safety and public health ben-





A small power plant converts methane gas into electricity.



Col. Jameel Jaymalin, chief of the Payatas Operations Group.

The Payatas now has a material retrieval project where old tires are collected and recycled.



Once an unsightly dumpsite (inset), Payatas has been transformed into a model community.

efits, the stability of the area to sustain human use, and more significantly, means of livelihood that can be generated. The residents were also provided skills training and financial help that allowed them to start small business ventures and alternative livelihood, and a relocation site that is more feasible for human settlement.

By 2004, Payatas had gone through a make-over of sorts: reshaping of the garbage hill, stabilization and greening of the area with vetiver grass (a type of grass that can stabilize the earth with its strong roots), fortification of roads leading in and out of the site, and improvement of the drainage system. The recovery of materials, such as recyclable plastics and rubber tires, was facilitated with the help of several companies. The community around the area was likewise transformed: most of the scavengers had found themselves leading new lives with newfound skills and small enterprises to provide a steady income, and as a result, the crime rate went down significantly.

The presence of methane gas at Payatas also made possible its recovery and use. By 2008, the government contracted an Italy-based energy company, Pangea, to convert the gas and generate power within the site. A small plant was established to manage the extraction, collection, processing, flaring and conversion of gas into electricity at the disposal facility. The plant can generate enough electricity to light lampposts and provide energy for an ironing facility that can be used by the residents for free.

“One of our goals is to transform the site into a venue for recreation and sports,” added Col. Jaymalin as he showed a blueprint of the entire site. Already, the Payatas rehabilitation project of the Quezon City government has earned recognition both here and abroad. It has received awards and citations from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the 2008 Galing Pook Awards.

From the top of Payatas hill, one can no longer see the area as a mountain of garbage but as a mound of earth verdant with greens and flowers. You can also view from its peak the seamless image of the sun emerging from the horizon, where all possibilities are endless.

“PEOPLE VISIT THE SITE TO WITNESS THE TOTAL CHANGE BROUGHT ABOUT IN THE PLACE AND TO LEARN PRACTICES THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN OTHER AREAS WHERE WASTE MANAGEMENT IS STILL A MAJOR CONCERN.”

Novaliches faces a bright horizon

Novaliches is usually associated with being distant and unreachable. A vast track of land that stretches from Caloocan to Fairview in the northeastern portions of Quezon City, its position made it difficult for people to live there in the past. To begin with, there were no roads; just a panorama of rice fields with a smattering of houses and construction supply companies.

Virgilio Bonifacio remembers living most of his life in this quaint town. "Before, people who live here knew each other, because there weren't many of us," he distinctly recalled, having been brought here by his parents in the 1960s.

Migration changed the landscape of Novaliches as people from thickly populated areas of the metropolis started moving there and building homes and businesses, as the value of its real estate was not too steep then. It boomed in the 1990s when slowly, roads and basic services were introduced. But this snail-pace introduction to development, left unbalanced with a burgeoning population that could equal an entire city's, sparked a movement to declare Novali-



Novaliches Community Library.

ches as a separate entity from Quezon City a decade ago. "The reason is that people think that they have been left behind because there were no improvements that would have come from local leaders then," Bonifacio explained as he once favored for its secession.

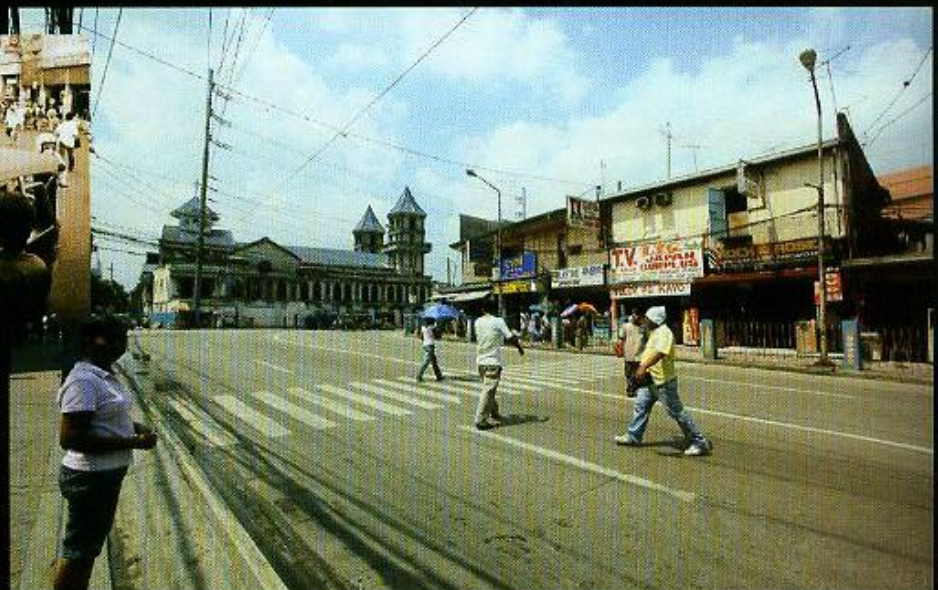
Things had a turnaround when Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. took the helm in 2001. He realized that Novaliches had been neglected for a long time simply because it was "too far away" and started infusing infrastructure programs that would benefit its large constituency. Roads were fixed, which helped alleviate the monstrous traffic in the area. Public elementary and high schools have been augmented with school buildings and facilities, and the main campus of the Quezon City Polytechnic University was established at San Bartolome, one of Novaliches' *barangays*. Parks, health centers and even a community library was built and the plazas were widened. A newly-built Novaliches District Center now provides local government services to the people.

The landscape of this once rustic town is definitely changing. With the physical improvements, more and more people are encouraged to do business in Novaliches. More establishments such as malls, banks and even call centers have made Novaliches their base in recent years.

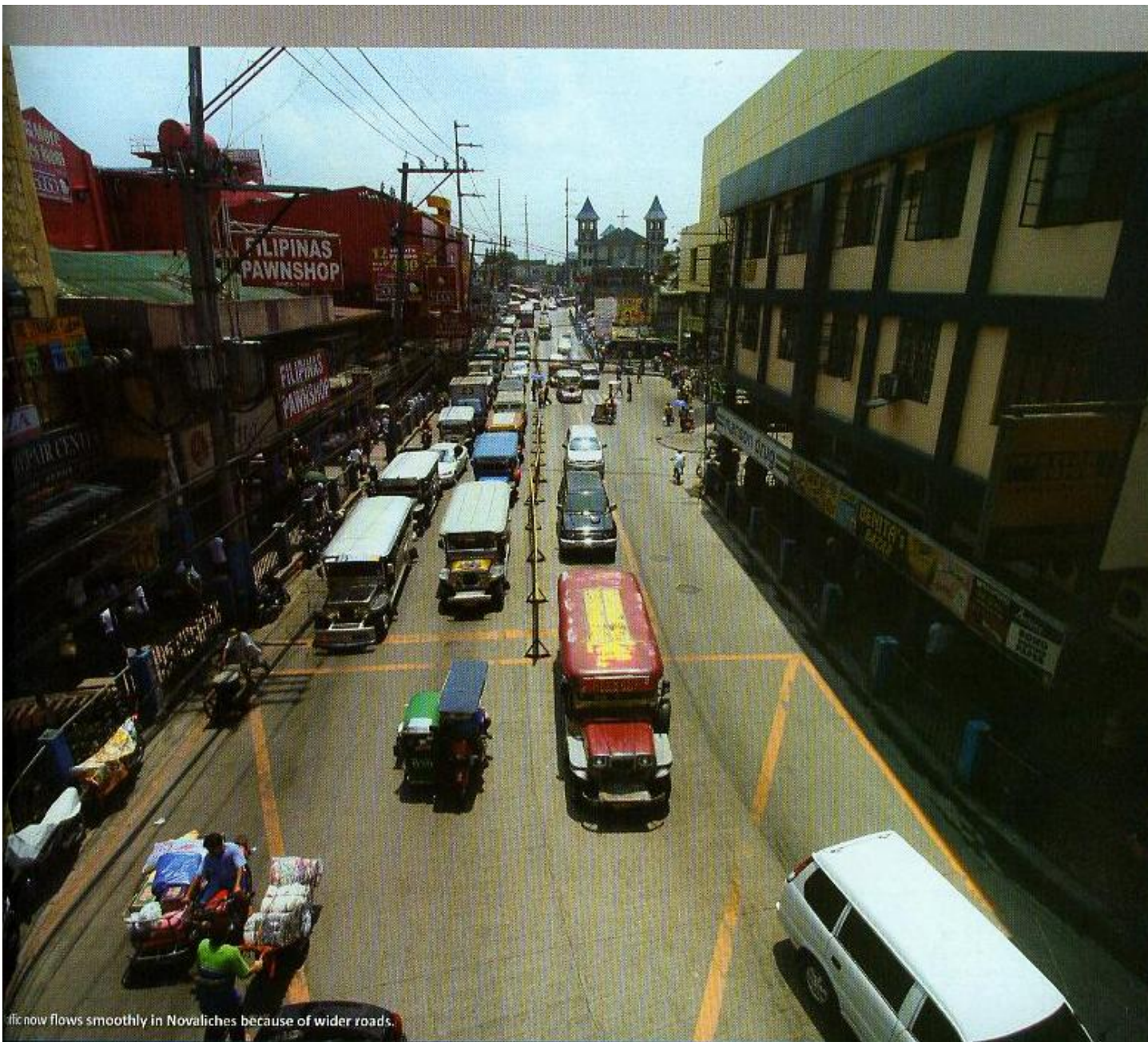
"Now, we people of Novaliches feel that the taxes we pay are worth it, since we see the improvements given back to us," Bonifacio proudly declared. Truly, it is a story of redemption, transformation and genuine concern from a caring leadership.



Novaliches then (inset) and now.



“ THINGS HAD A TURNAROUND WHEN MAYOR BELMONTE TOOK THE HELM IN 2001. HE REALIZED THAT NOVALICHES HAS BEEN NEGLECTED FOR A LONG TIME SIMPLY BECAUSE IT WAS 'TOO FAR AWAY' AND STARTED INFUSING INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS THAT WOULD BENEFIT ITS LARGE CONSTITUENCY. ROADS WERE FIXED, WHICH HELPED ALLEVIATE THE MONSTROUS TRAFFIC IN THE AREA. ”



Traffic now flows smoothly in Novaliches because of wider roads.



Quezon City Public Library in Novaliches.



Novaliches District Center

Eastwood City: Harmony of business and recreation

W

ith its perfect harmony of homes, offices and recreational establishments, Eastwood City in Libis is perhaps the best example of a thriving urban community in Quezon City.

Eastwood offers the unique and very convenient opportunity to live in a place where home, work and recreation are located within the same area – giving urban dwellers the

chance to enjoy the luxury of time.

