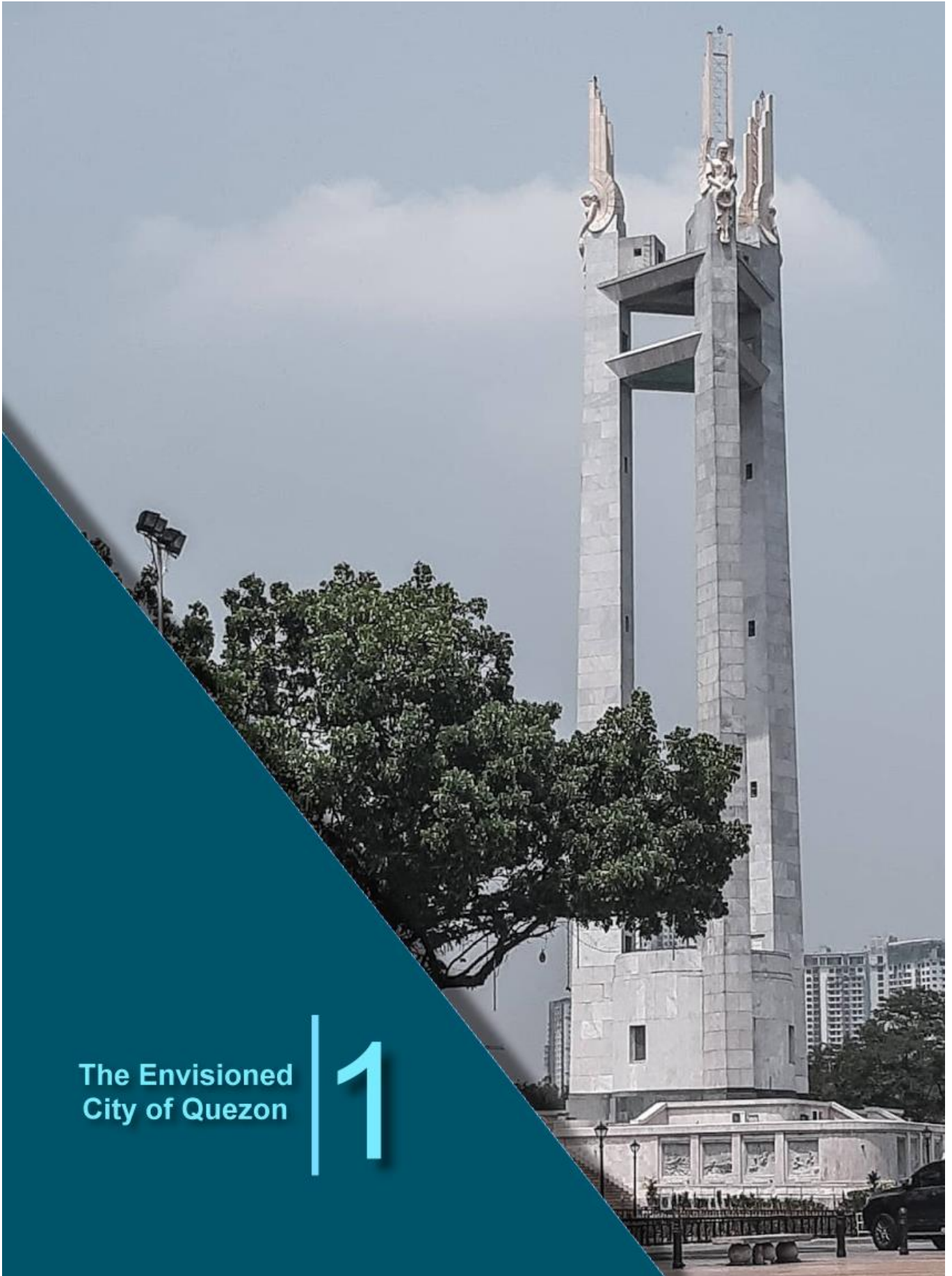


The Envisioned  
City of Quezon

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# CHAPTER 1: The Envisioned City of Quezon

