

**TRANSFORMING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE:
AN ANALYSIS OF PATTERNS, PROBLEMS, AND PROSPECTS
OF METRO MANILA**

by

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Bachelor of Science in Architecture
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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER IN CITY PLANNING
AT THE
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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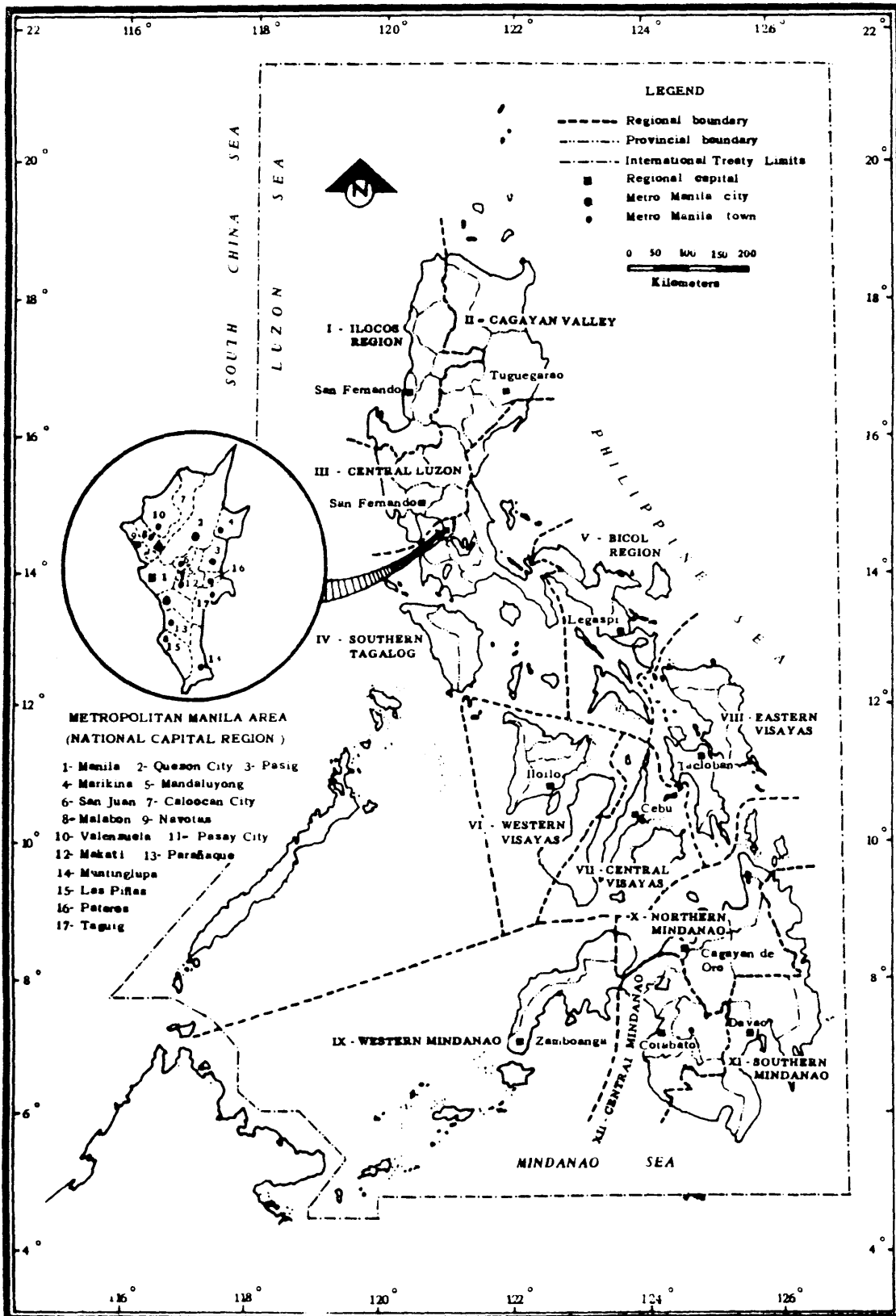
ABSTRACT

After the revival of Philippine democracy in 1986, Metropolitan Manila has experienced dramatic physical changes in its urban landscape brought about by the country's accelerated economic growth. These changes, however, have led to the worsening conditions in the metropolis. The problems of congestion, pollution and the inadequacy of urban services are approaching intolerable levels.

This study traces the evolution of Manila from a colonial capital to a modern metropolitan area in order to comprehend the nature of its contemporary urban problems. Numerous attempts by government to plan the growth of the area have not been very successful. Metro Manila's present physical landscape is a reflection of its uncoordinated and unplanned urban development. Without the deliberate efforts at planning and managing its growth, the conditions in the metropolitan area will continue to worsen and lead to urban decay.

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Map of Metro Manila and other Philippine Regions

INTRODUCTION

Metro Manila, the capital region of the Philippines, has long felt the growing pains of a disorderly and unhealthy urban environment that accompanies the “developing” economy of the country. Its physical configuration has evolved in a more or less *laissez-faire* manner reacting predominantly to market demand forces.

Over the last decade, accelerated economic growth brought about by the recent restoration of democracy in the country has triggered a major influx of capital investments into the nation’s economy. This has resulted to dramatic changes in Metro Manila’s physical urban landscape characterized by the expansion of development beyond metropolitan boundaries, the conversion of more agricultural lands to urban uses, and the construction of numerous large scale projects.

Yet, all these developments have been achieved in an urban environment that is steadily deteriorating, raising the possibility that the economic progress attained during the last few years may not be sustained. Urban problems such as congestion and pollution are approaching intolerable levels. Persistent neglect in dealing with these burgeoning issues will only serve to compound their effects over time. But what can be done to improve the urban conditions in Metro Manila?

I embarked on this study in search of a fuller understanding of the nature of the urban development problems in the Philippine metropolis. I believe that before viable solutions to current metropolitan problems could be formulated, a deeper awareness of the urbanization forces that have influenced and continue to shape its growth and development is required. I sought to address the following questions:

- (1) What are the reasons behind Metro Manila’s seemingly unplanned and haphazard urban form?
- (2) How can urban planning be used as a tool to alleviate the worsening conditions in the metropolis?

Chapter One is a brief analysis of how the general experience of urbanization in colonized countries like the Philippines differ from that of Western industrialized countries.

Chapter Two provides a historical background of how the nature of Spanish and American colonial rule led to the evolution of Manila as a primate city and how it eventually became the dominant metropolitan area of the country.

Chapter Three analyzes the nature of the development trends and the magnitude of the urban problems in Metro Manila.

Chapter Four describes the current urban developments and the initiative of government to improve the conditions in the metropolis through physical urban planning.

Chapter Five suggests a conceptual planning approach towards achieving preferred patterns of development.

I. URBANIZATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Urban growth in many developing nations has followed a different path from that in Western countries. In the Western World, the pattern of modern urbanization was largely determined by the Industrial Revolution. That revolution accelerated the urbanization process. It led to the progressive expansion and growth of many urban areas that were spatially and economically integrated. The existence of multiple urbanized areas tended to offset the economic dominance of one particular city or metropolis. Especially since the end of World War II, the populations in most of the large metropolitan areas in the West have ceased to grow and even declined. As the industrialization process accelerated, improvements in transportation, mass communication and the increased mobility of the people eventually led to the diffusion of urbanism or the culture of the city. Therefore, urbanism is no longer confined to the city but has spread to the countryside and has become part of the national culture.

In contrast, the main city in many Third World countries was largely a colonial creation, imposed from without rather than a product of indigenous socio-economic evolution. A common characteristic in these colonized countries is the dominance of one primate city and the existence of a number of much smaller urban entities.¹ The dominance of the main city developed from the multiple roles it performed as the colonial capital and economic center linking it to the external colonial power. These functions determined its spatial growth and development as well as shaped its pattern of socio-economic relations with the other areas. The functional imbalance is manifested by the evident physical contrast between the primate city and the rest of the cities and regions in the country. The colonial capital eventually evolved into the national capital and over a period of time, expanded beyond its boundaries and became a metropolis. Within its territory is concentrated the majority of the country's urban population, the bulk of the country's industries and economic activities, the location of most of its

¹ McGee, T. G. *The Urbanization Process in the Third World*, p. 31.

governmental, educational, and cultural institutions as well as the major communication and transportation facilities. While the primate city continued to urbanize, development in the rest of the country lagged behind, remaining basically agricultural and rural.

Although the urban problems of most Third World metropolitan areas appear to be similar to those of Western industrialized countries, i.e., congestion, urban decay, and inadequate services, they are actually very different and have more serious implications in terms of overall national development.² The interdependent relationship of the primate city and the rest of the developing country's regions is inherent to its national economic structure. Physical urban problems do not only require solutions of a technical nature but necessitate national economic growth and the political will to enforce basic changes in its environment.³ Urban planning and land use, ecological maintenance, provision of services, and planning for economic growth are ultimately political processes. Development decisions and outcomes are much more a reflection of power struggles rather than of rational planning.

It is within this developmental and historical context that the Philippine experience in urbanization, focusing on the evolution of Manila into the country's dominant primate city, will be examined.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE METROPOLIS

In order to comprehend the urban issues that confront Metropolitan Manila, an understanding of its evolutionary colonial development over four centuries is required.

² Laquian, Aprodicio. *The Asian City and the Political Process*, p. 19.

³ *Ibid.*, p.23.

A. Pre-Colonial Philippines

The Philippines is an archipelago consisting of over seven thousand islands. Because of this geography, the pre-colonial population was not politically integrated. The people lived in small, isolated communities known as *barangays*⁴ and had subsistence economies. Agricultural production was geared mainly to the needs of the communities and these needs determined the pattern of landholding within the *barangays*. Land use was based on usufruct rights.

B. Spanish Colonization

The Spaniards came to the islands in 1521 for three main reasons: (1) to secure a share in the spice trade then under Portuguese monopoly, (2) to establish direct contacts with China and Japan, and (3) to convert more people to Christianity.⁵ Spanish domination was initially established by force but continued control was secured by the evangelistic works of religious missionaries. The formation, planning and administration of towns for the new “converts” were left almost entirely in the hand of the friars.⁶ The typical spatial pattern of urban settlements reflected the “under the bell” concept where everyone had to be within earshot of the church bells.⁷ One could determine the size of the town by the size of the bell. Town planning followed the Graeco-Roman pattern where the church, bell tower, convent and municipal hall occupied prominent locations around the town plaza. These groups of civic structures were surrounded by streets that followed a grid layout.

⁴ A *barangay* is essentially a group of extended families or a kinship group that formed a community. The name was derived from the name of the boat that brought the original immigrants from Malaysia and Indonesia.

⁵ Phelan, John L. *The Hispanization of th Philippines*, p. 6-7.

⁶ Fernandez, Antonio. *History of Philippine Planning: Pre-Colonial Era to 1946*, p. 30.

⁷ Ibid.

Towards the end of the 16th Century, *Intramuros*, the Walled City of Manila, was built. It linked the Philippines to Spain and served as a seat of the higher Spanish bureaucracy and the ecclesiastical hierarchy and as a military outpost and center for trade and commerce.⁸ The creation of the capital city of Manila facilitated the unification of the Philippines under a centralized government structure under Spanish administration.