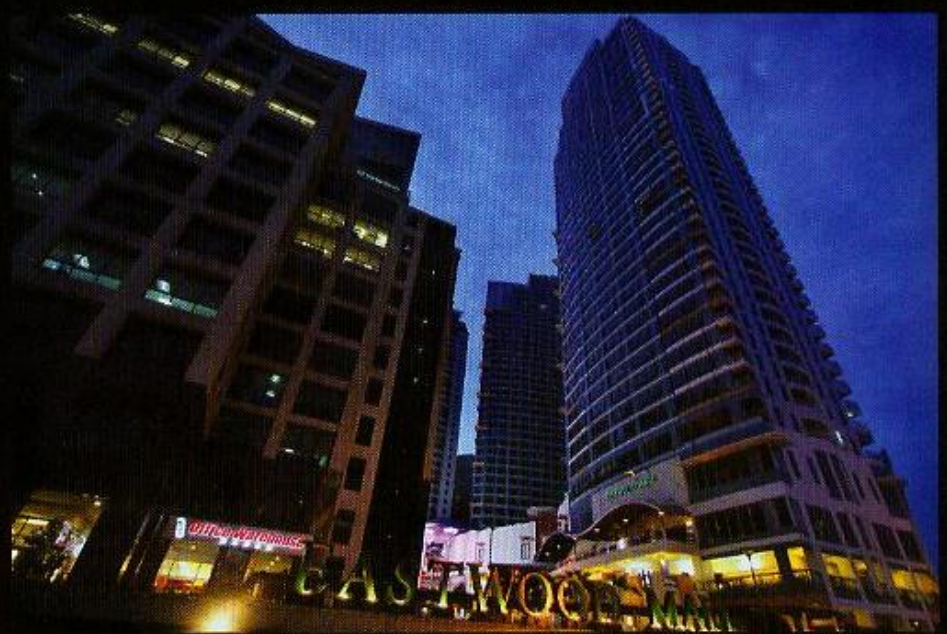
For the benefit of residents, condominiums, office buildings, restaurants and various lifestyle hubs are strategically situated within easy reach of each other. Hours are no longer wasted for travel time, and people get to address what they need fast.

This has made Eastwood of Megaworld Corporation an address of choice. More residential communities have been developed through the years, all constructed with the same concept of bringing the convenience of a beautiful home, a stable job and a fun lifestyle within the same cluster.

Take a short walk and one will find the hippest boutiques and a row of specialty shops that will make shopping instincts go on overdrive. There are even bazaars where unique items are on sale.

People can indulge in gastronomic pleasures with a variety of culinary offerings at Eastwood's City Walk 1 and 2. Aside from these lifestyle conveniences and first-class condominiums, Eastwood has also evolved into something much bigger.

In 2008, pioneering IT enclave – Eastwood City Cyberpark led all other IT economic



The latest addition to the Eastwood City is the Eastwood Mall.



QC's residents enjoy their weekends in Eastwood's various leisure options.

” WITH HIS EYES SET ON THE ULTIMATE PRIZE, MAYOR BELMONTE IS A STEADFAST FIGURE ON THE CITY’S ATTEMPT TO BECOME THE BPO CAPITAL OF THE ENTIRE WORLD. HE IS LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR THIS BY SETTING AN EXAMPLE IN QUEZON CITY FOR THE OTHER CITIES TO FOLLOW. ”

zones in the country in terms of exports revenues, employment and salaries paid.

Data released by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) showed that the 53 outsourcing and offshoring (O&O) locators in the Eastwood City Cyberpark raked in about \$323.17 million in services export revenues in 2008.

This translated to a huge 41% growth in revenues year-on-year as the visionary cyberpark developed by Megaworld Corp. brought in some \$228.09 million in earnings in 2007. In 2006, Eastwood City’s services exports amounted to \$188.5 million.

In terms of employment, the average number of personnel in 2008 at the Eastwood City Cyberpark was 13,774, about 10% higher than in 2007.

This allowed the cyberpark in Libis to retain its billing as the top employer among all IT zones in the country.

The growth will be impossible without the help of Quezon City’s local government, particularly the strong support of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr.

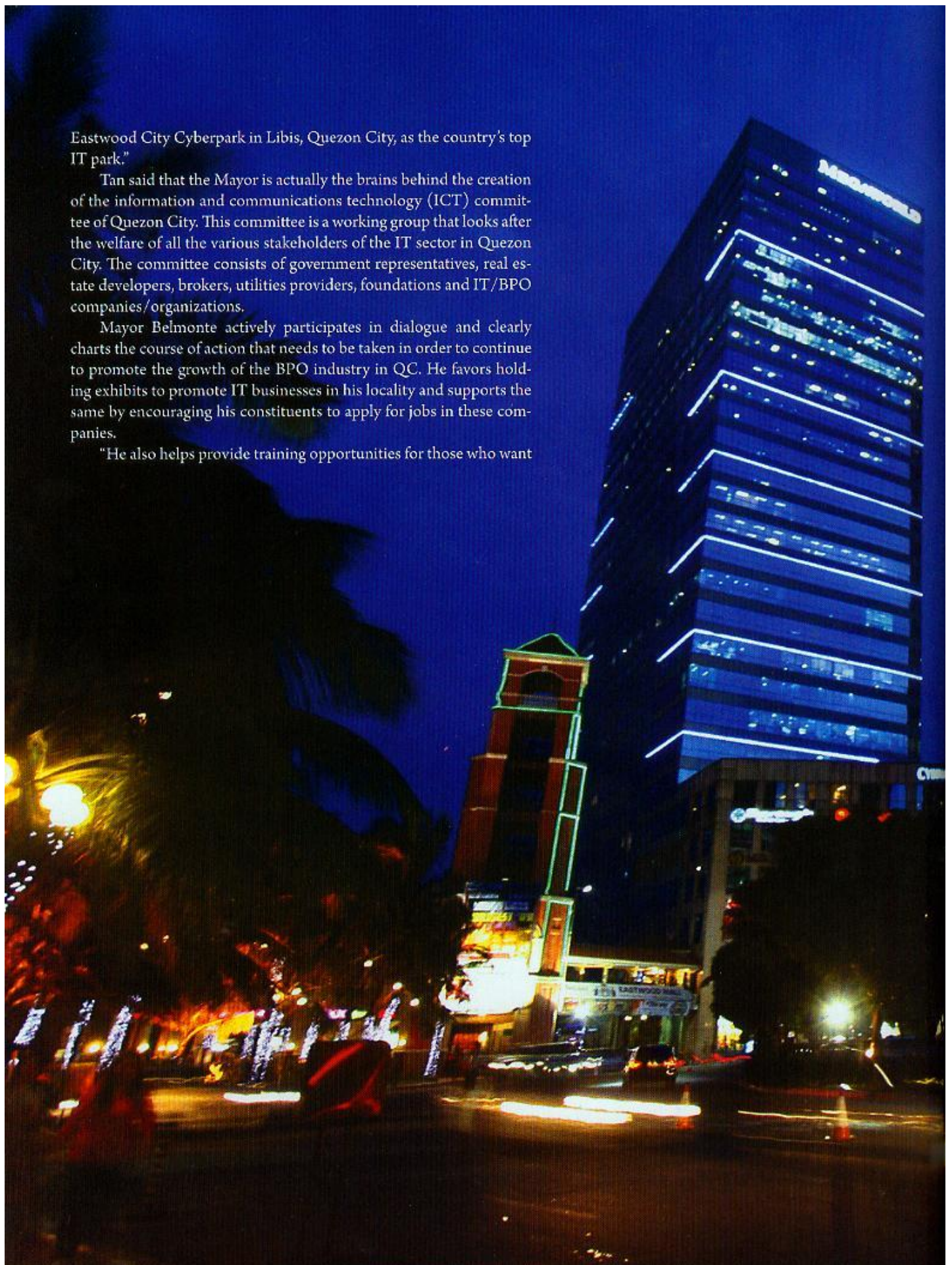
According to Megaworld Corp. chairman and CEO, Mr. Andrew Tan, “Mayor Sonny Belmonte is a true champion of the business process outsourcing (BPO) / information technology (IT) sector. We at Megaworld appreciate all his support for the continued success of


Eastwood City Cyberpark in Libis, Quezon City, as the country's top IT park."

Tan said that the Mayor is actually the brains behind the creation of the information and communications technology (ICT) committee of Quezon City. This committee is a working group that looks after the welfare of all the various stakeholders of the IT sector in Quezon City. The committee consists of government representatives, real estate developers, brokers, utilities providers, foundations and IT/BPO companies/organizations.

Mayor Belmonte actively participates in dialogue and clearly charts the course of action that needs to be taken in order to continue to promote the growth of the BPO industry in QC. He favors holding exhibits to promote IT businesses in his locality and supports the same by encouraging his constituents to apply for jobs in these companies.

"He also helps provide training opportunities for those who want





to work in BPO firms but don't have the necessary skills to get employed. As such, he gives them an edge to gain employment. There is no doubt that many of his constituents who were given training opportunities have found employment within Eastwood City Cyberpark," said Tan.

Mayor Belmonte's efforts have been recognized not just locally but abroad. Quezon City is referred to as the country's ICT capital and has been ranked seventh among the Top 10 Asian Cities of the Future in a survey commissioned by The Financial Times of London.

"With his eyes set on the ultimate prize, Mayor Belmonte is a steadfast figure on the city's attempt to become the BPO capital of the entire world. He is laying the groundwork for this by setting an example in Quezon City for the other cities to follow. And he can always count on the support of Megaworld and Eastwood City Cyberpark to make this dream a reality," Tan concluded.

Araneta Center:

Gateway to the future

A

ny true-blue cityfolk will confess to having spent a part of their lives at Quezon City's Araneta Center. Once Metro Manila's leading commercial and entertainment center during the '70s and the '80s, no less than the visionary J. Amado Araneta led its transformation from a vast expanse of cogon grass into a complex of department stores, office buildings and activity hubs, with the Araneta Coliseum as its centerpiece.

Strategically located at the crossroads of two busy thoroughfares EDSA and Aurora Boulevard, Araneta Center once took a backseat to newer venues like Greenhills, Ortigas and Ayala districts during the boom of the '90s. Volatile social and economic climates and ever-changing popular tastes further relegated this historical and cultural landmark.

Despite setbacks, the Araneta Group of Companies and the Quezon City government, through an ambitious long-term master plan, have revived the glory of Araneta Center and transformed it into a bustling commercial, business and residential district with a global appeal. The collaboration of the corporate and local administrations that run the area has resulted to initiatives that significantly transformed the image of Araneta Center to one that is highly urban, competitive and comfortable for living.