## 1.1 THE ENVISIONED CITY OF QUEZON

Quezon City was conceived in a vision of a man incomparable - the late President Manuel Luis Quezon – who dreamt of a central place that will house the country’s highest governing body and will provide low-cost and decent housing for the less privileged sector of the society. He envisioned the growth and development of a city where the common man can live with dignity

*“I dream of a capital city that, politically shall be the seat of the national government; aesthetically the showplace of the nation--- a place that thousands of people will come and visit as the epitome of culture and spirit of the country; socially a dignified concentration of human life, aspirations and endeavors and achievements; and economically as a productive, self-contained community.”*

--- President Manuel L. Quezon

Equally inspired by this noble quest for a new metropolis, the National Assembly moved for the creation of this new city. The first bill was filed by Assemblyman Ramon P. Mitra with the new city proposed to be named as “Balintawak City”. The proposed name was later amended on the motion of Assemblymen Narciso Ramos and Eugenio Perez, both of Pangasinan to “Quezon City”.

## 1.2 THE CREATION OF QUEZON CITY

On September 28, 1939 the National Assembly approved Bill No. 1206 as Commonwealth Act No. 502, otherwise known as the Charter of Quezon City. Signed by President Quezon on October 12, 1939, the law defined the boundaries of the city and gave it an area of 7,000 hectares carved out of the towns of Caloocan, San Juan, Marikina, Pasig, and Mandaluyong, all in Rizal Province. The law likewise specified the manner in which the city was to be governed. All the city officials were to be appointed by the President with President Quezon himself being the first acting Mayor. He served from October 12 to November 4, 1939, after which Tomas Morato, then Mayor of Calauag, Tayabas, was appointed as his successor.

The original physical plan of the City, which was prepared in 1940 by Harry T. Frost, architectural adviser of the Commonwealth, reflect a big quadrangle in the heart of the City from which four (4) avenues radiate toward the outskirts with rotundas placed on the four (4) corners, the largest being the 26-hectare elliptical center, now known as the Quezon Memorial Circle.

Progress in Quezon City continued until the outbreak of World War II on December 8, 1941. Just before the Japanese occupied the city, President Quezon issued Executive Order No. 400, dated January 1, 1942, incorporating Quezon City with Greater Manila for synchronized and coordinated activity in such time of emergency. Under the order, the Mayors of Quezon City, San Juan, Mandaluyong, Parañaque, Caloocan and Makati became the assistants to the Mayor of Greater Manila, who at that time was Jorge Vargas. However, when Mayor Morato was arrested by the Japanese in mid-1942, Dr. Florencio Cruz then City Health Officer was installed as Chief of the City (being a district of Greater Manila) until liberation.

As soon as the war was over, in April 1945, the Secretary of Interior Tomas Confesor designated Oscar Castelo, who was then an Assistant Fiscal of Manila, as Acting Mayor of Quezon City,

and therefore, Assistant to the Mayor of Manila Juan Nolasco. The house of President Quezon on Gilmore Avenue was used by Castelo as temporary office of the city government.

Capt. Sabino de Leon, former Quezon City Police Chief, was designated as Acting Assistant Mayor of Quezon City on October 1, 1945 while Castelo returned to his job as Assistant City Fiscal of Manila. Capt. De Leon moved the city government offices to a market site along South 9th Street near Sampaloc Avenue (now the site of Roces High School). Quezon City regained its separate political existence from Greater Manila on January 2, 1947 by virtue of Republic Act No. 45. Ponciano A. Bernardo was appointed City Mayor.

### 3.1.1 Population Size and Growth Rate

## 1.3 QUEZON CITY AS THE CAPITAL CITY

Upon assumption of office of President Manuel A. Roxas as the first president of the second Philippine Republic in 1946, he announced his intention to restore Quezon City as a regular chartered city. Various sectors declared their protests by citing the city's economic and financial bankruptcy, dismal health and sanitary conditions, and high rate of criminality during the post-war period.