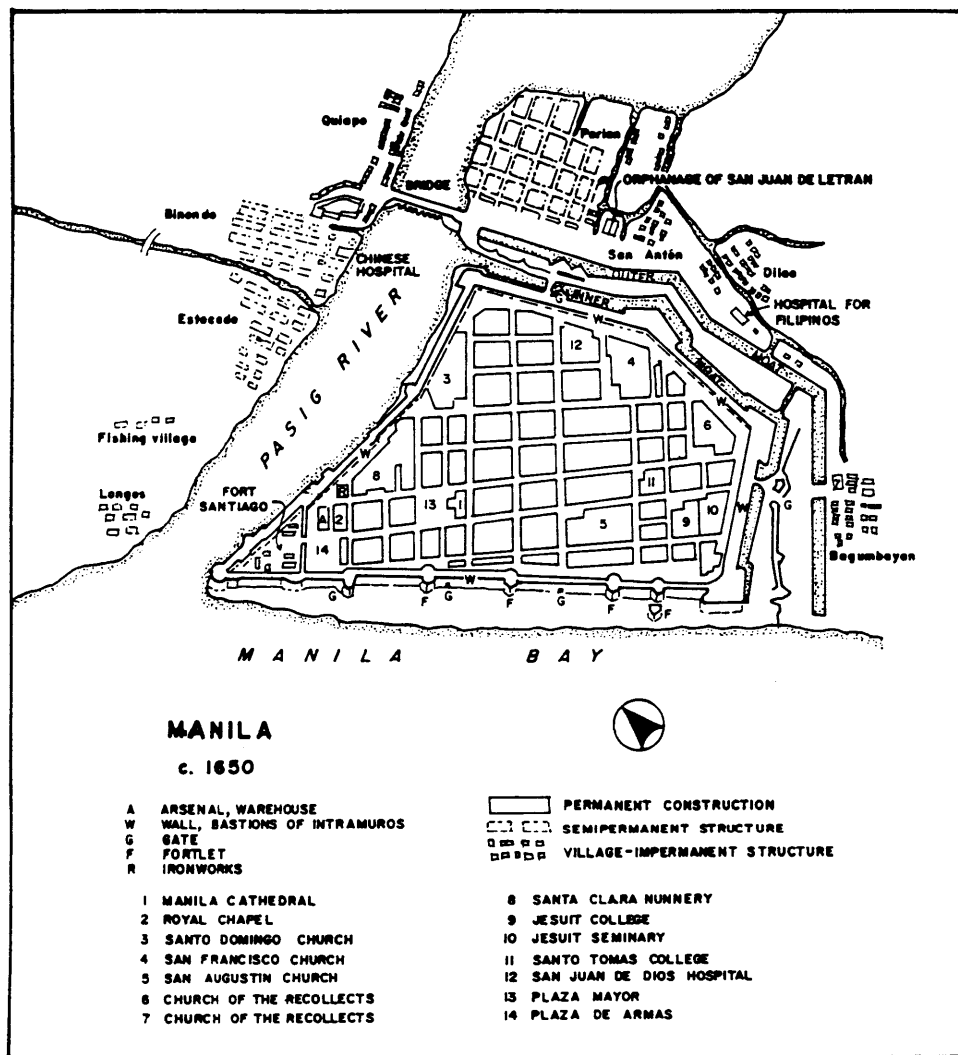


Figure II.1 Embryonic Manila was confined within the walls of Intramuros with an area of approximately 1.2 square kilometers.

Source: Serote, Ernesto. *The Socio-Spatial Structure of the Colonial Third World City*, p. 7.

⁸ Serote, Ernesto. *The Socio-Spatial Structure of the Colonial Third World City*, p. 6.

Spanish colonial rule introduced the concept of land as private property, evidenced by the possession of a title and retained as a form of wealth. This profoundly altered the pre-conquest economy and from then on, determined the nature and pace of Philippine socio-economic development for almost three and a half centuries (1564-1898). Ignorance of the imposed laws governing private land ownership and the traditional deference to the ruling *principalia*⁹ paved the way for the alienation of much of the natives' hereditary landholdings and their eventual concentration in private hands. By the eighteenth century, the religious orders soon became the biggest landowners around Manila.¹⁰

The conversion of land to private property and the rise of large friar estates exposed the native population to further economic exploitation and changed the structure of the indigenous society. As the natives lost their properties through taxation and legal confiscation by political leaders, they became tenants, share croppers, paid and unpaid laborers in their own ancestral lands.¹¹

Colonial development policies fostered a dependent economy encouraging agricultural production in rural areas and stimulating commercial and industrial activities in urban areas. Through the tribute tax, compulsory labor, and forced government purchase of agricultural products, resources from the countryside were extracted to support the colonial bureaucracy and religious establishments in the islands, provide income for the Spanish Crown, maintain the defense of the colony, and finance the building of a colonial capital.¹² Manila's central location in the biggest island of the archipelago, Luzon, and its natural harbor made it the logical choice for the site of the new city. The resource extractions, however, left little surplus and incentive for economic development in the rural areas, thus, economic progress was generally confined to Manila and its surrounding suburbs for many years.

⁹ The *principalia* was the class of native notables who served as local official during the Spanish period acting as a link between the colonial authorities and the population; usually coopted from the pre-Spanish nobility. This group included the earliest collaborators of the Americans during their occupation.

¹⁰ Constantino, Renato. *A Past Revisited*, p. 15.

¹¹ Serote, Ernesto. *The Socio-Spatial Structure of the Colonial Third World City*, p. 9.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 11.

In the latter half of the 18th Century, the temporary British occupation of Manila broke down the country's isolation from the rest of the world and triggered numerous revolts against the exploitations by Spanish colonial officials and friars. Consequently, Spanish colonial policy began to focus on economic reconstruction and domestic development.

In 1814, the country was officially opened to world commerce and this tremendously increased demand for agricultural exports. This demand encouraged the concentration of ownership of extraordinarily large parcels of agricultural land in the hands of fewer and fewer individuals. A consequence of this was the growing number of landless laborers. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Manila, as the port city, was gradually becoming a cosmopolitan center with modern urban amenities such as steam tramways, water supply lines, gas lamp streets, bull rings, theaters, etc.¹³

The organization of Manila's social and cultural life distinctly reflected the "chain of surplus extraction" which was Philippine development. Within the confines of the Walled City of *Intramuros* were European-born Spaniards, Creoles and Spanish *mestizos*¹⁴ who tried to make life in the colony resemble that of Spain as much as possible. The structures within this self-contained enclave reflected European architectural styles and the residents were involved in numerous religious processions and civic activities. Living outside the walls were foreign merchants, Chinese businessmen and native *principalias*. The rest of the population lived in bamboo houses in the surrounding suburbs. There were few social interactions between residents of *Intramuros* and the suburbs.¹⁵

Continued economic prosperity during the 19th Century enabled wealthy Filipinos to obtain higher levels of education in Manila, and eventually Europe.¹⁶ It was this *illustrodo*¹⁷ class that later articulated popular resentment of Spanish oppression,

¹³Fernandez, Antonio. *History of Philippine Planning: Pre-Colonial Era to 1946*, p. 35.

¹⁴*Mestizos* are the descendants of mixed marriages between a Filipino and a Spaniard or a Filipino and a Chinese.

¹⁵ Fernandez, Antonio. *History of Philippine Planning: Pre-Colonial Era to 1946.*, p. 37.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁷ The *illustros* were the educated class among Filipinos during the latter half of the nineteenth century, consisting of natives, *mestizos*, and creoles, which articulated the beginning of Philippine nationalism. They came from the middle and upper class or the *principalia* class.

fostered nationalistic sentiments and agitated for political and economic emancipation. With the support of the exploited agricultural laborers, a revolution was staged in Manila in 1896. Around this time, the Americans, who were also engaged in a war against Spain in Cuba, aided the Filipinos and fought the Spaniards to gain control over the rest of the archipelago. The unified Philippines was proclaimed a republic.

The Filipinos were on the threshold of self-rule when they realized that the Americans had used the revolution to install themselves in place of the Spaniards. The Filipino-American War of 1899 took place in Manila, but superior arms and military organization assured eventual American victory.

C. The American Regime

As with Spanish rule, the country under the Americans continued to have an agricultural export economy, its rich natural resources developed to support foreign commercial and industrial interests -- this time for the United States.

The vast friar lands were purchased by Gov. Howard Taft in 1903 ostensibly to be subdivided and sold to tenants of the estates but there was no accompanying program for financial assistance.¹⁸ Consequently, much of the vast landholdings ended up in the hands of American individuals and corporations as well as in the hands of the Filipino landed elite.

Manila remained the capital city under American rule. The influx of more Americans into the city led to the reconstruction and improvement of its urban infrastructure. To increase the efficiency in the delivery of cash crops from the countryside, the Americans built railways. New roads and bridges were constructed and Manila's harbor was upgraded to international standards. This paved the way for

¹⁸ Cortez, Alejandro. *The Philippine Primate City*, p. 23.

American and European multi-national companies to establish office in Manila. Thus, the Americans introduced the country into an era of monopoly capitalism.

The urban landscape was rapidly changing in character with the construction of parks, public recreation areas, social clubs, bars and government structures. In rural towns, the public primary school became an added feature of the plaza complex.

The Americans also introduced the ideals and institutions of democracy and modern amenities for urban living.¹⁹ By encouraging public education of the masses, they changed the rules of social mobility from one based on property ownership to one based on educational attainment and technical knowledge. Demand for higher education led to the proliferation of private schools, colleges and universities in Manila.

All throughout the American regime, rural migrants flowed into the capital city either to take jobs in the foreign firms or to enroll in schools for higher education. This rapid and unhampered in-migration resulted to many urban problems such as congestion, the emergence of slums and squatter settlements, and the shortage of basic services.

The increasing demand for housing led to another change in land disposition -- urban land development. The Americans reinforced the Spanish institution of private property ownership and introduced the business of real estate development.²⁰ The large estates they had purchased from the Spanish religious orders were subdivided and sold to individual homeowners. The native elite with extensive landholdings likewise converted their agricultural lands to urban housing developments.

By the first decade of the 20th Century, Manila had grown by leaps and bounds. It leapt out of the walls of *Intramuros* and became an extramural city. In 1903, the City of Manila formally incorporated twelve of the fast-growing suburban towns and the Walled City became just one of its thirteen local districts.²¹

The biggest influence that the Americans would have made on the physical structure of Manila was the deliberate attempt to control its growth through a master plan. In 1905, the prominent Chicago city planner and proponent of the "City Beautiful

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 39.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 48.

²¹ Fernandez, Antonio. *History of Philippine Planning: Pre-Colonial Era to 1946*, p. 44.

Movement,” Daniel H. Burnham, was commissioned by Gov. Taft to design Manila.²² The Burnham plan was similar in many respects to San Francisco and Washington, DC.