"There are a lot of things in store for Araneta Center as we push through with the redevelopment. With this, we have made a valuable contribution to the city's economy and brought to life the vision of Mayor Belmonte in making Quezon City a 'City of the Future,'" said Jorge



Araneta Group and Megaworld Corporation top officials at the groundbreaking ceremonies of their joint project, the Manhattan Garden City (from left): Stella Marquez-Araneta, Araneta Group CEO Jorge Araneta, Megaworld Corp. Chairman and President Andrew Tan, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., and MMDA Chairman Bayani Fernando.



The Araneta Coliseum is a popular venue for concerts, gatherings, and world-class acts.

“THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS IN STORE FOR ARANETA CENTER AS WE PUSH THROUGH WITH THE REDEVELOPMENT. WITH THIS, WE HAVE MADE A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO QUEZON CITY'S ECONOMY AND BRINGING TO LIFE THE VISION OF MAYOR BELMONTE IN MAKING QUEZON CITY A 'CITY OF THE FUTURE.'”

L. Araneta, chairman and president of the Araneta Group.

Soon, Gateway Tower 1 and 2 will rise, offering retail and office spaces. There will be an improved landscape that will promote a pedestrian-friendly environment. In collaboration with Megaworld Corporation, the Manhattan Garden City will soon tower over the area, bringing its transit-oriented development to the forefront. Also in the works are a Cyber Park and the construction of a new, upscale hotel that will serve both local and foreign tourists.

“The Big Dome, the core of the Araneta Center, is now pulsing towards a continued bright future as a mixed-use development comprising shopping malls, residential towers, and office parks among the 2,000-plus businesses in its confines. Soon, hotels, office towers and more will complete the masterplan to create a Central Business District of Quezon City. We are proud to say that we are part of it and we are integral to its success,” Mr. Araneta added.

Given these plans, people will soon witness how Araneta Center, with a storied history to back it up, brings them forward to the gateway of the future. But as of the moment, it has claimed a triumphant return to its rightful spot as a premier leisure and lifestyle hub.

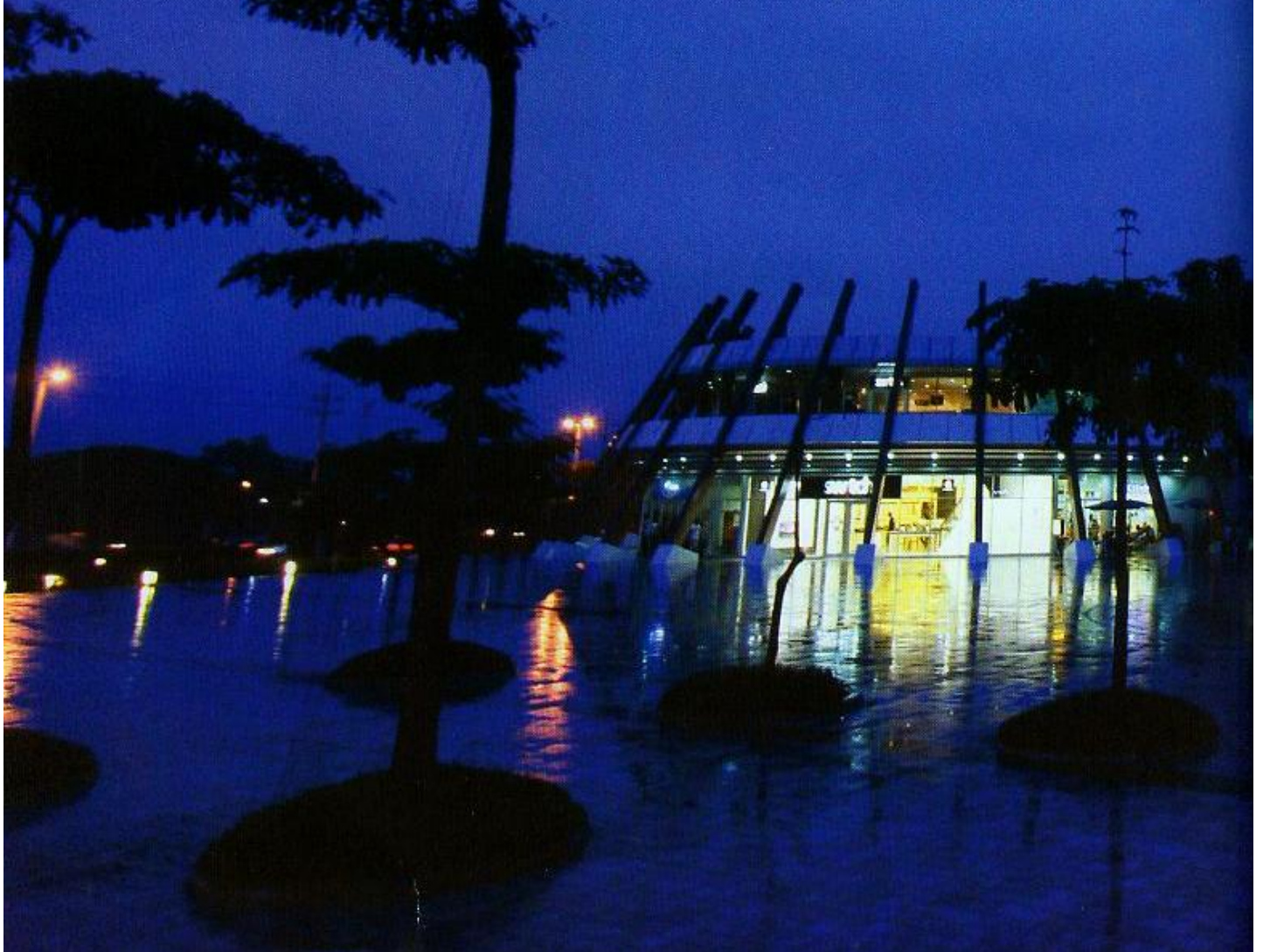
UP-Ayala Land Technohub: Stage for technology

The UP-Ayala Land Technohub located along the busy highway of Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City rises like a vision of the future in the horizon – and in so many ways, it is.

The sprawling 37.5-hectare site was conceptualized to be the newest and most modern business and information technology (IT) district to be established in this side of the metropolis, further underscoring one of the city's titles as 'IT capital of the Philippines.' This new landmark is a joint project of the University of the Philippines (UP) and Ayala Land – a subsidiary of Ayala Corporation.

The technohub was envisioned to become a strong business district and IT research facility of the state university. It currently houses strong names in the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry, as well as top global brands in IT working on hardware and software.

Almost P6 billion was invested for the completion of the UP-Ayala Land Technohub,



which was formally launched on Nov. 21, 2008. Ten low-rise buildings form the impressive facade of the technohub – distinguished with its unique design of glass buildings and modern architecture. The futuristic site is tapered with a beautiful landscape of greens and shrubs. The vision actually is a realization of the wonders of green architecture that UP has been known for.

Part of the structure is the UP Science & Technology Office, and areas for residential buildings for university employees, faculty and students, a hotel, and various commercial spaces.

UP-Ayala Land Technohub is designed as a satellite office of BPO and IT firms who have set-up office in the South of Metro Manila. With the introduction of the modern district, the Quezon City local government hopes to supply more income-generating opportunities for those living in the city and nearby provinces.



A showcase of good governance and a promise fulfilled

Ernesto and Lolita Bathan have made Murphy Public Market in Cubao their second home. They have fed their family through their earnings in grating coconut and extracting coconut milk or *gata* and selling vegetables in their stall, a livelihood that Lolita has learned from her mother, who originally owned the place that they now maintain. "We have seen the place through good and bad times, although we have been struggling much recently," Ernesto said, telling a story of ordeals that many other stall vendors have experienced.



Donato C. Matias, head of the Barangay Operations Center and the Market Development and Administration Department.

The *palengke* at Murphy Avenue has been with the Cubao community for decades, and its residents have attested to the dependability of the place when it comes to daily food sustenance. As all places of public convergence, the elements have worn the market down, and the environment has degraded. But according to Amado Quiacos, another stall vendor and vice president of the Makakalikasang Manininda sa Murphy Market (M4) Inc., an association of stall owners, the main problem was the culture of corruption that infested the place. "We have been persistently clamoring for the rehabilitation of the market so that many of the stall owners would have a decent place to sell their products, but it fell on deaf ears," he said.

Another thorny contention is the proliferation of illegal, ambulant vendors who have installed makeshift stalls right on the street, not only hampering the flow of traffic but also greatly contributing to the pollution of the area by leaving their trash everywhere. "We are





Lolita Bathan, one of the vendors at Murphy Public Market.

“MAYOR BELMONTE WAS THE ONLY OFFICIAL WHO REALLY LISTENED TO OUR CRIES FOR HELP AND ACTUALLY FULFILLED A PROMISE.”

all for fair competition, but instead of helping us, market administrators of long ago accommodated them at our expense, putting undue pressure on us by trying to deprive us of our livelihood so that these ‘squatters’ could continue bribing them,” Quiacos elaborated.

At last, after many years of appeals by M4, Mayor Belmonte approved on July 7, 2008 the renovation of the Murphy Market. City officials led by Secretary to the Mayor Tadeo Palma inspected the place and promised immediate action on the rehabilitation of the market. The M4 patiently waited for this promise and made follow-ups.

One day, as they were crossing the underpass from the Quezon Memorial Circle to City Hall, they got a surprise that surely brought smiles and tears of joy. They saw the plan that oversaw the design of the new Murphy Market, and immediately soon, construction finally began in February 2009. This, they say, restored the dignity of their work as market vendors and assures them of food and livelihood for their own families, something that they are grateful to the Mayor and the rest of the city officials who have made it possible. “Mayor Belmonte was the only official who really listened to our cries for help and actually fulfilled a promise,” Lolita said.