On July 25, 1946, President Roxas, created a committee that would study the selection of the official capital of the Philippines. By virtue of Administrative Order No. 5, the Selection Committee was given the task of "selection of the most suitable site on which to build the capital city of the Philippines and the capitol building/s". Then Senator Melecio Arranz, who was appointed committee head, declared that Manila, although inevitably a key point in the selection of the capital city site, has "become undesirable as a national capital" due to postwar damages, congestion of commercial activities, and government and military requirements, among others. On the other hand, the city of Quezon had worked on the reparation of post-war vestiges.

The selection process underwent series of extensive studies, researches, discussions, and public hearings which primarily focused on the following considerations: "general sanitation, public works development, strategic considerations, scenic beauty, and administrative coordination." Out of the sixteen (16) nominated sites, three sites emerged as the top choices: Ipo-Novaliches area; Baguio; and, Quezon City-Novaliches. The contiguous areas of Ipo-Quezon City-Novaliches proved to be the ideal choice for the nation's capital and still garnered the highest composite average rating over the second placer Baguio. Thus, the Arranz Selection Committee concluded: "...the area now covered by Quezon City extending northward along Marikina River to the upper limits of Novaliches reservoir watershed, [and] West to the boundary line...comprising an approximate total area of 16,200 hectares...one-fourth of which is owned by the Government, is the best...[site] to be made as the Capital City of the Republic."

The committee also cited the following advantages of the City as the choice nation's capital:

- "[The City's] proximity to Manila, the best port of entry from foreign countries and the commercial and financial center of the country...;
- Its accessibility from all the important inhabited areas in the Philippines either by land, air, sea;
- Its already available conveniences from the standpoint of a municipal entity...[-as an organized and partially developed chartered city];
- Its public works facilities with regard to the provision of water supply, easy drainage, availability of power and proximity to commercial, industrial, and manufacturing establishments engaged in the sale, production, and distribution of construction materials and equipment;
- Its geological qualities, which provide a satisfactory foundation for buildings and other structures, at the same time allowing the construction of underground structures;

- Its larger area of government-owned land right in its central zone which will permit a substantial economy in the development of public improvements as well as more freedom and liberal assignments for streets, parks, and playground areas;
- Its healthfulness due to its elevation (it averages about 250feet above sea level) together with the availability of an abundant and wholesome water supply and excellent drainage which are the most important requirements for the development of modern cities; and,
- Its historical background; consideration of public expenditures already made; administrative commitments and evident public support.”

## THE CAPITAL CITY BILL

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE PERMANENT SEAT OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, TO CREATE A CAPITAL CITY PLANNING COMMISSION, TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE ESTATES WITHIN THE BOUNDARY LIMITS OF SAID CITY, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE ESTATES, FOR THE SUBDIVISION THEREOF, AND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF STREETS, BRIDGES, WATERWORKS, SEWERAGE AND OTHER MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CAPITAL CITY.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. Section two of Commonwealth Act Numbered Five hundred two, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 2. *Powers.*—The territory within the boundaries described in the next succeeding section is to be known as QUEZON CITY which shall be the CAPITAL of the Philippines and the permanent seat of the national government;

“SEC. 3. *Boundaries.*—The boundaries and limits of the territory of said city, containing the total areas of fifteen thousand six hundred sixty hectares, more or less, are established and prescribed.

SEC. 3. There is hereby created and established a Capital City Planning Commission composed of seven Members three of whom shall not be government officials to be appointed by the President of the Philippines with the consent of the Commission on Appointments of the Congress of the Philippines.

SEC. 7. The Capital City Planning Commission shall submit to the President within one year after its organization the master plan of the Capital City of the Philippines for his approval.

SEC. 9 The President of the Philippines is authorized to issue, in the name and behalf of the Republic of the Philippines, bonds in an amount of twenty million pesos, the proceeds of which shall be used as a revolving fund for the acquisition of private estates, the subdivision of the area, and the construction of streets, bridges, waterworks, sewerage and other municipal improvements in the Capital City of the Philippines.

SEC. 12. The Capital City Planning Commission shall have the supervision of all the work to be done and improvements to be made with the proceeds of the sale of the bonds authorized by this Act.

SEC. 13. All acts and executive orders or regulations or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed.