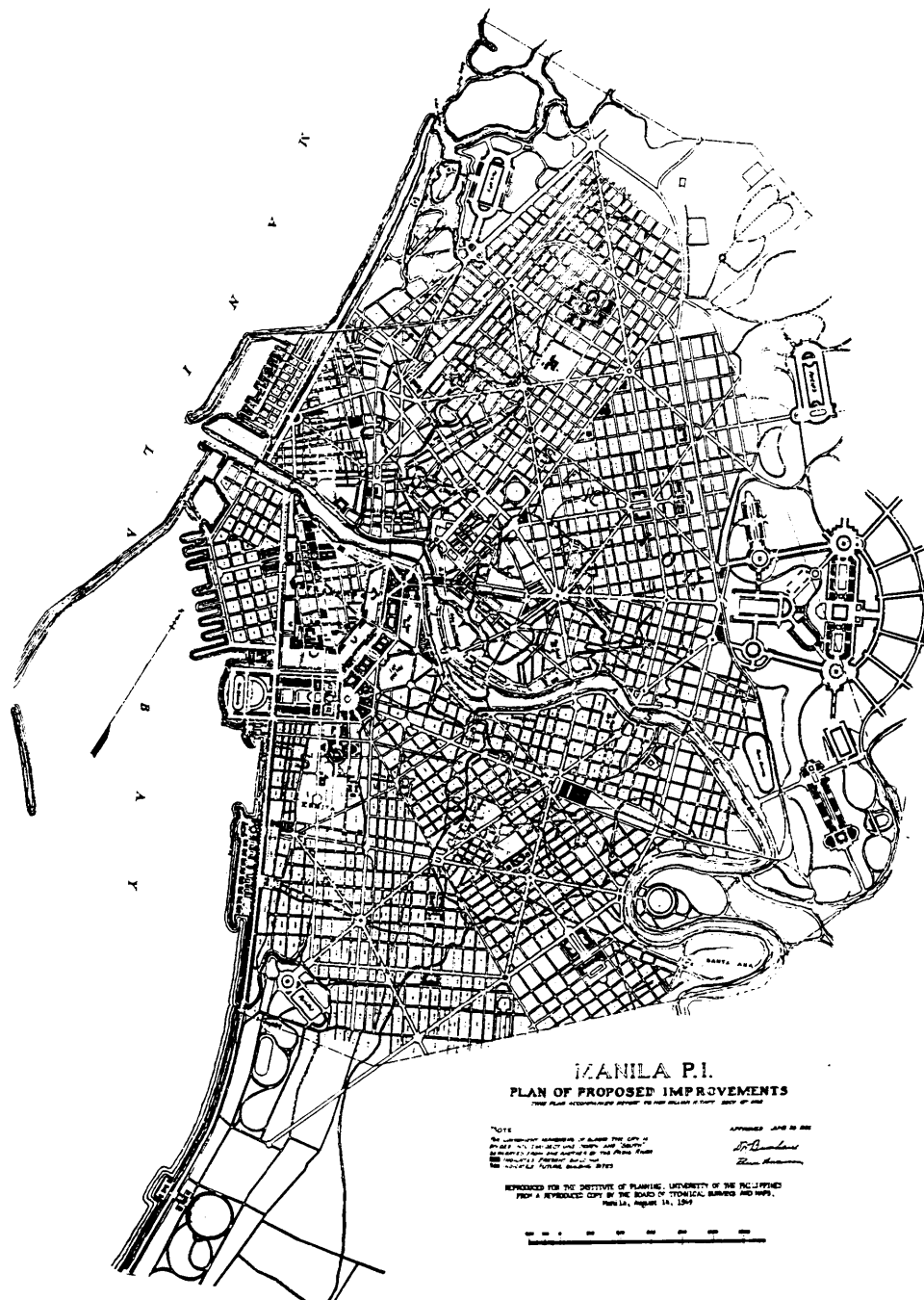


Figure II.1 Burnham’s Plan for the Capital City of Manila, 1905
(Source: Silao, Federico. *Burnham’s Plan for Manila*, p. 10)

²² Moore, Charles. *Daniel Burnham: Architect, Planner of Cities*, p.13.

His five major interrelated proposals were: (1) the development of the waterfront and the location of parks and parkways in areas that would give adequate opportunities for recreation to every quarter of the city, (2) the establishment of a street system that would secure direct and easy communication from every part of the city to every other district, (3) the location of building sites for various activities, (4) the development of the interior riverways for transportation, and (5) the provision of summer resorts.²³

Initially, the prospects of having the Manila Plan faithfully executed were bright. The Philippines, as a colonial possession of the United States, was entitled to colonial government funds for public improvements towards the realization of the objectives of the plan. Burnham advised the government to start laying out the initial purchasing lands to ensure the proper implementation of the plan but, unfortunately, his advice was not heeded. Manila, consequently, lost the chance to reserve land for its future needs for urban development.²⁴

A decision was made by President Quezon to transfer the capital city to a new and larger site. In 1936, Quezon City was planned as the permanent seat of the national government and as an outlet for the congested city of Manila.²⁵ It was to be developed by public and private enterprises. However, the implementation of the urban plans was overtaken by the outbreak of World War II. The Japanese occupied Manila in 1942. More than two-thirds of Manila's facilities were destroyed and many structures were leveled to the ground in the battles fought to liberate the city from the Japanese forces.

D. The Period of Reconstruction

After World War II, the United States granted political independence to the Philippines but retained twenty-three military bases in the archipelago. Economic and

²³ Silao, Federico. *Burhman's Plan for Manila*, p. 13.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁵ Fernandez, Antonio. *History of Philippine Planning: Pre-Colonial Era to 1946*, p. 62.

political power became concentrated in a small traditional landowning class whose interest lay in the continuation of the country's dependent economy. The newly established government supported local government autonomy laws and opposed comprehensive national development programs.²⁶

The destruction of Manila after the war did not interrupt the flow of rural migrants into the city. Economic policies emphasized industrialization at the expense of agricultural productivity. The dependence of new industries on imported machines and raw materials meant that the rural economy did not participate fully in the nation's growth as it might have done if industrialization had been linked to a domestic raw material base.²⁷ This import dependence led to the concentration of manufacturing industries around Manila as the country's principal port, thus, perpetuating continued rural underdevelopment and the further concentration of wealth and economic activities in Manila and its surrounding areas.

The shift towards industrialization altered the pattern of urban development. Migrant families boldly occupied vacant and deserted lands, whether public or private. Squatters moved into the ruins of *Intramuros*, thus, transforming the once proud center of Spanish authority into a veritable slum.

Because of the growing demand for urban land for commercial and other speculative ventures, land values had rapidly gone up. Lack of effective land development controls led to the undirected spatial expansion, the arbitrary location of homes and factories, the growing inadequacy of services, and the development of private enclaves. The continuous movement of people from one part of the city to another resulted to changing land use patterns.

Manila's further growth proceeded in this manner, a haphazard process based on political expediency, immediate needs and short-term decisions.²⁸ Government planning efforts focused mainly on the expansion of land areas to accommodate the growing

²⁶ Cortez, Alejandro. *The Philippine Primate City*, p. 56.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.60.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

population and the expansion of various socio-economic activities. These activities determined the kinds of land used and the infrastructure and utilities to be constructed.

Over the years, urban blight had steadily eaten into the old core of the city and this led to the building of settlements beyond city boundaries. Middle and higher income families relocated to the suburbs following the transfer of schools, government offices and new industries. This trend of rural-urban and urban-suburban migration shaped the pattern of the emerging urban landscape.

During the 1950s, redevelopment efforts adapted a different form of movement, from the “City Beautiful” to the “City Efficient” concept²⁹. There was rapid construction of all forms of structures taking cue from Western standards and models. The physical landscape projected a new look with numerous modern buildings, factories, roads and vehicles. Several exclusive residential subdivisions and posh commercial complexes were mushrooming in scattered locations within the rapidly urbanizing area.

The accelerated pace of physical development and the intensification of industrialization were indications of the recovering economy but there were still those nagging issues about the quality of the resulting urban environment. There was no strategic consideration for an overall, comprehensive vision in relation to the growing needs and future demands of the ever-increasing urban population. The problems of rapid urbanization such as chaotic land uses, growing slums, increasing traffic congestion, pollution and environmental degradation continued unabated.

Government attempts at long-range physical planning through the creation of a number of centralized planning agencies were ineffective in controlling the growth of the rapidly urbanizing area.³⁰ (see *Appendix A*) This was not only because of their weak organizations and lack of financial and technical resources, but more importantly, their lack of political support. During that time, the concepts and consequences of urban development, city planning and urban rehabilitation were not fully appreciated by either government or private enterprise. Physical urban development needs were not

²⁹ The City Efficient concept pertains to the emphasis on economic efficiency in building. It is also viewed in terms of being attuned with the international industrial built-up as influenced by the war-time surplus and the trend towards modernization.

³⁰ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metro Manila*, p. 2.

incorporated in long-term economic plans. Planning was voluntary, at the discretion of individual local governments, and since local funds and technical personnel were unavailable, in most areas, physical planning was not done at all.³¹ The national government concentrated the bulk of its resources in economic planning while physical urban planning remained a low priority-issue in policy-making. Its efforts to cope with the increasing demands of urbanization continued in a piecemeal, uncoordinated and ineffective fashion, addressing mainly the symptoms of the worsening problems rather than the causes.

Manila's run-away urbanization resulted in imbalanced development, prematurely converted prime agricultural lands into urban uses, irrationally mixed the uses of land, and tolerated the proliferation of slums and squatter settlements.³² The cumulative effects of government's neglect in dealing with these mounting urban problems eventually spread to adjoining regions.

All these issues came to a dramatic head in 1972 when a series of typhoons brought heavy rains for some forty days, inundating Manila and its surrounding areas, paralyzing transportation and communications and bringing the economy to a standstill. The flooding was caused by a number of interrelated factors: the area's flat and marshy terrain, the inadequate drainage aggravated by silting of creeks and rivers and the disappearance of many *esteros* (canals that serve as storm drainage) due to illegal squatting, the denuded forest lands, the increasing urban population in coastal areas, and the inadequate drainage facilities.³³ The disaster so severely strained government resources that even after the flood waters had subsided, the country was in a state of economic crisis. President Marcos, thus, proceeded with the fateful decision to impose Martial Law over the entire country.

³¹ Aragoncillo, Erlinda. *History of Planning: 1946-1972*. p.14.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³³ Cortez, Alejandro. *The Philippine Primate City*, p. 148

E. The Movements Towards Metropolitan Reform

The government under Martial Law aimed at ushering in the beginning of progressive reconstruction by creating a “New Society” that demanded radical reduction of the economic gap between the rich and the poor. It hoped to give stability to the country’s development that had so far been traumatic because of the many disruptive periods in its history. The President considered the old governing system as oligarchic -- where the elite exercised their political authority over the masses and perpetuated an individualistic form of politics. Thus, the initial decisions of the Martial Law government was to weaken the power base of the traditional landed elite by the abolition of the democratic Congress and the closure of private media networks.

The President became the sole law-making authority, concentrating in that office both executive and legislative powers. In taking up the task of nation rebuilding, the President relied on the support of a strengthened military force and a select group of civilian technocrats who assisted him in the formulation of long-term “grandiose” plans, drafting presidential decrees and executing policies.

President Marcos commissioned multiple studies aimed at determining the most appropriate organization to manage the burgeoning urban problems of Manila and its expanding geographical domain. Manila’s reform became an integral part of the strategy for national economic development.