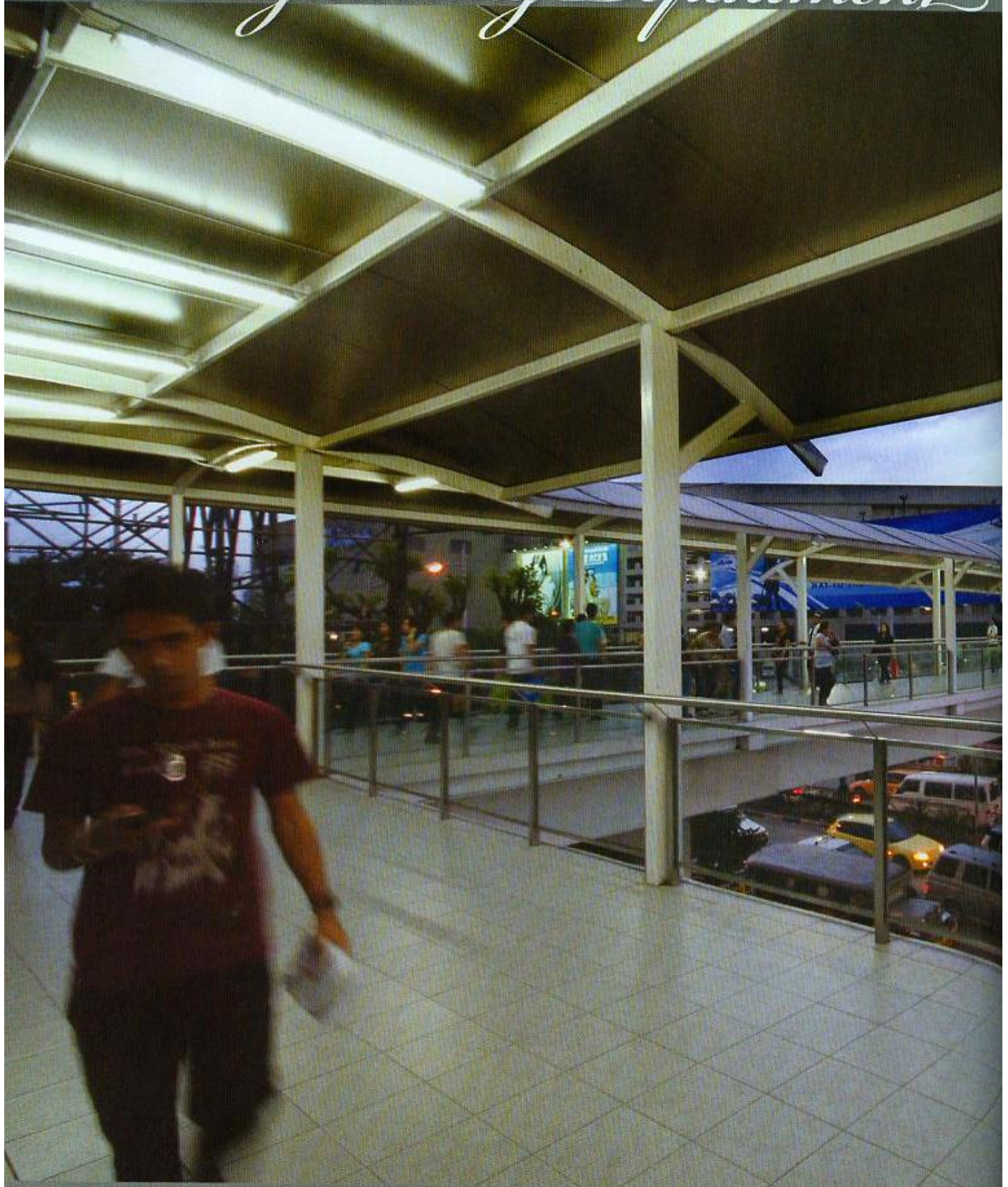
Donato C. Matias, head of the city’s Market Development and Administration Department (MDAD) and concurrent head of the Barangay Operations Center (BOC), understands the travails that market vendors undergo through. Although he just assumed the position recently, he realized that there are so many things to do in order to restore the respectability of the city’s public marketplaces while carefully considering the rights and needs of vendors, both stalled and ambulant, who make a living there.

“You know, many of them live on a daily hand-to-mouth basis, so we also don’t want them displaced while at the same time we want the stall owners to feel secure about their livelihood,” he explained. While Murphy Market is a pilot project of the Belmonte administration, the goal is for the rest of the city’s seven public markets to undergo not only an infrastructural makeover but also to make them sustainable sources of revenue and environmentally sound venues for domestic commerce.



Artist’s perspective of the new Murphy Market.

QC Engineering Department





An overpass connects two major shopping centers in Quezon City: Ayala's TriNoma and SM North EDSA.



WELL-BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE IS THE EPITOME OF PUBLIC SERVICE

The recent achievements of the Belmonte administration in transforming the landscape of Quezon City as a cosmopolitan venue will not be possible without the initiatives and efforts of the Quezon City Engineering Department. It is through their office that all infrastructure projects of the city government have come to fruition. With their careful planning and direction, roads, buildings and other structures have been successfully completed and are now being utilized by the city's constituents. The men and women of the QC Engineering Department are quiet and humble heroes in this endeavor, and their commitment is proof that good local government service, often the subject of suspicion, is possible in these times.

Building a city of the future

W

hen former President Manuel L. Quezon was drafting plans for the city that would later on bear his great name, his vision was quite simple: to make Quezon City a "working man's paradise" and essentially a place to host housing developments in the "outskirts" of Manila.

Fast forward to the 21st century and Quezon City has evolved to something much more grandiose than President Quezon's vision. Today, Quezon City is recognized as a "City of the Future" among selected countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The possibilities are indeed endless for Metro Manila's biggest city in terms of land area with more than 16,000 hectares and plenty of room for progressive growth.

Housing projects and real estate, commercial and institutional ventures, along with multi-use complexes, well-paved roads and bridges, softened by greenery and parks, characterize the landscape, making the city both livable and conducive for business.

Credit goes to Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., whose own vision for the city is as grand as any local government leader could muster. Same goes for the implementing arm of his government which paved the way for all this infrastructure development: the Engineering Office headed by OIC City Engineer Joselito B. Cabungcal.

Cabungcal assumed office in 2001 — the same year Mayor Belmonte was elected into his first term. This partnership, built on a strong foundation, flourished through the years, both sharing the vision and commitment to transform Quezon City into a world-class, model city that is admired across the globe.

Transforming the city

The city's history will always be annexed in the year 2001, when Mayor Belmonte put into place an efficient bureaucracy capable of delivering public service and building up a very strong financial position that allowed the city to pursue development on a broader scale for a population of more than 2.7 million residents.

From negative to surplus — the success story of the Quezon City government's economic turnaround amazed everyone, but Mayor Belmonte was far from finished. With the generated funds achieved after just one term of office, he pursued his vision anchored on priority projects such as a well-rationalized infrastructure program.

"To date, we have invested P17 billion for the infrastructure projects during the Belmonte administration," Cabungcal disclosed.

This translates to 90% of the road network all over Quezon City that is now well-paved, compared to 15% prior to Belmonte's term; not to mention the various road, drainage and sidewalk improvement projects; the P332 million invested in citywide streetlighting programs; over P2 billion used to finance the construction of new school buildings and classrooms, as well as the installation of bridges and creation/renovation of parks and green communal spaces in different barangays.

Infrastructure development stands for the "I" in Mayor Belmonte's priority program summed up as LIFE (Livelihood and entrepreneurship, Infrastructure development, Fiscal and



Receiving area of the Engineering Department at the 8th Floor of the Quezon City Hall.



Architect Nemencio Cachola (left), Acting Chief of the Architecture Division.

“MAYOR BELMONTE IS FOCUSED ON CREATING A CITY THAT WILL BE CONDUCIVE TO BUSINESS AND COMMERCE. HE KNOWS THAT IMPROVED ROAD NETWORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES CAN RESTORE INVESTOR CONFIDENCE IN THE CITY.”

Engr. Joselito 'Chito' Cabungcal,
OIC City Engineer of Quezon City.

financial management, and Education). This encompassing endeavor aims to fulfill the Mayor's vision of a highly-interconnected metropolis, which he believes is a critical foundation for progress.

“On each occasion when the Mayor reports his State of the City Address (SOCA), he would highlight his plans and programs for the city and update his constituents on the achievements of the past year. And the following year, he would make sure to fulfill the plans of the previous year. If he said there will be a bridge on a certain area, on his next SOCA, he would announce that such infrastructure has been completed. He never wavers from his primary objective: to transform Quezon City into a Quality Community,” Cabungcal noted.

Owning years of experience in the corporate world, Mayor Belmonte translated this expertise in managing Quezon City using sound judgment, clear-cut strategies and a hands-on approach to ensure efficiency in his government. About 50% of resources are allotted to infrastructure, with projects incessantly proposed and approved to fulfill the Mayor's programs — making the Engineering Department one of the busiest offices in the QC Hall.

“Mayor Belmonte is focused on creating a city that will be conducive to business and commerce. He knows that improved road networks and infrastructure facilities can restore investor confidence in the city. So, as the office responsible for identifying certain zones ideal for business, we work hand in hand with the Mayor to implement all these projects,” Cabungcal added.



Engr. Cabungcal receives full support from Mayor Belmonte.

Cabungcal even said that the Mayor himself sometimes functions as engineer and architect for his projects, just to implement his vision accordingly. The Engineering Office in effect becomes the frontline department, and the “mirror” of the Mayor’s performance.

“If we deliver poorly, it would reflect on Mayor Belmonte, so we are very careful in doing our job well to make him proud,” he said.

Such rapport between the Mayor and his Engineering Chief has been effortless through the years, with Cabungcal insisting how proud he is working for his boss.

“I get full support from the Chief Executive so I feel really fulfilled. He may be very strict, but we all learn a lot from his example,” he said.

Depressed to dignified

The city’s transformation transcends beyond physical changes, involving its most important asset — its residents.

District II is the largest portion of the city, containing the five biggest *barangays* with the highest population (Payatas, Holy Spirit, Commonwealth, Bagong Silangan, and Batasan Hills). They also have the biggest concentration of “depressed” communities.

“Before Mayor Belmonte’s term, those *barangays* looked more like rural areas because of the dilapidated structures, the unpaved roads, and the prevalence of informal settlers and their makeshift homes. Payatas also formerly had an infamous reputation as a garbage dumpsite,” Cabungcal related.

Today, the road network in these *barangays* is well-paved and efficiently planned. A drainage system is in place, all areas are serviced by electric and water utilities, and people live in much improved conditions.

“*Malayung-malayo na ang pagkakaiba* (There is a very big difference),” Cabungcal said. “Payatas is now very much livable, with the community even opening small enterprises and investors coming in for business.”

The generous amount of public service devoted to District II has restored dignity in the lives of the residents, dissuading the notion that the poor are neglected by the local government. People walk the streets feeling safe and confident, knowing that given the opportunity, they can



Engr. Geminiano Victa, Jr. (right), head of the Vertical Projects Division and current OIC of the Maintenance Management Office.



Architectural Division



pursue valid and meaningful sources of livelihood and get compensated well in the process.

Aside from roads and bridges, emphasis is also placed in the construction of school buildings and other important institutions. From a ratio of one classroom to more than 80 pupils, Quezon City's schoolchildren can now enjoy better education at the city's high-rise school buildings. The ingenious plan not only addresses the lack of facilities, but also maximizes the building space and resources.

Health centers have been built in various *barangays* to cater to the medical needs of residents. The Quezon City General Hospital has been renovated and improved to world-class standards. Every *barangay* can now boast of a pocket park within the community where they can gather for wholesome recreation. Streets are well-lit, crime rates have gone down, and the former tag of the

Engr. Ernesto Salvador (right), head of the Infrastructure Management Services and Engr. Ramiro Tiamzon, head of the Horizontal Projects Division. Left photo shows Engr. Sabina Santos (right), chief, Planning and Programming Division.