SEC. 14. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,

Finally passed by the Senate on June 26, 1948.

This Act, which originated in the House of Representatives, was finally passed by the same on June 25, 1948.

Approved and Signed by His Excellency, the President of the Philippines, Elpidio Quirino.



However, before the selection was made, President Roxas died of heart attack in Clark Field, Pampanga. It was President Elpidio R. Quirino, his successor, who signed Republic Act No. 333 on July 17, 1948, which made Quezon City the capital of the Philippines. The Act created the Capital City Planning Commission to prepare the general development plan and supervise the improvements to be done in the Capital City. Archt. Juan Arellano headed the architectural division of the Commission while Mayor Bernardo handled public relations. After almost one year, on April 8, 1949, the Master Plan was signed by President Quirino. It further stipulated “the appropriation of funds for the acquisition of private estates within the boundary limits of the city, and authorized the issuance of bonds... for the construction of streets, bridges, waterworks, sewerage...” and other city improvements.

In July 1947, the City Hall building was constructed along Highway 54 (now Epifanio delos Santos Avenue or EDSA) on what used to be the site of the pre-war public market. It was occupied in February 1948, housing all the city government’s offices and departments with the exception of the police department.

Quezon City was formally inaugurated as the national capital of the Philippines on October 12, 1949. President Quirino laid the cornerstone of the proposed Capitol Building at Constitution Hills. The Welcome Arch (now Mabuhay Rotunda) at the boundary of Manila and Quezon City was built; the construction of Roxas Homesite by the Philippine Homesite and Housing Corporation, consisting of 1,104 housing units on an area of 40 hectares, started

The City’s territorial boundaries were revised four times since its creation on October 12, 1939. Originally, Quezon City had only about 7,000 hectares extending from La Loma to Marikina River and from Pasong Tamo River down to (and including) Wack Wack Golf Club in Mandaluyong. It was first amended in 1941 by Commonwealth Act 659 which returned the portions west of Marikina River to Marikina, a reduction of about 500 hectares. After the war, Republic Act 333 dated July 17, 1948 which declared the City as the National Capital, incorporated the areas of Novaliches and Payatas thereby greatly increasing the territory by more than double: from 6,500 hectares to 15,660. A third revision which decreased the City’s area by about 300 hectares was made in 1950 by RA 537 when parts of the territory east of Marikina River were given back to Montalban and San Mateo, as well as Wack Wack and Camp Crame to Mandaluyong and San Juan, respectively.

The final amendment was made on June 16, 1956 by virtue of RA 1575 which again reduced the City’s area by 260 hectares from 15,359 to 15,106 hectares, when areas west of Marikina River were again reverted to Montalban and San Mateo even as Camp Crame was reintegrated to the City. This is the present official territorial boundary of Quezon City. However, graphical plots made on this present boundary of the city gave an area of 16,112 hectares, about 1,000 hectares more than the officially declared land area

**Table H-1: Changes in Land Areas of Quezon City**

	Commonwealth Act 502	Commonwealth Act 659	Republic Act 333	Republic Act 537	Republic Act 537
Date Approved	October 12, 1939	June 21, 1941	June 17, 1950	June 16, 1950	June 16, 1956
Land Area	7,006 has.*	6,497 has*	15,660 has.	15,359 has	15,106 Has.* 16,112 has*

\* Figures obtained thru graphical computations only

\*\* Based on 1995 GIS graphical plot

## 1.4 CHANGING FORTUNES OF QUEZON CITY

For twenty-seven (27) years, Quezon City held the distinct status of being the nation's capital. However, two Presidential Decrees issued by President Ferdinand E. Marcos would have substantially changed the political stature and landscape of the city.

Presidential Decree 824 authorized the creation of the Metropolitan Manila and Metropolitan Manila Commission which would exercise territorial and political jurisdiction over seventeen (17) municipalities and cities, including Quezon City. The Decree was deemed necessary due to "rapid growth of population and...of social and economic requirements in the contiguous communities". Too, the Decree served to address the imperative for integrated development, service delivery, and management in terms of peace and order and eradication of social and economic ills which were considered then as among the reform measures under Martial Law.