In 1975, preceded by almost a dozen organizational proposals, President Marcos issued a presidential decree which integrated the four cities and thirteen municipalities into a unified territorial and administrative entity known as Metropolitan Manila or the National Capital Region of the Philippines. It created the **Metro Manila Commission (MMC)** as its single governing body to replace the existing seventeen local government units.³⁴ The MMC was the first organization legally mandated to plan, manage, and implement a metropolitan blueprint for the planned physical development of Metro

³⁴ Santiago, Asteya. *Urban and Regional Planning in the Philippines*, p. 459.

Manila. The First Lady, Imelda Marcos, was appointed by the President as the governor of the MMC.³⁵

The drive to make Metro Manila attractive as a base for foreign investments in Southeast Asia and to promote the tourism industry led to massive government investments in urban infrastructure. High priority was given to the repair of roads, flood control projects, highway expansion to outlying regions, creation of high-profile architectural structures, etc. Ironically, these reforms appeared to reinforce Manila's historic role as the colonial center of capital accumulation and surplus extraction.

The MMC was vested with strong planning, implementation and taxing powers. It took over most of the executive powers of the seventeen local governments in the metropolis and all of their legislative powers.

Considering that it was the first metropolitan organization in the country, the MMC did not have the benefit of precedence and had to develop its own programs for metropolitan governance. Specialized national government agencies were created to deal separately with development issues such as housing, environment, land use, transportation, soils, etc. These agencies became responsible for the systematic gathering and organization of data for development purposes. This information approach laid the foundation for more rationalized planning in the Philippines.

The major accomplishment of the MMC was the creation of a Structure Plan for Metro Manila which laid out proposals for major infrastructure investments.³⁶ (see Figure II.3) The Structure Plan aimed at deconcentrating development outside Metro Manila through several legislations such as the fifty-kilometer industrial ban, the setting up of new town developments, and the identification of priority industrial and export processing zones nationwide. MMC also initiated land use and zoning surveys for each of its seventeen local districts but these were more of indicative documentations of the existing built-up uses rather than implementable plans.

³⁵ Datuin, Arnel. *Martial Law in the Philippines*, p. 48.

³⁶ Santiago, Asteya. *Urban and Regional Planning in the Philippines*, p. 459.

LEGEND:

- HIGH INTENSITY DEVELOPMENT
- LOW INTENSITY DEVELOPMENT
- ⊙ INSTITUTIONAL
- ▨ MAJOR OPEN SPACE/AGRICULTURAL AREAS

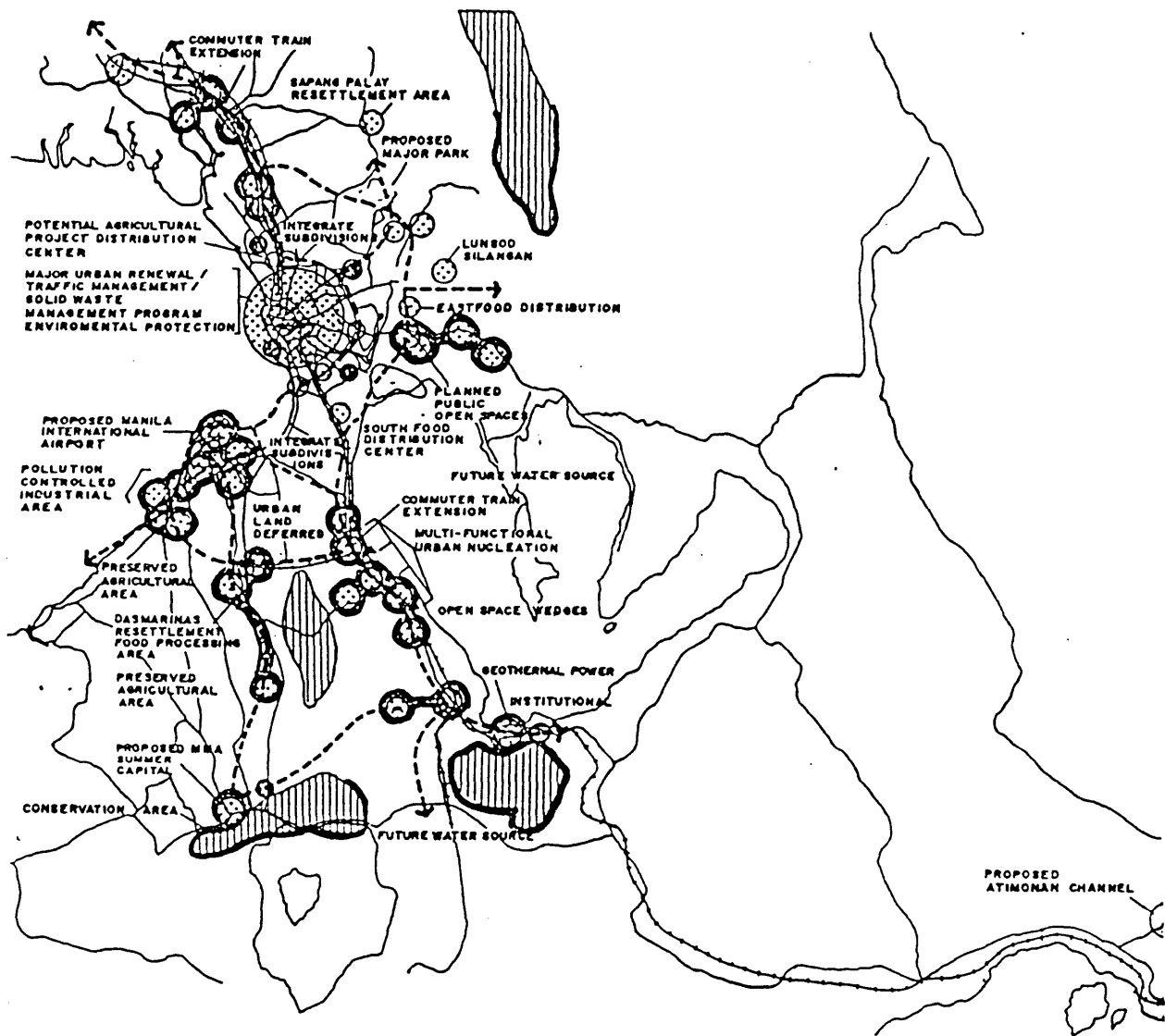
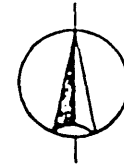


Figure II.3

The Structure Plan of Metro Manila

Source:

Faithfull, Walter. *Manila Bay Metropolitan Region*, Philippine Planning Journal, Vol. III, No. 2, April 1972.

MMC's limited accomplishments, especially considered against the vast resources it had at its disposal and the wide range of both legislative and executive powers it had, have been attribute to many reasons.³⁷ The over-centralization of power and decision-making in the MMC reduced the local governments to weak participants in the metropolitan administration system. Local governments were unable to make significant contributions to guide the direction of growth within their jurisdictions. Legislative power was in the hands of a single person -- the governor -- and the executive and the local government officials had no powers or discretion on their own. These officials were also, concurrently, officers in other national agencies and could only devote part time to their metropolitan duties. This disjointed and fragmented structure of decision-making did not benefit from organization-wide consultation. Its vertical structure of approvals significantly lengthened the implementation process of development proposals. Numerous infrastructure projects were bogged down in red tape while priority projects that had strong political connections had better chances of getting approved.³⁸ Corruption in government was rampant during the Marcos administration because of the tremendous concentration of power and resources and the unchecked hierarchical structure of government.

Another main problem of the Martial Law government was that its long-term and ambitious development programs relied heavily on foreign capital invested by multi-national corporations or in the form of foreign loans. Many affluent Filipinos, during that time, had invested their capital outside the country. Although the multi-national corporations and foreign loans had substantially contributed to the overall economic growth of the country, the benefits had gone mainly to the few. Increases in national income had not trickled down to the populace as had been optimistically assumed, and the country was gravely in debt to foreign banks.

³⁷ Einsiedel, Nathaniel von. *Managing Metro Manila: Lessons from the Past*. A published report written by the Commissioner of the MMC.

³⁸ Datuin, Arnel. *Martial Law in the Philippines*, p. 64.

Martial Law was officially lifted in 1981 but the Marcos administration continued to govern the country until it was overthrown in 1986 by a peaceful revolution led by Corazon Aquino. A new democratic government was set in place.

Beset by the enormous tasks of political and economic restructuring, physical urban planning did not receive much attention in the Aquino administration but it did lay the foundation for firm democratic governance through the creation of the 1987 Constitution. Most of the projects of the Structure Plan were either left in limbo or discontinued and no clear urban policy had been pursued.³⁹

A sequel to the continuing experimentation for more efficient and effective management of urban development in Metro Manila was the creation of the **Metro Manila Authority (MMA)** in 1990.⁴⁰ The MMA tried to reconcile local autonomy with metropolitan governance by ensuring that local governments retained their respective executive and legislative powers. This was in direct contrast to the actions of its predecessor, the MMC. The MMA underscored the fact that the local government units should be primarily responsible for the administration of their respective political jurisdictions. The MMA, in strict adherence to the new Constitutional mandate, was granted only coordinating powers over the delivery of metropolitan services. This resulted in a highly emasculated organization which had limited capacity for long-range physical planning.

Another MMA innovation to the MMC set-up was the decentralized and participative system of governance set up through the collective responsibility of the local government units whose mayors were all members of the Council. The chairmanship was rotated among the Council members in six-month intervals to express shared and equitable leadership for all its members regardless of whether they were cities or municipalities and regardless of their financial position. The absence of a fixed tenure for the chairman inhibited long-term planning and implementation of programs and caused discontinuity in policy-formation. This highly decentralized approach led to

³⁹ *National Urban Development and Housing Framework, 1993-1998*, Housing and Urban Development Coordination Council, p.1.

⁴⁰ Santiago, Asteya. *Urban and Regional Planning in the Philippines*, p. 461.

numerous short-term projects that were initiated but eventually discontinued. In 1995, after four years of uneventful existence and plagued with a wide range of financial constraints, the MMA was replaced by another metropolitan governing body, the **Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA)**.⁴¹ In the past two decades, the management of the metropolis has, therefore, changed hands three times.

It is, indeed, ironic that all throughout Metro Manila's tumultuous history, the perpetual experimentation by different forms of government to create a more effective planning structure for directing metropolitan growth and providing basic services has been at the expense of its rational and planned development.

⁴¹ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metro Manila*, p.2.

III. THE EVOLVING TRENDS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Manila's growth and dominance was shaped by the convergence of geographic, economic, social and political factors in Philippine colonial history. Its eventual expansion into a modern metropolitan area is an outcome of consequences that influenced its urbanization process. This section will analyze in more detail the cumulative problems and development trends that continue to affect Metro Manila's contemporary urban landscape.

A. The Cycle of Migration

The origins of Metro Manila's current urban problems can be traced to the concentration of activities in Manila and the heavy migration to the city of the people from depressed areas. As indicated in the previous chapter, Spanish, and later, American colonial policies fostered the dependent development of the Philippine economy and shaped the structure of its social class and politics. These policies nurtured Manila's primacy by perpetuating rural underdevelopment and the concentration of wealth and economic activities in Manila and its surrounding areas.¹

As the colonial capital of the country, Manila was the center of trade, education, culture and socio-economic activities.² It served as a point of capital accumulation, its growth sustained at the expense of the rest of the country. As a result, continuous streams of migrants were "pushed" from the rural areas by the exploitative practices of the colonialists and the lack of economic opportunities in the countryside and were "pulled" to the city by the perceived prospects of jobs, education and improved living conditions. Continued imbalanced development even after the Second World War

¹ Serote, Ernesto. *The Socio-Spatial Structure of the Colonial Third World Country*, p. 9.