Michelle A. Bogarin, OIC,
Administrative Division.

Upper Right photo shows
Arch. Virgilio S. Regala, Jr.
(standing), city Architect
and head of special Design
Group.



city as the “carnapping capital” has vanished.

Even established venues have been targeted by Mayor Belmonte to enhance their prospects. The Tomas Morato, West, and Timog Avenues underwent sidewalk redevelopment to improve the aesthetics of these popular areas. Establishment owners were initially opposed to the disruption in their operations, but after the evident improvement, business has more than doubled both for building owners and their tenants. Property value has also increased.

The road to QC CBD

Construction and completion of major transport and infrastructure projects are expected to trigger further development in the city.

With Mayor Belmonte’s program for road connectivity, accessibility between certain subdivisions and around the city has also improved. Travel time and vehicular traffic have been greatly reduced with the opening of alternate routes like the SB Diversion Road, which makes the drive to Valenzuela and Novaliches easier while avoiding the usual bottleneck traffic in Quirino Highway. More than an hour of travel has been significantly reduced to 30 minutes.

Cabungcal explained that with such improved infrastructure around the city, business can further flourish in Quezon City as an investment hub. The Engineering Department is responsible for plotting the road network based on the masterplan of certain economic and commercial areas, among other zoning requirements.

Which is why Cabungcal and his competent staff are excited with the most ambitious project that will entrench Mayor Belmonte’s administration in the annals of history: the Quezon City Central Business District (QC CBD).

The QC CBD is a multi-billion peso development set to rise within 250 hectares from North Triangle to East Avenue including Veterans Memorial complex – in the heart of Que-



Engineering Department Performance Team*

zon City – as a well-planned, integrated and environmentally balanced mixed-use development model. The project has been called by the World Bank as “the center of gravity of economic developments in Metro Manila in the coming years.”

The business district will be composed of science and technology parks, cyber centers and offices, residential developments, hotels and leisure centers, and will even be serviced by its own mono-rail system – turning the area into an ultra-modern, cosmopolitan destination that will live up to the potentials of Quezon City as a “City of the Future.”

And this transition is now gradually taking shape: the TriNoma Mall has emerged as a shopping destination of choice across various segments of the market. UP-Ayala Land Tech-hub, set along Commonwealth Avenue has opened and is attracting business process outsourcing (BPO) companies. Construction of the Eton Centris complex by the Lucio Tan Group is ongoing.

Cabungcal identified other supplemental projects that are being set in place in anticipation of the QC CBD: the construction of pedestrian overpasses, vehicular bridges, electrification of major thoroughfares, sidewalk redevelopments and the proposed MRT 7 which will connect Commonwealth Avenue to San Jose del Monte in Bulacan. However, he said that the Quezon City government will always maintain its mandate to preserve clean and green elements that soften the pace of progress.

Within five years, this massive development, in cooperation with the Office of the President, the National Housing Authority (NHA) and the Quezon City government, is expected to generate employment opportunities, investment and income for the city and its residents.

By then, the city’s transformation from a mere “working man’s paradise” into the most interesting premier metropolis in the National Capital Region must be at its peak, joining the global trend of economic competition and making the rest of the Philippines ultimately proud.

“THE NEW BUSINESS DISTRICT WILL BE AN ULTRA-MODERN, COSMOPOLITAN DESTINATION THAT WILL LIVE UP TO THE POTENTIALS OF QUEZON CITY AS A CITY OF THE FUTURE.”

* Not in photo: Engr. Hynlette Corpuz

CARAG BUILDERS, INC.

Office: 287-B Ermin Garcia St., Cubao, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 995-7768/ 438-9435
E-mail: IPCbuilders@yahoo.com

Carag Builders, Inc., incorporated by its president, Inocencio P. Carag in 1986, started with developing housing projects in the metro. Today, it is a reputable company composed of experienced architects, engineers, general contractors, developers, and realtors.

Based in Quezon City, the company has also ventured into government contracts with the administration of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. It has established a reputation in building and renovating schools, ground improvement, construction of roads, and electrical remodeling.

Among its projects for Quezon City are: the improvement of drainage of Gold St., Brgy. Batasan Hills; improvement of fence and construction of stage at Esteban Abada Elementary School; expansion of Quezon City Hall Annex Bldg., Brgy. Central; ground improvement of Bagong Silangan High School; proposed construction of a 4-storey QC Center for Excellence-IT Bldg., Sto. Cristo; construction of 4-storey, 17-classroom School Bldg., Bagong Silangan High School; proposed construction of a 4-storey, 4-classroom School Building, Brgy. Culiati; proposed construction of a 4-storey, 15-classroom school building, Brgy. Bagong Silangan; ground improvement at Doña Rosario Elementary School, Brgy. Novaliches Proper; construction of 4-storey, 19-classroom School building, Doña Rosario Elementary School, Brgy. Novaliches Proper; improvement of drainage at Damar Village, Brgy. Damar; construction of a 4-storey, 18-classroom school building at San Bartolome Elementary School; repair of drainage system at San Francisco High School, Brgy. Sto. Cristo; and construction of a 4-storey, 18-classroom school building at San Francisco High School.



Inocencio P. Carag



COMPACT BUILDERS, INC.

Office: 532 Taas St., Bagumbong, Caloocan City
Tel. Nos.: 930-1411/ 408-0441
E-mail: compactbuilders@yahoo.com

The City Hall employees, who have diligently worked alongside Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., have also benefited from the city's economic growth, by way of housing programs such as the Quezon City Housing and Urban Renewal Authority, Inc. (HURA).

Built on 1.2 hectares of land, the HURA housing project in Brgy. Vasra contains four 5-storey medium-rise structures, created by Mayor Belmonte to provide affordable housing units to both the city's landless and City Hall employees.

The project was constructed by one of the local government's private partners, Compact Builders Inc. Its president, Ms. Mylene E. Hizon, refers to this development as their biggest project, started in March 2006 and completed in December 2008.

Compact Builders, which started operations in 1991, has also implemented various infrastructure projects that benefit Quezon City's constituents, among them the Lupang Pangako Health Center in Payatas – a two-storey mega health center that provides free medical services for the low-income sector.

Hizon also cited the Scout Borromeo road project, a 700-meter stretch which now boasts of a concrete road, and proper drainage system with a 600 mm diameter to accommodate the huge load of sewage generated by the area. This standard is considerably advanced versus other cities that still use the open canal system, Hizon noted. As per Mayor Belmonte's instructions, the company is only too willing to provide the best for the city.



Mylene E. Hizon

FREERPORT SHIPYARD AND ENGINEERING CORPORATION

Office: 99 Scout Fernandez St., Brgy. Sacred Heart, Diliman, Quezon City

Tel. Nos.: 926-3436/ 927-4888/ 926-5147/ 927-8262

Fax: 922-6597

E-mail: freerport_engg@hotmail.com

Freeport Shipyard and Engineering Corp. is a domestic corporation owned and managed by Filipino nationals. Established in 1975 with a primary purpose to engage in general construction and other allied business, it has been rendering services in civil works projects nationwide to both the government and the private sector.

Led by its president, Aurora E. Panlilio, the company has now acquired a long and wide experience along the field of its specialization in general engineering and building works, with expertise in designing, planning, estimating, fabricating, supervising, and maintenance services.

Among its infrastructure projects for Quezon City are the improvement of road and drainage of Cotabato St., Brgy. Ramon Magsaysay; improvement of road and drainage of Sgt. Rallos (Phases I and II), Brgys. Laging Handa and Sacred Heart; improvement of drainage at A. Rocas Ave., (Phase II) in Brgys. Paligsahan, Laging Handa, Obrero; improvement/ concreting of 5th St., Brgy. Mariana; drainage improvement of 8th St., Brgy. Mariana; improvement of drainage system along Bonifacio St., Brgy. Sta. Lucia; improvement/ concreting of Ana Maria Esquivel St. in Brgy. San Antonio (Phase II); proposed improvement/ concreting of Calavite St., Brgy. Salvacion; and drainage improvement of Mabini St., Brgy. Sta. Lucia.

Freeport's implemented projects also include the construction of school buildings to support the Belmonte administration's thrust for education. Among these are the 4-storey, 19-classroom Esteban Abada Elementary School building in Brgy. Veterans Village; 4-storey, 14-classroom Culiati Elementary School building in Brgy. Culiati; and the 4-storey, 14-classroom Payatas B Annex Elementary School building in Brgy. Payatas.



A.C. MOJARES CONSTRUCTION

Office: 400-A Tandang Sora Avenue, Brgy. Culiati, Quezon City

Tel. Nos.: 932-9152/ 931-3258

E-mail: roumella61576@yahoo.com.ph



Roumella Mojares

Few now question the fiscal rehabilitation program initiated by Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. through his nine years in office as Mayor of Quezon City. After achieving the status of the Philippines' "richest city" the good Mayor continued his work to put to good use the income generated by his administration.

Its physical manifestation can be seen in the construction of school buildings and health centers, concreting of roads, redevelopment of sidewalks, renovation of parks, among other infrastructure improvements.

One of the key partners that helped the local government implement such progressive changes is A.C. Mojares Construction – established in 1974 by Alejandro C. Mojares.

His daughter Roumella, who functions as the firm's administration manager, said that their company has always admired Mayor Belmonte for always using the city's resources wisely. He has created tangible manifestations of the city's revenues that are geared for the welfare of the constituents.

That is why they are also as eager to bid for projects with the Quezon City government, notably for school buildings, roads, sidewalks and other SB projects. Among their accomplishments are Sacred Heart Elementary School, Novaliches High School, Lagro Elementary School, and San Francisco High School.

The West Avenue sidewalk redevelopment package which was also awarded to this firm, stretches from Edsa to Baler. Among road concreting projects, Roumella cited Mayon St. in Loyola Heights.

Presently, A. C. Mojares is helping the local government achieve one of its most ambitious goals of improving the image of Novaliches. They have embarked on concreting and improvement of roads, and the building of school buildings.

Roumella added: "We are proud to be part of all this growth, especially because we are also residents of Quezon City."

RAMCC



Vilma M. Moya

R.A. MOYA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

Office: 57 Josefa Ave., North Susana Executive Village, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 931-0778/ 932-8458/ 456-1929

R.A. Moya Construction Company was established in 1987 by a hard-working couple and their two sons to become a building firm committed to high standards in the construction industry.

Vilma M. Moya, who acts as president of the firm, is a real estate broker while her husband used to work in a construction firm. Eventually, they decided to put up their own construction company and gradually achieved success with a specialization in constructing roads.

Based in Quezon City, the firm was able to test its mettle with other contractors by bidding with the Quezon City government's various infrastructure projects. They have clinched the deal for a number of these projects and proved their company's reputation through the years.