It was around this period and under the leadership of appointed mayor Norberto S. Amoranto, that the city attained an impressive performance record in terms of financial standing, delivery of services, particularly that of medical and health services, establishment of buildings, and community beautification projects which were also supported by then First Lady Imelda R. Marcos.

On June 24, 1976, then President Marcos issued Presidential Decree (PD) 940, which effectively conferred back the role of the nation's capital to the City of Manila and mandated the area prescribed under PD 824 as Metropolitan Manila, now known as the National Capital Region (NCR), to be the permanent seat of national government.

Three months prior to this declaration, Quezon City set another record by having the first lady chief executive appointed to office after Mayor Amoranto resigned from his post. Mayor Adelina S. Rodriguez then led the city during the transition towards the period when it was no longer the nation's capital. During her first year in office, Mayor Rodriguez formulated the nowfamous City Development Program, which functioned as basis for integrating problem solution. She underscored the importance of the city's mandate in terms of employment generation and delivery of basic services despite limited resources. With the successful implementation of the city's Seven-Point Management Program that would bring about "community awareness and consciousness of maintaining ecological balance", the city also recorded significant improvements in terms of income generation and crime reduction.

A Letter of Instruction (LOI) No. 473 was issued by President Marcos and under which the Constitution Hills and Reclamation Areas, both situated in Quezon City, were designated as the site of the country's parliamentary building or the Batasang Bayan and other government offices, such as Department of Education and Culture (DEC) and the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

Indeed, even as Quezon City was no longer the capital city, it proved to be a vast and teeming city which by then attained a steadily increasing income and occupied one-third of Metro Manila's total land area. It has implemented its development plan and served as the government center with the national legislature and other important government offices located in its area.

All of these are reminiscent of the same noble dream that brought forth the creation of the City

## 1.5 CAPITALIZING ON THE “QUEZON CITY” VISION

The original vision of President Quezon for the City became the thread that weave and will continue to weave a very vibrant and rich past, present, and future for the city.

Important people, places, and events that shaped the course of history in the struggle for freedom and sovereignty including the “Cry of Pugad Lawin” led by the Great Plebeian and revolutionary hero Andres Bonifacio, the People Power Revolution in EDSA that toppled the regime of President Marcos and the installation of President Corazon Aquino under the restored democracy took place in areas that now comprise the city.

Currently, Quezon City is the largest among the Metropolitan Manila’s cities in terms of population and land area. The “Quezon dream-vision” continues to guide efforts for the attainment of a progressive and peaceful, clean and orderly place conducive and hospitable to living, employment, and business, “A Quality Community that is Quezon City”.

Effective fiscal management, aggressive tax management strategies, increasing efficiency and growing discipline in the management and use of resources as well as participatory governance have made Quezon City one of the most competitive cities in the Philippines today. In particular, the city recorded the highest net income in the Philippines, produced an annual budget surplus averaging P307 million for seven consecutive years from 2002 thru 2008, and earned an income of P8.02 billion in 2008. The City takes pride in its strong economic viability and financial standing, rational development of systems to curb graft, rigid budgeting process that considers the city’s development planning strategies and priorities and the most pressing needs of its constituents.

The city has also achieved various firsts in many areas such as computerized revenue collection and assessment system, fiscal control and capability building in the barangay level, various environmental and solid waste management programs, women and children protection, and institutionalization of citizen participation in governance thru the City Development Council.

Due to its achievements and innovations, Quezon City was recognized and cited for the dynamism of its local economy, the quality of life of its residents and the responsiveness of the local government in addressing business needs, among others. In 2007, Quezon City took the 7th place in the “Asian City of the Future” survey commissioned by the London Financial Times. In a 2008 Tholons Global Outsourcing and Investments special report, the city ranked as the number 21 emerging global outsourcing city, the highest among all nine new entrants.

The city manifests the same criteria for the nation’s capital being at the center of trade, commerce, education and culture, seat of the national government, modern transportation, communication and accommodation facilities and other physical attributes of a modern city

# HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS : 1938 - 2019