²Ocampo, Romeo. *Planning and Management of Metro Manila: Focus on Development and Conservation of the Inner City Area*, p. 1.

prompted the more ambitious and better-educated manpower of the rural areas to gravitate to Manila, thus, contributing substantially to its population growth.

In 1975, for instance, during Martial Law, the density of Metro Manila was over 7,500 persons/square kilometer while the average density of the country was 140 persons/square kilometer.

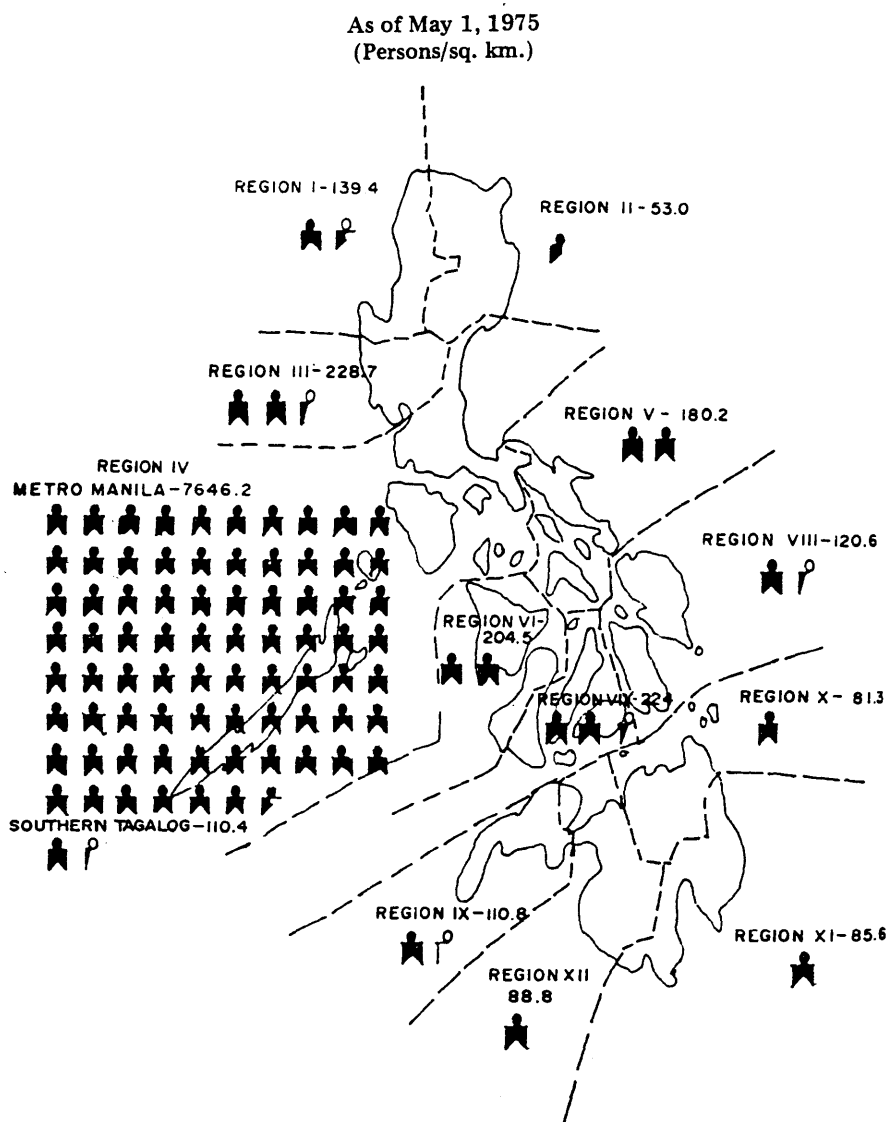


Figure III.1 Population Density By Region, Philippines (As of May 1, 1975)
Source: Republic of the Philippines, National Economic Development Authority, 1977 Philippine Statistics Yearbook, p. 34.

This unceasing rural-urban migration trend has persisted over the years and has very serious long-term repercussions in the overall development of the country.

Table III.A

Level of Urbanization, Urban Population, Share in Total Urban Population, and Average Annual Growth Rate for Metro Manila, 1903-1990

<i>Census Year</i>	<i>Level of Urbanization* (%)</i>	<i>Urban Population (in thousands)</i>	<i>Per Cent of Total Urban Population</i>	<i>Per Cent Change</i>
1903	76.9	256.7	25.7	-
1918	87.1	371.1	28.7	2.4
1939	90.3	903.3	26.2	4.6
1948	97.1	1,526.1	29.4	5.5
1960	98.1	2,426.5	30.0	4.2
1970	100.0	3,952.6	33.0	4.9
1980	100.0	5,927.1	31.9	4.0
1990	100.0	7,948.8	31.2	2.9

Source: *The Impact of Migration of Rural Areas in the Philippines*, National Urban Development and Housing Framework, 1993-1998.

* Level of urbanization is the proportion (percentage) of the population living in the urban places.

As the rural areas continue to lose their better educated population, the area's prospects for economic advancement remain relatively low. Migrants from these rural areas tend to have lower educational and technical skills compared with residents from the urban areas.³ Migrants to Metro Manila are generally not able to compete with the resident population in the metropolis' highly competitive job market for specialized services and technical skills. Consequently, they are often forced to reside in low-income neighborhoods and squatter settlements where the cost of living is within their meager means.⁴ Despite harsh conditions, people continue to trek to the big city. Their swelling number strains existing public services, intensifying the host of urban problems such as inadequate housing, public transport, traffic congestion, increased crime rates, etc.

A significant contributor to this enduring migration trend is the concentration of the best and most prestigious colleges and universities in Metro Manila. In 1990, 38% of the nation's universities were located within the metropolis⁵. This geographic centralization of higher educational institutions encourages the profusion of employment opportunities within the metropolitan area for professional, technical, and related work. In 1993, Metro Manila's labor force accounts for 58% of the nation's employable population⁶ and almost 71% of this engage in the service sector.⁷

In terms of industrial investments, Metro Manila has been greatly favored while the rest of the country's regions have not benefited accordingly. In 1993, 70% of all industries in the country are located within the metropolitan region.⁸ It accounts for over half of the country's total manufacturing and commercial output. It similarly dominates the country's cultural and communications industries.⁹

Metro Manila's dominance can also be measured by its contribution to the Philippine economy. In 1993, Metro Manila generated more than a third of the national

³ Ocampo, Romeo. *Planning and Management of Metro Manila: Focus on Development and Conservation of the Inner City Area*, p. 6.

⁴ *Shelter and Human Settlements. Philippine Report*, p. 23.

⁵ Data are from the Republic of the Philippines, Department of Education and Culture, Planning Service, Project Development and Evaluation Division.

⁶ Refers to the percent of the population that are aged 15 years and over.

⁷ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metropolitan Manila*. p. 8.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., p.7.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP).¹⁰ It is the only one of the country's fourteen regions considered to be fully urbanized. This means that it does not rely on the agricultural sector for its income but on the service and industrial sector. As the capital region drains manpower from both developed and underdeveloped regions, these manpower resources contribute to furthering Metro Manila's dominance in the national economy. Therefore, its economic dominance reinforces its growth. This pattern of urbanization reflects a vicious circle of uneven development in the Philippines.

At present, Metro Manila continues to be the fastest growing agglomeration in the country. It is geographically defined by eight cities and nine municipalities. It is one of the largest and most crowded metropolis in the Asia-Pacific Region and the 18th largest in the world.¹¹ Its current resident population is 8.6 million, 13% of the total population of the country and about 1/3 of the total urban population. Its land area is about 636 square kilometers which accounts for only 0.2% of the country's total land area (*slightly larger than Singapore*). It has a population density of over 13,400 persons per square kilometer, almost 60 times the national average. The Philippines' second largest city, Metro Cebu, has a population of only 1 million.

Within the next 20 years, it is forecasted that 5 million more people will reside in Metro Manila.¹² As the population grows, so will the pressures on the existing limited resources -- social and human services, finance, infrastructure, and the environment.

¹⁰ Ranjo, Mary Grace. *NCR Regional Development Plan, 1993-1998*, Ch.1.

¹¹ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metropolitan Manila*, p.7.

¹² *Development Framework Plan for Metro Manila:1996-2016*, Metro Manila Development Authority, p. 5.

B. The Crisis of Urban Growth

Control over urban land and its uses has been a major determining factor in the physical development of Metro Manila. Urban growth has largely been conducted by the private sector. Private ownership of large tracts of land all over country is not a rare phenomenon. This situation finds historical precedent in the land tenure system during the Spanish time and was continued by the Americans. The Americans did try to redistribute urban lands, but it was strictly a business proposition. Land was a commodity of trade subject to price speculation and indiscriminate use.

The problems of land utilization became increasingly apparent after the Second World War when Manila was rapidly becoming industrialized. The newly established government was still at its formative stage and was ill-equipped to deal with the burgeoning urban problems created by the waves of rural migrants. Technical, financial and political obstacles had deprived it of the opportunity to undertake land use planning and implementation within the context of a comprehensive urban plan. Thus, Manila's postwar growth was characterized by bargaining and compromises resulting in an organic and arbitrary pattern of urban land development.¹³ Manila's transformation into a metropolitan area proceeded in this haphazard and random manner, expanding in all directions to surrounding areas.

An outstanding characteristic of Manila is that, throughout its history, it has not stopped evolving. Its geographic spread has expanded from an eight-kilometer radius from the mouth of the Pasig River in the immediate post-war period to fourteen kilometers radius in 1985.¹⁴ In the 1990s, this spread has expanded to twenty kilometers.¹⁵

¹³ Ocampo, Romeo. *Planning and Management of Metro Manila: Focus on Development and Conservation of the Inner City Area*, p. 9.

¹⁴ Binay, Jejomar. *Contrast in Urban Planning*, p. 33.

¹⁵ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metro Manila*, p. 11.