Among these projects is Ascencion Avenue in Lagro, stretching more than 1 km with an 8.5-meter pavement, which they accomplished in less than four months.

RAMMC also played a major role in the sidewalk redevelopment program of Quezon City by accepting the Tomas Morato and Visayas Avenue packages with a 7-meter width on each sidewalk.

Moya for her part, is proud of RAMMC's contribution, which initially was opposed by the establishment owners of the mentioned areas. Eventually upon completion of the sidewalk, the owners saw the worth of such project. The attractive environs created by the enhanced sidewalk entices customers to frequent the commercial establishments, improving immensely the rate of business in these leisure hubs.

MARIGOLD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Office: 43-G Road 7, Project 6, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 925-5204/ 456-6009

Established in 1973 by its president, Apollo Y. Chua, Marigold Development Corp. has evolved into a reliable company dedicated to the construction industry.

It has honed an expertise spanning 36 years in building various infrastructure projects, and counts among its clients the Quezon City government under the administration of Mayor Sonny Belmonte.

Its impressive lineup of projects for the Quezon City government include school buildings such as Bago Bantay Elementary School, Judge Juan Luna High School, Quirino Elementary School, Bagong Pag-asa Elementary School, Ramon Magsaysay High School in Cubao, Novaliches High School, Betty Go Belmonte Elementary School, Commonwealth High School, and Lagro High School.

These educational institutions were built over a span of seven years, all during the term of Mayor Belmonte. For its part, the firm shares the pride of the local government in putting up infrastructure that will serve as learning venues for the city's youth.



MASCOT CORPORATION

Office: 20 Kapiligan St., Brgy. Doña Imelda, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 715-1174/ 716-3159

The whole stretch of Timog Avenue is now a vibrant example of Quezon City's progress, thanks in part to the construction firm that realized Mayor Belmonte's vision for a "City of the Future."

The sidewalk redevelopment of Timog Avenue was undertaken by Mascot Corporation, headed by its president, Henry Y. Chua. The stretch of sidewalk from Scout Circle covering the *barangays* of South Triangle, Laging Handa, and Sacred Heart is now adorned with paver tiles and stamp concrete in attractive colors of red and yellow. They are bound on the side by bollards to add elegance to the overall look of this highly-commercialized area.

The same look is replicated along Tomas Morato Avenue, which is part of the project package awarded to Mascot Corporation. The amount of work in this part though is bigger because of the inclusion of sidewalk parking spaces required in the redevelopment.

Operational for 27 years, the company rose to the challenge in implementing one of its most significant projects for Quezon City. The sidewalk redevelopment has certainly helped improve the aesthetics of the commercial area, thereby attracting more business.

Chua added: "We're proud of this project because it can last for a long time, and hopefully, will be memorialized as our project in partnership with the Belmonte administration."



Henry Y. Chua



E. M. CUERPO, INC.

Address: Don Mariano Marcos Avenue Extension, San Jose Rodriguez, Rizal

Tel. Nos.: 941-1655/ 998-0796

E-mail: emcuerpo2001@yahoo.com

E. M. Cuerpo, Inc. was established in 1999 as a single proprietorship company called E. M. Cuerpo Enterprises and later incorporated on July 26, 2001 headed by its president and CEO, Arch. Celerino S. Cuerpo.

The company was established primarily to provide and undertake general building construction and other related services. The company is actively engaged in the construction industry of various projects all over the country, some of them in Quezon City.

The company has obtained a "AAA" contractor license and its projects consist of infrastructure such as building construction, steel fabrication, construction and development of townhouses and subdivisions, among others.

In fact, in Quezon City, E. M. Cuerpo, Inc. has left an important mark with projects such as: construction of a 4-storey, 23-classroom with four office school buildings at the QC Polytechnic University in Brgy. San Bartolome; construction of a 4-storey, 8-classroom school building at Payatas Elementary School in Brgy. Payatas; general repair and renovation of the Office of City Treasurer in La Loma, improvement of covered court in Brgy. Dona Aurora, and more.

"The company's strength lies in the expertise of its technical team through years of experience and continuous education on new technologies in the industry. We aim to continually provide quality and reliable construction services by utilizing cost-effective processes and ensuring professionalism in conducting our business," said Arch. Cuerpo.



Arch. Celerino S. Cuerpo

NEW ARCOND BUILDERS, INC.

Office Address: 107 Mabilis St., Diliman, Quezon City

Tel. No.: 922-5736

Telefax: 928-7588

A dynamic and dependable construction company, New Arcond Builders, Inc., (NABI) evolved from the heritage of Arcond Builders which was established by Arturo C. Dimaguila in 1987 as its general proprietor.

NABI was incorporated on Aug. 24, 2001 as a construction firm composed of a motivated and experienced group of multi-skilled professionals from diversified fields that provide a wide range of integrated services. The company prides itself for its uniquely personal approach and variety of construction management, supervision and implementation tailor-made for each project type, along with its timely completion of developments.

Now headed by James Michael Dimaguila as president, the company has undertaken both vertical and horizontal projects mostly under the infrastructure program of the local and national agencies of the Department of Public Works and Highways. It has acquired and implemented projects ranging from P60 million to P100 million per year since 1997.

Since 2003, the company has also completed projects for the Quezon City government, among them the construction of a 4-storey, 19-classroom school building at Camp Aguinaldo High School in Brgy. San Roque; a 4-storey, 19-classroom school building at Diosdado Macapagal Elementary School in Brgy. Tatalon; a 4-storey, 12-classroom school building at Lupang Pangako Elementary School in Brgy. Payatas; the Novaliches Fire Station in Brgy. Novaliches Proper; and a bridge in Katipunan Extension, Brgy. San Bartolome/ Nagkakaisang Nayon.

Its range of public works infrastructure includes the improvement of road and drainage at Gen. Lim St., Brgy. Sta. Cruz; sidewalk improvement of Riviera St., and asphalt overlay of Red Arrow St., Brgy. St. Ignatius/ White Plains; improvement/ concreting of Old Samson Road, Brgy. Apolonio Samson; improvement/ concreting of Eden/ Herdules St., Brgy. San Agustin and Antoinette St., Brgy. Apolonio Samson; drainage improvement of Imperial, West Point, Columbia and St. Marys St., Brgy. E. Rodriguez.



Partners in Progress

ROCKFORD DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Office: No. 1 La Salle St., corner Aurora Boulevard, Cubao, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 912-5555 to 63

Rockford Development Corp. (RDC), a Filipino-owned corporation, was established on Nov. 20, 1978. It is engaged in the construction contracting business under the General Engineering and General Building classification and category.

The company is registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) with a category of "A" and Size Range of Medium A on Registration Particulars.

RDC was organized by John A. Bautista as a business related to their family's hardware business. It started its contracting business by undertaking local government projects, among them the construction of public school buildings, public health centers, *barangay* halls, cementing of roads, drainage improvement, repair of public schools, local government offices, construction of pedestrian overpass, installation of new streetlights, construction of public parks and development and installation of streetsigns and development of sidewalks.

Its completed projects in Quezon City are the Quezon Bldg., Mathay Hall and steel bridge at Novaliches High School, Brgy. San Agustin; construction of Katipunan Footbridge overpass at Brgy. Loyola Heights; installation of streetlights on LRT Line-2 along Aurora Blvd., Edsa to Katipunan Ave.; development of Proj. 4 Park, Brgy. Milagrosa, park improvement of Villa Verde Park, Brgy. Sta. Monica and rehabilitation of Diamonon Park, Brgy. Bahay Toro; improvement of road and drainage of Lualhati St., Brgy. Baesa and Don Crispulo St. in Brgy. Gulod; improvement/concreting of Kabignayan, Brgy. Doña Josefa; development and installation of Streetsigns, citywide; redevelopment of Timog Avenue Sidewalk (Package 6), in Brgy. South Triangle; and construction of the 2-storey Murphy Super Health Center in Brgy. San Roque, 2-storey Health Center Building in Brgy. Paltok, San Francisco Del Monte; and the 2-storey Mercedes de Joya Health Center, in Brgy. Sta. Teresita.



TRIUMPH BUILDERS & STEEL, INC.

Office: 3/F Victoria Building, 142 Mindanao Ave., cor. Calla Lily St., Quezon City
Tel. No.: 453-0440



Quezon City residents remember the heroism of Tandang Sora at her shrine in Brgy. Tandang Sora. But unknown to them, it is the work of Triumph Builders & Steel that developed the Tandang Sora Shrine which was finished in May 2008.

More than that, Triumph Builders & Steel, which was incorporated in 2006 with Engineer Liwanag R. Victoria as president, has contributed a lot in improving the infrastructure of the city.

Some of their recent projects include the construction of the pedestrian overpass at Mindanao Avenue in Road 3 & Road 16, Brgy. Bagong Pag-Asa; improvement of the Blue Ridge Park in Brgy. Blue Ridge, construction of the bridge connecting Calamba St. to De Vera St., construction of the pedestrian overpass along Quirino Highway; improvement of road and drainage of Roses St. in Brgy. Fairview, and more.

With all these noteworthy projects, it is a real triumph for the Quezon City government to have Triumph Builders & Steel as one of its partners for progress.

J.Y.M. CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Office: 107 Kamias Road, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 921-8348/ 51

J.Y.M. Construction & Development Corp., incorporated on March 18, 2002, was formerly J.Y.M. Construction & Development Enterprise when it was founded on Oct. 30, 1986 as a sole proprietor business. Its current president and general manager is Jerome P. Mendoza.

Over the years, the company has significantly contributed to the development of infrastructure in Quezon City. In fact, in the year 2008, J.Y.M. has been at the forefront of projects involving the improvement of road and drainage in various areas. Some of them include: Sinaguelas St. in Brgy. Quirino 2-C, Cannon St. in Brgy. Mariana, Gen. A. Luna St. in Brgy. Bagong Silangan, Eymard Drive in Brgy. Kristong Hari, Lanutan St. in Brgy. Veterans Village, Basa St. in Brgy. Paltok, and more.

AMARANTH TRADING & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Office/s: Unit 412 Doña Victoriana Building, New York St., Quezon City
40 Matulungin Street, Brgy. Central, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 924-6416/ 454-3675/ 928-7006
Email: amaranthcorp@yahoo.com

The story of Engr. Edilberto 'Eddie' Villanueva and his wife Florita is quite interesting and full of lessons to learn from. It tells us how to rise from the ruins of our mistakes and acknowledges the role of the wife as a formidable partner in someone's success. And his success rested mainly because of his good partnership with the Quezon City government, especially with Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr.'s infrastructure-building programs.

Amaranth Trading & Construction, the company's predecessor, was built in 1988 after Eddie's first attempt – and failure – at starting a business venture.