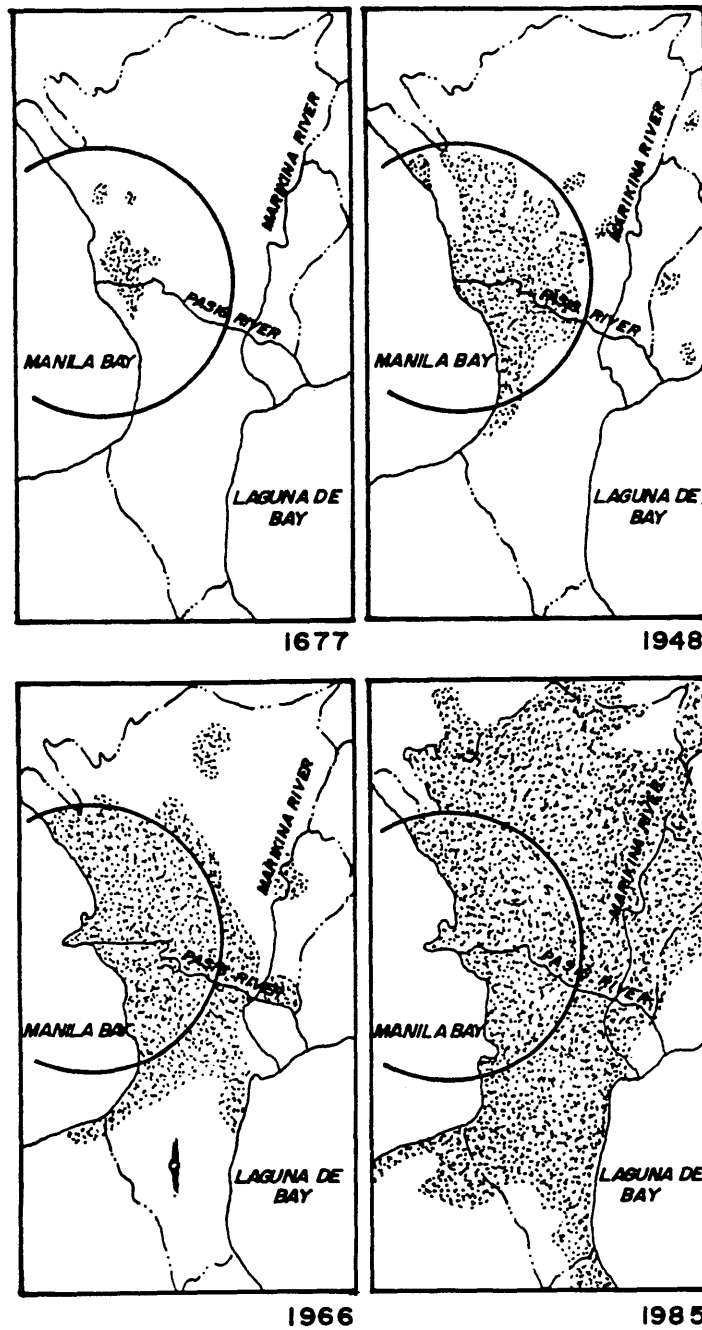


Figure III.2
Source:

Growth and Expansion of Metro Manila
Binay, Jejomar. *Contrasts in Urban Planning*, Philippine Planning Journal, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, October 1991, p. 34.

During the Martial Law Administration, the government sought to rationalize the physical growth of the metropolis by establishing the pattern for its road expansion. The metropolitan road network is composed on ten radial roads and six circumferential roads, but many of the road segments have not yet been constructed.¹⁶



Figure III.3 Present and Proposed Road Network of Metro Manila
 Source: *Metro Manila Urban Transportation Plan, 1993.*
 Department of Transportation and Communication.

¹⁶ *Development Framework Plan for Metro Manila, 1996-2016*, Metro Manila Development Authority, p. 12.

The metropolitan area can be subdivided into an inner core and an intermediate core. The developed inner core is heavily built up with a jumble of incompatible land uses. It is bounded by a circumferencial road known as C-4 or EDSA (Epifanio delos Santos Avenue). The intermediate core, on the other hand, is a physical transition from the developed inner core to the moderately urbanized area. It consists of predominantly uniform density residential development and other supporting uses. The intermediate core is bounded between C-4 and the projected C-6. Outside of C-6 is a directionless sprawl of communities, industrial and agricultural areas.¹⁷

A typical trend of metropolitan expansion is that it runs in a linear or ribbon pattern where development follows major roadways.¹⁸ Land uses along roadways have been changing over time in accordance with market demand and private sector decisions. However, these multiple, uncoordinated and piecemeal private decisions in the development of urban land have not necessarily consider the broader physical setting and the functional efficiency of metropolitan systems. The leniency of government in controlling urban development is clearly manifested in the poor location of many traffic generating developments.

EDSA, the main thoroughfare that cuts across the center of the metropolis is a prime example of the linear development pattern. This 12-lane highway serves as the most major link from the northern to the southern portions of the metropolis. It receives the bulk of the vehicular traffic from the radial roads. Residential, commercial and institutional uses of moderate density used to abut this highway.

In the last decade, several massive commercial centers have located along EDSA in the same manner that they have mushroomed along other major thoroughfares and road intersections.¹⁹ Because of substantial increases in roadside activities and the indiscriminate location of entrances and exits for vehicles and pedestrians, traffic volume along EDSA has greatly intensified.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁸ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metro Manila*. p.11.

¹⁹ *Development Framework Plan for Metro Manila: 1996-2016*, p. 13.

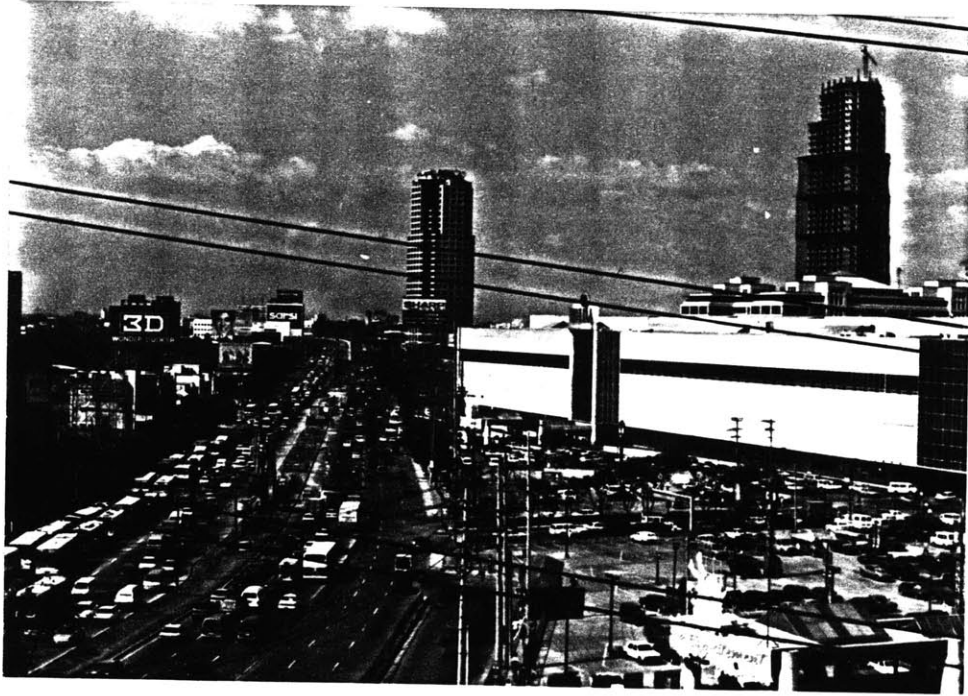


Figure III.4 Foreground: SM Megamall along EDSA
 Background: Twin Towers of the Robinson's Galleria Shopping Mall

Characteristically, solutions advanced to cope with the road congestion soon made matters only worse. During the Aquino Administration, the government began to construct numerous flyovers and highway overpasses at every major junction along EDSA to alleviate the traffic. These infrastructure improvements temporarily reduced congestion but did not reduce the number of trips generated and even encouraged the use of private vehicles. Without enforceable land use and zoning restrictions on roadside developments, more high-intensity structures have sprung up.²⁰ Now, congestion along EDSA is worse than ever.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

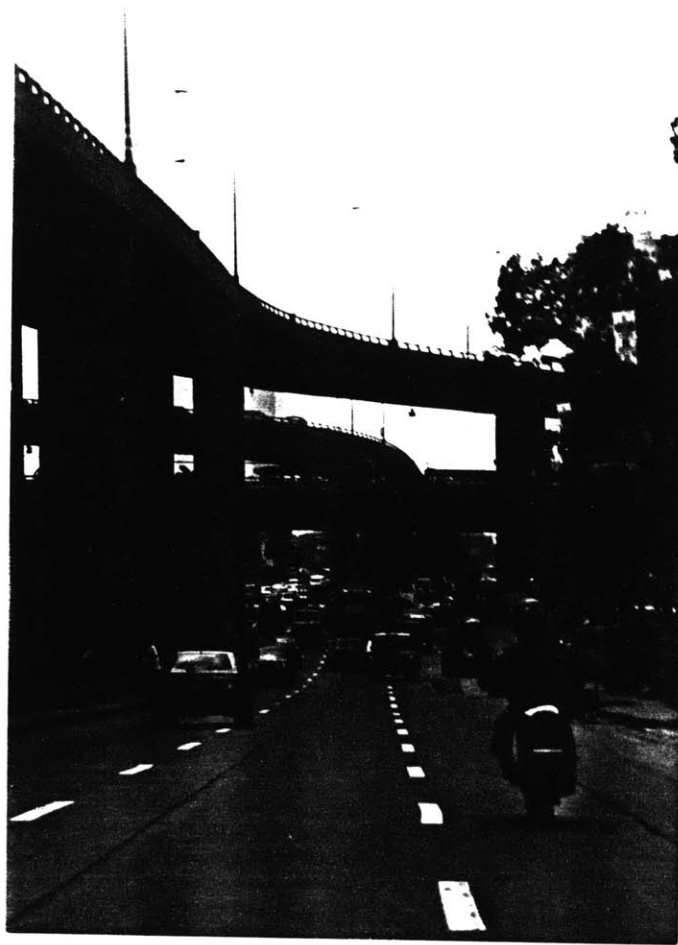


Figure III.5 Highway Overpasses along EDSA

In the last two years, metropolitan traffic jams have reached such paralyzing proportions that the government has had to implement drastic measures to limit the number of private vehicles on the roadways (*only cars with license plates ending in 1 or 2 can use the public roads on Monday, 3 or 4 on Tuesday, etc. during designated peak hours*). Average vehicle speeds in the metropolitan area have gone down to about 15 kilometers per hour.²¹

If government continues to be a reactionary participant and allow the private sector to initiate urban land development, the resulting metropolitan environment will be fragmented and unpredictable. Private decision-makers are rarely concerned with the fact that establishing a use at a particular location rigidly commits for a considerable length of time not just that piece of land but the whole area surrounding it. If this commitment turns out to be inappropriate, its social and economic costs have to be borne by the area so long as it endures it and even when it decides to rectify the initial mistake.



Figure III.6 Private Retail Establishments along EDSA

²¹ *Shelter and Human Settlements: Philippine Report, 1995*, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, p.27.

Land uses being highly interrelated in themselves and in relation to urban activities need to be allocated in right proportions and arranged and juxtaposed bearing in mind their multiple inter-linkages. *Ad hoc* land use decisions ignore this vital aspect and thus cause serious troubles and imbalances. Metro Manila's current urban landscape clearly reflects the accumulation of parochial market-driven decisions and compromises that have been made without the forward-looking tradition of city planning.

Another trend in Metro Manila's urban development is its rapid unguided expansion to outlying areas. During the postwar period, negative and low growth rates were occurring in the old inner core of the metropolis as it was approaching its capacity. The intermediate area, on the other hand, was experiencing increased population growth as more suburban residential communities for middle to high income markets were being developed by private real estate companies.²²

This pattern of private sector-initiated sprawl results to the irrational distribution of population vis-à-vis employment and other supporting land use activities. Suburban communities remain primarily "dormitory towns" with residents depending on the metropolitan core for jobs. A consequence of this population-employment imbalance is the worsening pattern of heavy and long cross movements between homes and workplaces.²³

Over the years, the intermediate core has become increasingly built up and the residential sprawl has now extended beyond the metropolitan boundaries. Low-cost housing projects have sprung up in the adjacent provinces outside Metro Manila.²⁴ Private developers have been purchasing large tracts of agricultural lands along regional roadways and developing them as exclusive gated communities.

²² Ocampo, Romeo. *Planning and Management of Metro Manila: Focus on Development and Conservation of the Inner City Area*, p. 8.

²³ *Shelter and Human Settlements: Philippine Report, 1995*, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, p.43.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

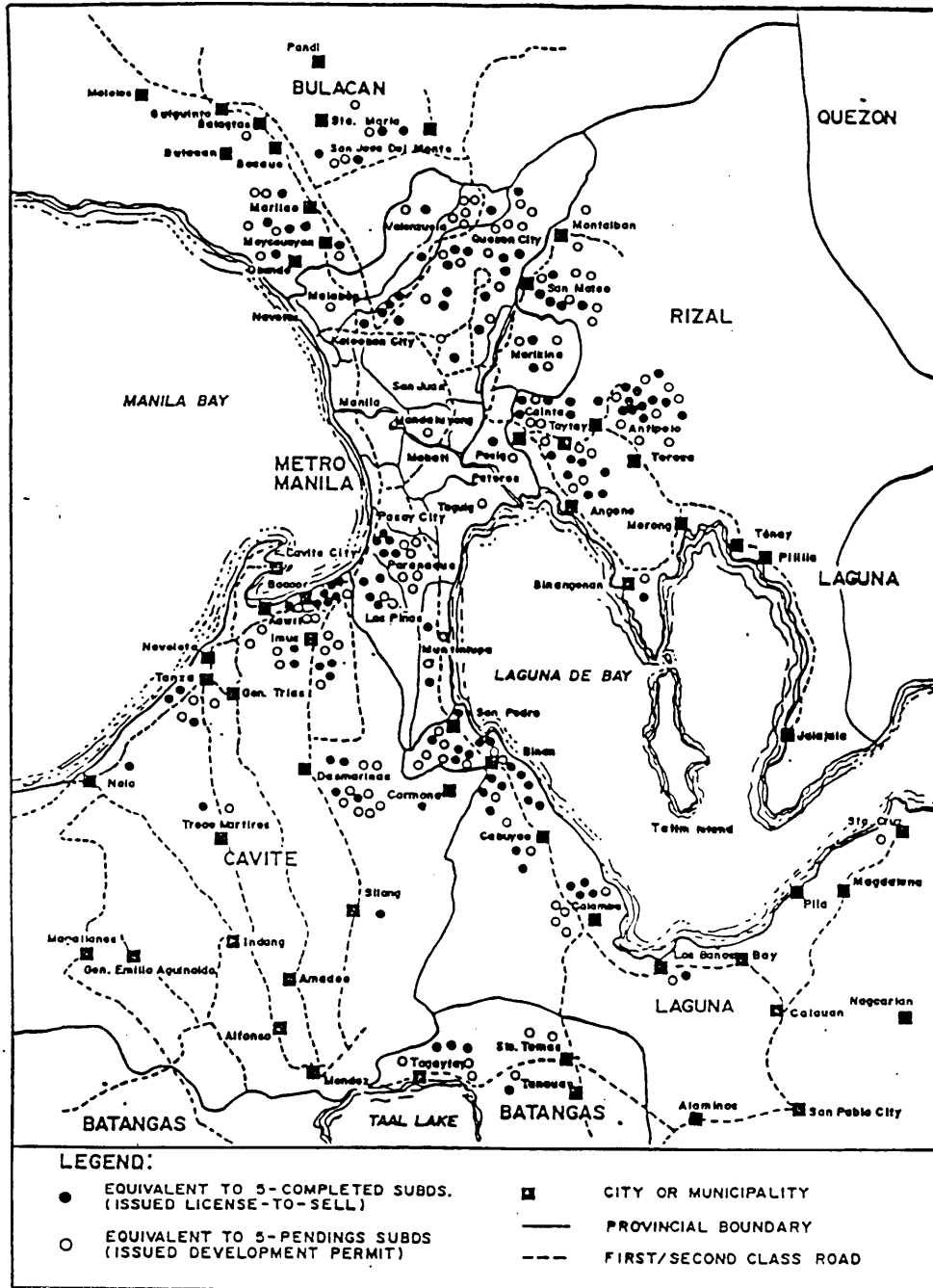


Figure III.7 Location of New and Pending Residential Subdivisions within Metro Manila and its Environs, January 1990.
 Source: *Shelter and Human Settlements, Philippine Report*, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, 1995.

On-going developments such as these have unwanted consequences. First, they contribute further to inefficient land use patterns in the absence of enforceable land use and zoning plans. Second, this “leap-frog” expansion trend brings about development in outer regions that are not yet prepared to accommodate substantial increases in density. For instance, it can easily be predicted that traffic conditions along these narrow regional roads will worsen in the coming years as provincial development intensifies.

Simultaneously with the outward expansion in all directions, Metro Manila continues to experience in-filling and land use changes in its main urban areas. The unrestrained construction of high-rise condominiums, commercial and office buildings on previously low to moderate density sites without the adequate adjustments in supporting infrastructure causes strains in existing services. Open spaces, already inadequate both in quantity and distribution, are fast giving way to more intensive uses.

Metro Manila’s land development practices are far from being conducive to the creation of better physical environments. Without a longer term vision within which better planning and stricter enforcement of development policies could take place, future growth and expansion will continue as in the past, with only limited control over the nature and extent of development. Market forces and the availability of developable lands will remain the main determining forces for future growth. Existing developed urban areas will generally display increases in population densities. Adjoining provincial areas and outlying areas will continue to experience the effects of urban sprawl with new residential, commercial, and industrial development continuing to mushroom in areas previously devoted to low intensity agricultural land uses. Serious environment stress, intractable one-way traffic congestion, loss of irreplaceable open space, and long commutes will continue to degenerate the living conditions in the suburbs. The need for comprehensive and effective policies on urban land is dictated not only by the burgeoning urban problems but also by the physical and socio-economic benefits that arise from proper planning policies affecting the use, management and disposal of land.

C. Mobility within the Metropolis

A major contributing factor in the worsening road congestion in Metro Manila is the increasing number of motor vehicles on metropolitan roadways. The metropolis currently accounts for 48% of the total vehicle registration nationwide yet only 2% of the entire national road network is concentrated within this region.

Despite the large urban population, road-based vehicles remain the primary mode of transportation. The total number of person-trips per day in Metro Manila is currently estimated to be close to 20 million. It is served by over 1.1 million vehicles. Private vehicles which account for 75% of the total number of vehicles on the roadways carry only 30% of the passenger transport demand. Its average occupancy is less than 2 persons per vehicle. Public transport systems, consisting mainly of buses, taxis and jeepneys, serve about 68% of the passenger transport demand. These public utility vehicles are owned and operated by the private sector.



Figure III.8 Private buses servicing Farmer's Shopping Mall along EDSA

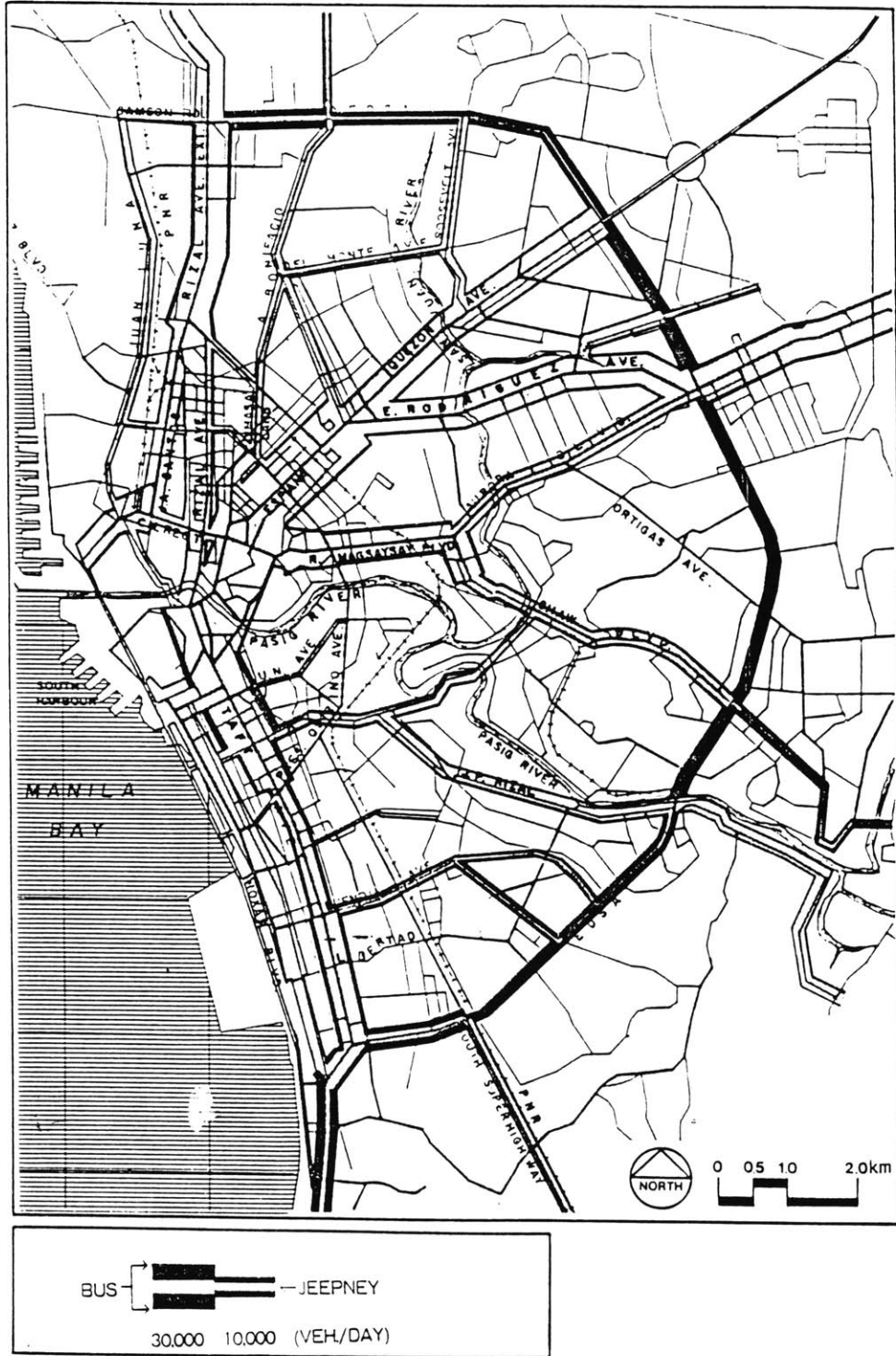


Figure III.9 Bus and Jeepney Vehicular Traffic Flow in Major Roads, 1990
 Source: Updated Traffic and Transport Management Plan, 1993
 Department of Transportation and Communication

The light rail transit (LRT) system serves only 2% of the commuting population.²⁵ Immediate and long-term plans are being made to remedy the shortage and inefficiency of the current public transport services. Major investments are planned for more rail-based mass transport systems, notably the LRT within the metropolis and commuter rail to outer regions.²⁶

Although the majority of the population rely on public transit for mobility, support services for pedestrians and commuters are extremely inadequate. In the government's analysis for traffic planning and management, it is interesting to note that the function of the roads is the sole determinant of their operational classification.²⁷ Other determinants such as land uses abutting the road and pedestrian activity are not being considered. Needless to say, the pedestrian facilities are generally poor. There has not been a comprehensive effort to coordinate pedestrian movements between private developments. Transit passengers, pedestrians, vendors and hawkers encroaching the roadways are a common sight. This can be traced to the fact that sidewalks are non-existent, too narrow or impassable. The heavy mixture of vehicles and pedestrians on the roads leads to other related issues associated with traffic congestion such as traffic safety, diminished vehicular speed, and the resulting urban environment.