It was a suggestion from Florita that reminded him of his previous ambition. After all, Eddie has been involved in the construction business since the early 1970s. It was then that he remembered the word *amaranth*, which means 'undying flower' – a guiding metaphor that he would later use to name his company, Amaranth Trading & Construction, established in 1988.

From small construction projects in *barangays*, the company grew until the couple decided to build a corporation, which would later become Amaranth Trading & Development Corporation, in 1996. Eddie attributes this slow but sure growth to six factors: perseverance, persistence, quality workmanship, fulfillment of promises, and most importantly, the fruitful conjugal collaboration and faith in God.

"Since 1988, we are one of the few contractors with a good track on the quality of our projects," Eddie said. "First of all, I hired qualified engineers to supervise our projects. There should be close supervision, and I make sure that the quality of the materials we use is not substandard. I also make sure that there is close coordination with the Quezon City Engineering Department and that the plan is well understood and implemented."

Some of the more significant projects of the company under the Belmonte administration include the Betty Go-Belmonte Super Health Center in Brgy. Holy Spirit and Kamuning Super Health Center, school buildings and repairs for San Gabriel, Balara, Villa Verde, Lucas R. Pascual, and Teodora Alonzo Elementary School and San Agustin, Doña Rosario Annex and Novaliches High Schools. They were also involved in the widening of Dahlia and Fairview Avenues. They were also responsible for the redevelopment of the Boy Scout Monument and Rotunda at the corner of Tomas Morato and Timog Avenues.

The seamless cooperation between two entities — husband and wife, Amaranth and the QC government — demonstrate the age-old adage, "two heads are better than one." The success of the Villanueva couple's engagements with the local government is expected to last for a long time.



Engr. Edilberto Villanueva



TOLEDO CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

Office: 83 Del Monte Avenue, Quezon City
Tel Nos.: 363-1835/ 363-0154
Email: tccdm83@yahoo.com



The initiatives taken by the Quezon City government, under the indefatigable leadership of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. to make the city almost self-reliant in terms of income, has fulfilled the delivery of basic social services that are now being utilized by its residents.

"*Serbisyong Bayan*", Mayor Belmonte's leadership slogan, is already tangible proof of his effective public service through concreted walkways and roads, improved landmarks and parks, newly-built and repaired school buildings and health centers and other public infrastructure.

Since its establishment in 1981, Toledo Construction Corporation has been in partnership with the local government in making sure that the Mayor's programs are not just lip service.

Januario T. Romualdez, president of the company, has projects in and outside the city, but the Quezon City government is one of the most vigorous in making sure that developments are completed as soon as possible without sacrificing the quality of materials. He also makes sure that they follow the design faithfully and comply with the safety standards imposed by the local and national government.

The partnership between Toledo Construction and the Belmonte administration is successful because while it may be seen by many as purely business, ensuring the quality of the various SB infrastructure is also an act of social responsibility and public service.



SOLID ROCK CONSTRUCTION

Office Address: 1625 G. Tuazon St., Sampaloc, Manila

Branch: 26 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City

Tel. Nos: 749-7671/ 749-7674

E-mail: src@yahoo.com



Arch. Kit S. Valenzuela

As its name implies, Solid Rock Construction is a "AA" builder company that prides itself for its solid workmanship and professionalism in public works and other construction requirements.

Headed by its owner and general manager, Arch. Maria Corazon "Kit" S. Valenzuela, the firm was established on August 29, 1986 with an impressive portfolio of public works that has contributed to the vision of the Quezon City government to improve the city's infrastructure landscape.

Among its notable projects are the widening of Tandang Sora, Commonwealth and Luzon Avenues, construction of the Holy Spirit Elementary School, and sidewalk improvement of Visayas Avenue.

The bulk of Solid Rock's projects come from public works, registering around P200 million each year, but more than prestige, Arch. Valenzuela shares Mayor Belmonte's passion and dedication to improve the physical infrastructure of the city.

She also cited Mayor Belmonte's administration for its professionalism in dealing with contractors and the implementation of various construction projects: "He's an excellent visionary, and he's done wonders for Quezon City the same way he turned around other institutions he has led, such as GSIS and Philippine Airlines. His management style is also very hands-on, because he makes it a point to consult with us about various projects and conducts regular inspections himself."

ARV CONSTRUCTION & SUPPLY, INC.

Address: 415 Union Square Condominium, 15th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City

Tel. No.: 647-7465

ARV Construction & Supply Inc. was formed in 2004 with Alicia R. Villanueva as president. Even though it is a young company, its accomplishments and projects with the Quezon City government have already been substantial.

Among the projects completed by ARV include: redevelopment of sidewalk in West Avenue, improvement of drainage and concreting of K-3rd St. in Brgy. Kamuning, improvement of Villilia Park in Brgy. Talipapa, improvement of drainage and concreting of Chestnut St. in Brgy. Fairview, among others.



Marciano P. Medalla

MPM BUILDERS

Office: 314 Dumalay St., Sta. Monica, Novaliches, Quezon City

Tel. No.: 936-3006

Civil engineer Marciano P. Medalla is the owner and president of MPM Builders. Aside from construction, the company also renders architectural and design services. With this, the Quezon City government has entrusted the company with the construction and improvement of various important infrastructure projects.

MPM Builders is the sole contractor of two important projects of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr.: the improvement of the Commonwealth Elementary School in Brgy. Commonwealth, and the site development and construction of the Fairview Police Station.

Over the years, MPM Builders has engaged in various infrastructure projects that have benefited Quezon City residents. Some of these include: redevelopment of the West Avenue sidewalk in Brgy. Philam, rip-rapping of the creek at Taraville, Brgy. Sta. Lucia; construction of parking space and rehabilitation of various driveways at QC Medical Center in Brgy. Central, improvement of Pinyahan Park in Brgy. Pinyahan, and various other projects.



TRM CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Address: 19 I. Eisenhower Tower, #7 Eisenhower St., Greenhills, San Juan
Tel Nos.: 721-3276/ 721-3351



If there is one city where infrastructure projects are in full-swing, then it must be Quezon City. Proof of this are the various construction projects implemented by TRM Construction & Development Corp.

Some of the projects are: improvement of road and drainage at K-1st St. in Brgy. Kamuning, construction of bridge connecting Margarita and Consolacion St. in Brgy. Gulod, Novaliches; improvement and rehabilitation of Quezon City Hall open plaza, among others.

The company, incorporated in 2000, has Josephine Michelle M. Lagman as president. Through the years, it has contributed its mark in the infrastructure of Quezon City with some of these important projects: improvement of road and drainage at Bonifacio St. in Brgy. Pasong Tamo, development of Rosalia Park in Brgy. Tandang Sora, improvement of road/ drainage of Luisito St. in Brgy. Sta. Monica, improvement of road/ drainage of Cannon St. in Brgy. Mariana, and more.

JOSE CRIS BUILDERS

Office: 71 Timog Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No.: 426-3902

With a vision to become a noted cost-oriented and technologically-advanced developer, Jose Cris Builders aims to produce infrastructure that are safe, beautiful, strong, and durable. With a highly-trained and well-experienced finance and technical manpower, the company's founder and president Jose Cris J. Acuzar, aims to become a globally competitive developer.

"The company provides services in an excellent way by using modern construction methods and practices and employing only the best and highly-skilled construction workers, down to the support group. Quality work is the utmost concern of the company," said Acuzar, who formed the company on Jan. 18, 2002.

This vision and commitment has allowed Jose Cris Builders to develop a wide array of infrastructure projects in Quezon City which are now used in full extent by the populace. Some of these include: improvement of the Tomas Morato Avenue, construction of a 4-storey 18-classroom school building for North Fairview Elementary School, land development for the San Bartolome High School, construction of the 4-storey, 24-classroom school building for San Diego Elementary School, concrete widening of Kamuning Road, among others.



Jose Cris J. Acuzar

MRB CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLY

Address: 38 Regina St., Regina Village, Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora, Quezon City
Tel. No.: 453-0441
Telefax: 951-7138

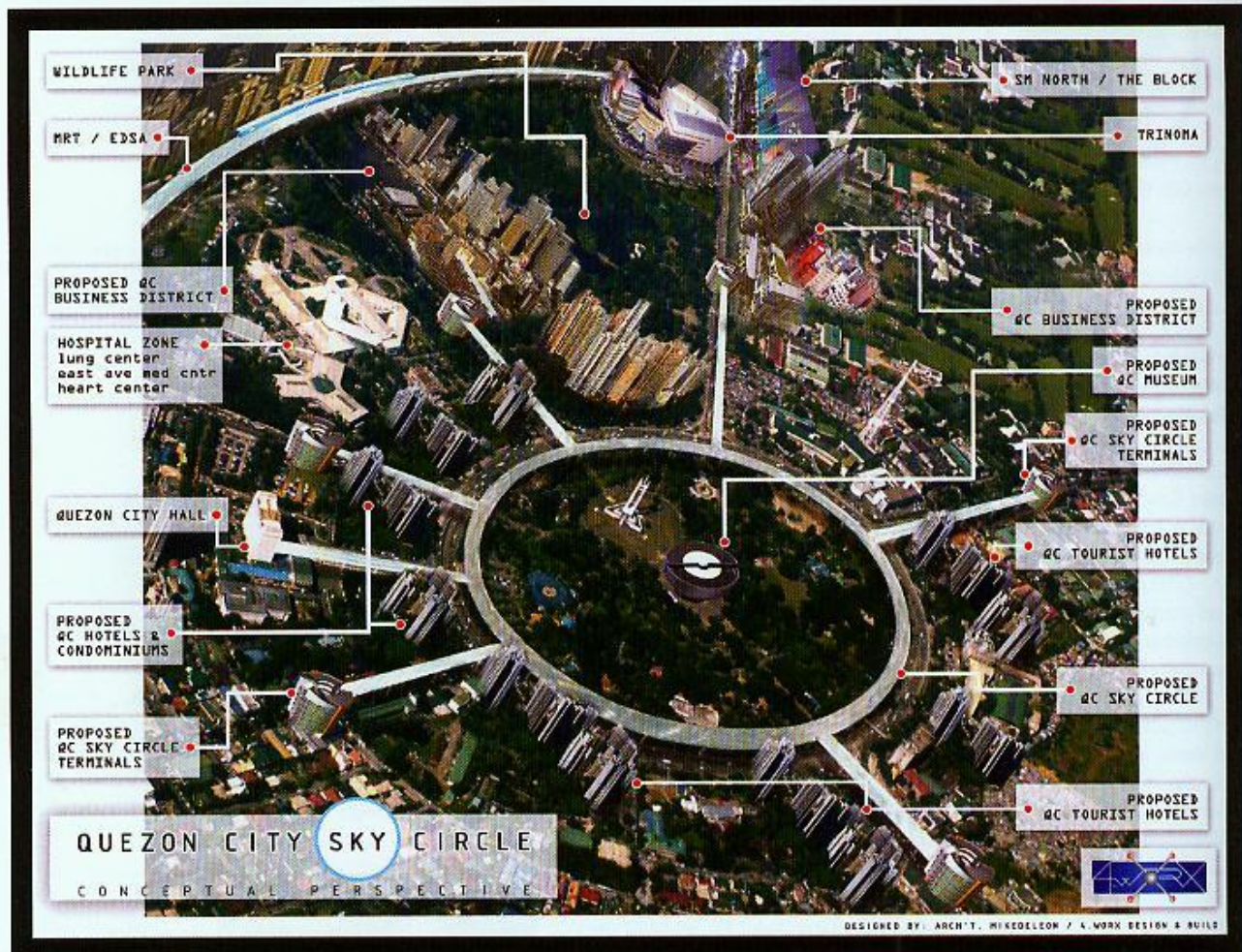


MRB Construction and Supply was established in 1994 with Manuel R. Bulaong, Jr. as general manager.

Duly registered with the Department of Public Works and Highways, it is licensed to undertake civil works and projects. Among its various construction accomplishments are projects with the Quezon City government.

Among the company's completed projects for Quezon City are the construction of the Quezon City Pound; construction of a 4-storey, 18-classroom school building for Fairview Elementary School, Brgy. Fairview; repair/repainting of 32 classrooms at Commonwealth Elementary School in Brgy. Commonwealth; improvement of various buildings at M.H. del Pilar Elementary School in Brgy. Kamuning; improvement/ concreting of Mapagbigay Extension, Brgy. Pinyahan; construction of a 4-storey, 14-classroom school building for Maligaya High School in Brgy. Pasong Putik; improvement/concreting of FEMA Road, Brgy. Bahay Toro; improvement/ concreting of Don Pepe St. (Phase II) in Brgy. Sto. Domingo; improvement/concreting of Sgt. Catolos St. in Brgy. Immaculate Concepcion; and drainage improvement of Don Carlos, Don Vicente, Don Miguel, Don Gregorio St., in Brgy. Holy Spirit.

QC 2020



Metro Manila's most exciting city is living up to its billing as a "City of the Future." Indeed, the Quezon City government is setting the stage for a progressive urban area geared to meet the demands of a global city. At the centerpiece of the development is the Quezon City Central Business District (QC CBD).

An inspired masterplan has been drafted for the QC CBD which will cover a 250-hectare prime property located in North and East Triangle. It is envisioned to become the Philippines' first transit-oriented mixed-use CBD that will serve as a catalyst for economic growth and investment, job generation, as well as tourism.

The QC CBD will be organized into five distinct commercial/ residential/ recreational districts: The Triangle Exchange (54.3 hectares), The Residences at Veterans (40 hectares), The Downtown Hub (54 hectares), The Emporium (37.9 hectares) and The Commons (19.8 hectares). It will have a mix of housing components, from high-rise condominiums to medium and lower density dwellings; high-end malls, business offices, entertainment parks and corporate offices.

The vision is a grandiose undertaking that can position Quezon City alongside mega-cities abroad. Taking into account what the Belmonte administration has accomplished for the past nine years, everything is in place to achieve the goal of the QC CBD — a lasting legacy that Quezon City residents deserve.



Dear Tito SB,

I am Shanti Arista Iridelle and I live in Project 8, Quezon City

I study at GSIS Village Elementary School. I am very happy to be living in a beautiful place like Quezon City because it is very quiet in my neighborhood.

My family says Quezon City is beautiful because you are a good leader.

Thank you for making good roads, so that there will be no more accidents.

Thank you for building many classrooms for more children to study.

Thank you for making lampposts so that it will not be scary at night.

Thank you for building hospitals and clinics for sick and poor people.

Thank you for building houses for people who have no home.

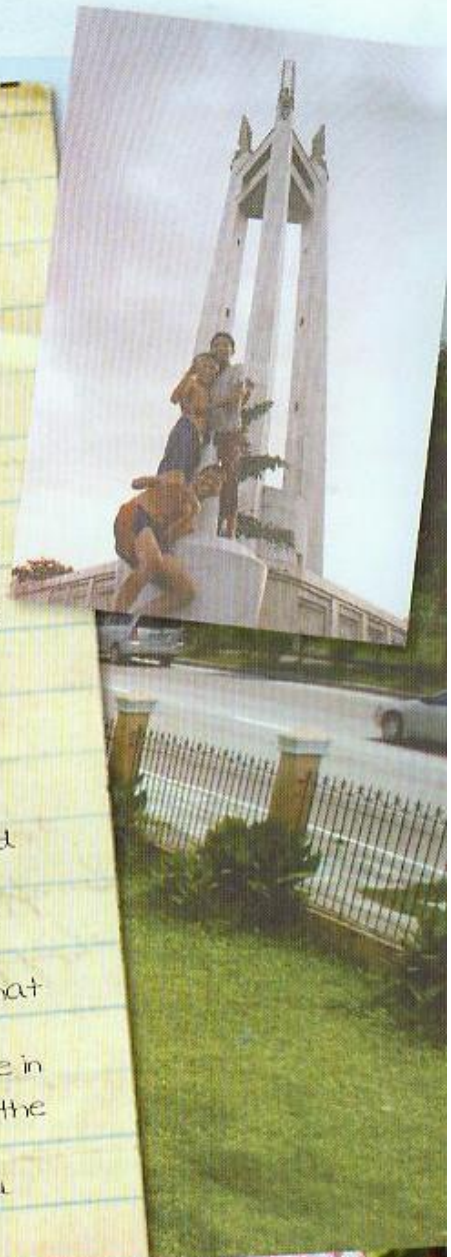
Thank you for the many parks and playgrounds so that we can play.

Thank you for making Quezon City a good place to live in. I hope and pray that many leaders will be like you in the future.

We are thankful that we have a good mayor like you.

God bless you always, Tito SB!

Yours truly,
Shanti Arista Iridelle Garritos



Notes on editors and contributors



Cirilo F. Bautista is a multi-awarded poet, fictionist, critic and writer of nonfiction. He has authored several books of poetry, fiction, essay & criticism and edited literary anthologies. Among his literary achievements are the Palanca Awards and its Hall of Fame distinction, the Philippines Free Press Literary Awards, the National Book Awards, and the Gawad Balagtas from the Writers Union of the Philippines (UMPIL). He has received various recognitions from different local governments, including the

Gawad Manuel L. Quezon in 1996 from the Quezon City government, for his contributions to literature and teaching. He has been a resident of Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City since 1968.

Ricky Quezon Avanceña has worked as writer and consultant for various political, historical and literary figures. His book on his paternal grandfather – *Chief Justice Ramon Avanceña: His Stories of a Young Nation* was published by the Supreme Court in 2003 as an official publication for the High Tribunal's Centenary Celebrations. In 2008, he was co-awardee of the National Book of the Year award given by the Manila Critics Circle for the book *Baler, Aurora* which he co-wrote.



Johannes L. Chua is a journalist whose works have been published in newspapers and magazines. He studied at Grace Christian High School and at De La Salle University where he finished a bachelor's degree in economics and is currently reading for a master's degree in creative writing. A prolific writer of short stories in Filipino, he is a two-time Palanca Awardee and a recipient of the Gawad Ka Amado V. Hernandez Award. He has authored

a textbook in Economics. His grandfather is one of the first residents of Quezon City after the war, having lived there in Bingo Street near the Sto. Domingo Church during the 1950s.

Christopher A. Datol finished his bachelor's degree in journalism, *cum laude*, at the University of the Philippines in Diliman. He worked for nine years as a journalist for a leading newspaper before being contracted by a government corporation as a consultant-writer. Presently, he also writes for different public relations firms for a variety of corporate clients. Among his published works is the coffee-table book *Quezon City Council: History and Legacy* (2007) – a chronicle of the City Councilors' accomplishments from 1939 to 2007 – which he edited and co-wrote. A resident of Iba Street in Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City since childhood, his articles have appeared in local and international publications and on the Internet.



Raymund Magno Garlitos is an award-winning poet, children's book writer and translator. He studied at La Salle Green Hills and at De La Salle University. He has written several books for children, including *Ang Paglalakbay ni Pepito Piso / Pepito Piso's Journey* (1996), *Chenelyn! Chenelyn!* (1999), *Mga Lihim sa Gabi ni Ruming / Ruming's Night Secrets* (2001) and *Ang Higante sa Loob ng Aming Bahay / The Giant in Our House* (2009) and co-authored and edited *Sentinels of Freedom: One Hundred Years of Presidential Security* (1998), a commemorative book published by the Presidential Security Group. His literary and

journalistic works have appeared in various local and international publications. He has received several awards and recognitions, including the Carlos Palanca Awards and the Talaang Ginto – Gawad Surian sa Tula for his poetry, the Gintong Aklat Awards and the Philippine Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) – Salanga Prize for children's literature and the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) 2004 Honour List and Diploma of Distinction for literary translation. He has been a resident of Quezon City all his life, having resided in GSIS Village since birth.

Mae Lorraine S. Rafols writes for a newspaper and magazine. A *fashionista* by heart, she is a part-time stylist for fashion shoots. A journalism graduate of the University of Sto. Tomas, she also contributes articles to different lifestyle magazines. She lives in Project 8, Quezon City with her son Anton.



Romeo Mariano started professional photography in 1983, contributing to foreign wire agencies such as the Associated Press and Impact Visuals in New York. He became the official photographer of the Quezon City government in 1992 and has literally witnessed the development of Quezon City through the years with his photographs. He lives in Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City with his family.

Allan 'Bong' Bundang studied Fine Arts at the University of Santo Tomas. He has been working for a publishing house as a graphic artist for the past 18 years. He lives with his wife and two sons in a house on the boundary of Quezon City and Manila.



Roberto 'Robbie' Villegas finished a bachelor's degree in journalism at the University of Santo Tomas, where he first did layout direction for the arts and letters journal *The Flame*. He has been doing layout work and design for a publishing house for more than a decade. He was born and raised in Banawe Street, Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City.



Public Affairs and Information Services Office (PAISO)

Gregorio T. Bañacia, Chief

Administrative and Editorial Staff

Aida Calderon
Priscilla Icban-Torres
Mencio Galang
Ramir Clave
Art Son
Enrico de Leus
Jonah Art Son

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Mr. Joey Mancia, Asst. to the Principal, Batasan Hills National High School

Engr. Rolando Pusing

Ms. Genny Marcial of Araneta Group of Companies

Eddie Gaser

Ruben Morris

To all the **parents** who provided photos of their children on the flyleaf.

Credits

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DECEMBER 07



APRIL 08



MAY 08



JUNE 08



MAY 09



JUNE 09





JULY 08



AUGUST 08



SEPTEMBER 08



APRIL 09



JANUARY 09



OCTOBER 08



JULY 09



AUGUST 09