Figure III.10 Lack of Pedestrian Amenities along EDSA

²⁵ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metro Manila*, p. 28.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.30.

²⁷ Camarillo, Ernesto. *Seminar on Urban Transport Integration*, Department of Transportation and Communication, November 1993.

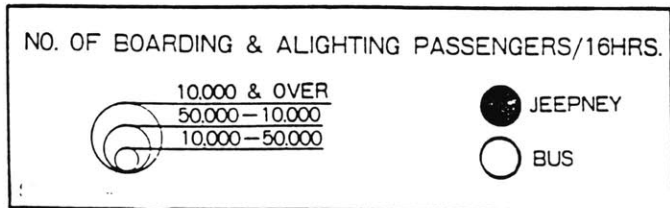
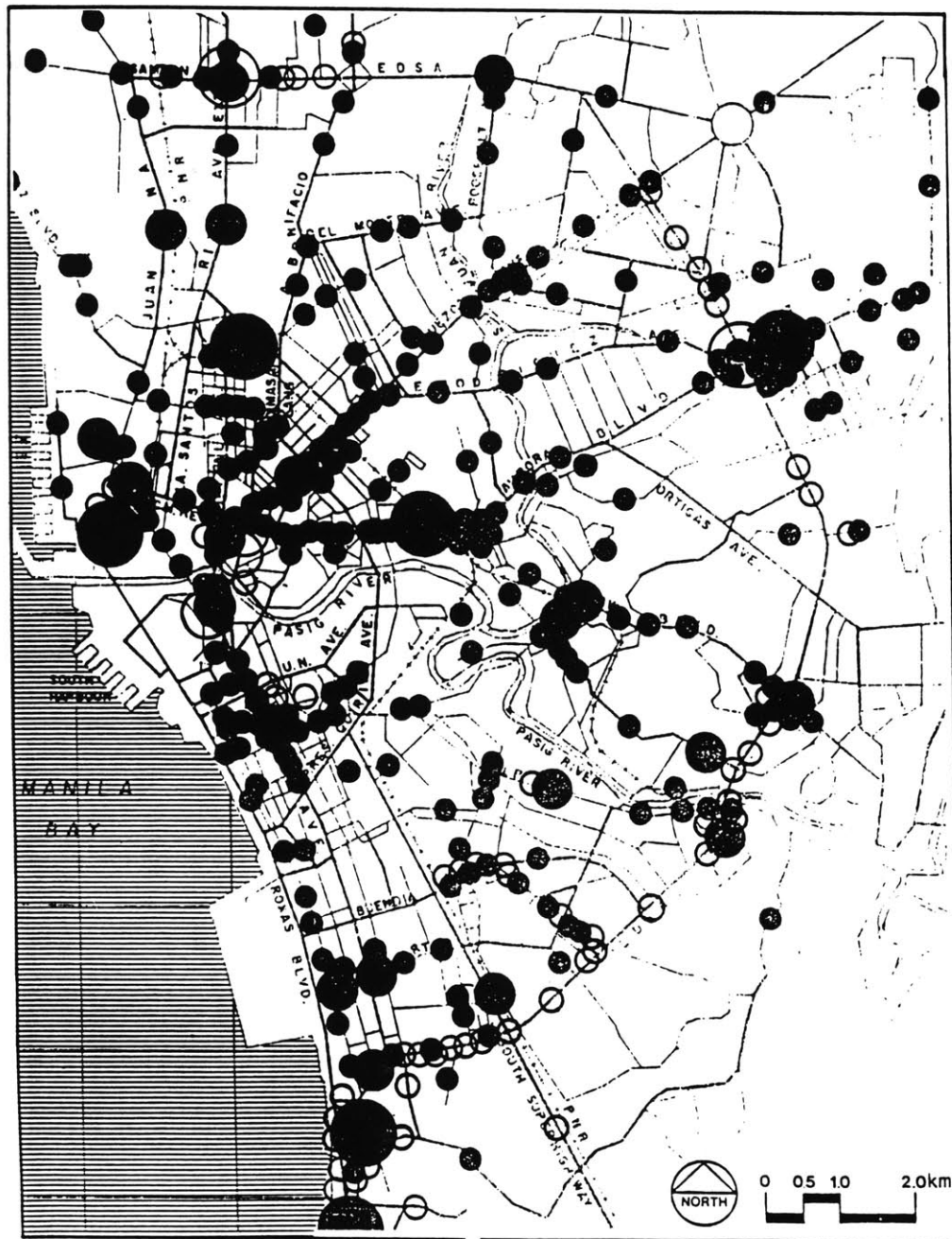


Figure III.11 Multiple boarding and alighting points of public utility vehicles along roadways result to the slow pace of vehicular traffic, 1990.

Source: *Updated Traffic and Transport Management Plan, 1993*
Department of Transportation and Communication.

With regard to air pollution, Metro Manila is considered as “one of the more polluted urban areas in the world.” Recent findings revealed that Metro Manila’s air pollution is two to three times above the World Health Organization’s Air Quality Standard. About 60 % of air pollution is attributed to road-based vehicles while 40 % is generated by the industrial sector.²⁸

Streets have become environmentally critical areas because the air that is breathed in along roadways is heavily polluted. Respiratory ailments in Metro Manila remain high. 33% of jeepney drivers suffered from pulmonary diseases as against 15% of drivers of air conditioned buses.²⁹

²⁸ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metro Manila*, p. 15.

²⁹ Ibid.

D. A City of Enclaves

An evident outcome of the urbanization process under colonial rule was the emergence of a dual society. The economic base of the traditional elite was landownership. The bulk of the population were laborers. The dominance of the landed elite in postwar government positions prevented the implementation of serious land reform or redistribution measures that could have restructured the imbalanced land ownership system. Thus, land properties remained in the hands of a minority of the population. Urban settlement patterns that developed after the Second World War reflected the extreme variations in the quality of life between the different income groups.

Low density, modern exclusive subdivisions were developed to cater to the higher income classes. Living standards in these residential enclaves are comparable to Western suburban living. These are characterized by spacious dwellings with multi-car garages, modern amenities, well-tended lawns and often with swimming pools. The subdivisions have privately paved roads, parks and recreational facilities, adequate water supply, sewer and drainage facilities all enclosed within guarded perimeter walls.



Figure III.12 : Main Entrance to a Private Subdivision in Tagaytay City

In contrast to these private enclaves are the crowded squatter settlements where many of the rural migrants live. Postwar difficulties led to the initial tolerance of urban slums in the city of Manila. Its unmaintained and deteriorating structures brought about extreme congestion and urban blight in many of its districts. The squatters occupied crowded, dilapidated apartments or shanties near the city's marketplaces and business districts, near factories or warehouses, along railroad tracks and *esteros* (drainage canals), and along the seashores close to the piers.³⁰ Although they were most dependent on public services, they were least provided for. Many dwellings lacked basic amenities such as piped water, toilets, sewers and drainage facilities and were frequently only accessible from the main roads through a network of alleys or catwalks.

The inability of the postwar government to deal with the worsening conditions resulted to the spillover of Manila's squatter problems to adjoining areas. As property values depressed due to the infiltration of squatters to other areas, public demand for slum clearance grew. But the squatters got politically organized and became important sources of electoral support for local politicians. Thus, the government's attempts at squatter eviction and relocation were frustrated. Legislation was obtained to compel the sale and subdivision of many public lands to them. Numerous mass-produced industrial-type housing projects on tiny lots were built on public lands. These well-intentioned laws served only to encourage squatter encroachment on public properties.³¹



Figure III.13 Squatter Shanty along Drainage Canal and Low-Cost Housing Project

³⁰ Ocampo, Romeo. *Planning and Management of Metro Manila: Focus on Development and Conservation of the Inner City Area*, p. 11.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

These highly visible differences in the forms of urban land development within the metropolis are not only limited to residential uses. There are numerous examples of independent projects large enough (*450 hectares or more*) to be considered new towns or cities, many of them developed by private capital and initiative. In fact, real estate development continues to be the most speculative and opportunistic industry in the Philippine economy.

The City of Makati is an example of a private city enclave. Developed by a landed family of Spanish descent who owned more than half of the land *area (900 hectares)*, Makati was designed as a planned unit development.³² Guided by a comprehensive plan that imposed strict regulations on its building and land development, Makati has emerged as a carefully laid out modern city with integrated upper-class residential, commercial and industrial uses. Its development is based on the concept of land stewardship rather than on private property. 40% of its land area is devoted to public parks and open spaces.³³ Commercial parking is integrated. Buildings define streets. Land is subject to leasehold agreements for predetermined periods. On-going developments continue to be managed by the family's own private real estate firm. Makati now has the most expensive real estate in the country.



Figure III.14 The Privately Planned City of Makati

³² Binay, Jejomar. *Contrasts in Urban Planning*, Philippine Planning Journal, Vol. XXIII, October 1991, p. 35.

³³ Santiago, Asteya. *Urban and Regional Planning in the Philippines*, p. 506.

It is rather unfortunate that places like Makati are more the exception rather than the rule. The lack of government leadership in regulating urban land development has left it to the private sector and market-demand forces to determine the nature and quality of the metropolitan landscape. Independent private land use decisions do not often consider the social consequences of piecemeal development. The resulting urban environment is an agglomeration of isolated pods with very little physical and psychological connectivity with each other.

The whole practice of architecture in the Philippines has been based on the design of individual structures or complexes for private clients. Projects are site specific, with little regard for the overall functional or aesthetic quality of the broader social setting.

E. The Environmental Dilemma

Residential land uses are unique in that they tend to be the most vulnerable to ecological degradation yet they oftentimes are directly and indirectly responsible for generating most of its causes. Proximity to facilities and sources of livelihood and easy access to transportation remain the vital criteria for determining locations for the expanding needs of the metropolis for residential and supporting land uses. These locational parameters, by themselves, without regard to environmental concerns, produce irrational patterns of growth. The typical linear pattern of development along transportation routes is extremely inefficient because it result in higher costs in terms of operating and maintaining utilities that are introduced to service the emerging communities. They unnecessarily extend the areas to be serviced and put strong pressure on the government to provide more access roads than would be required for more compact and concentrated developments.

The “leap frog” pattern where settlements choose not to locate in places with already established communities also poses serious environmental problems. New settlements are located or expanded in areas that generally suffer from the lack of available or planned services, facilities and utilities.

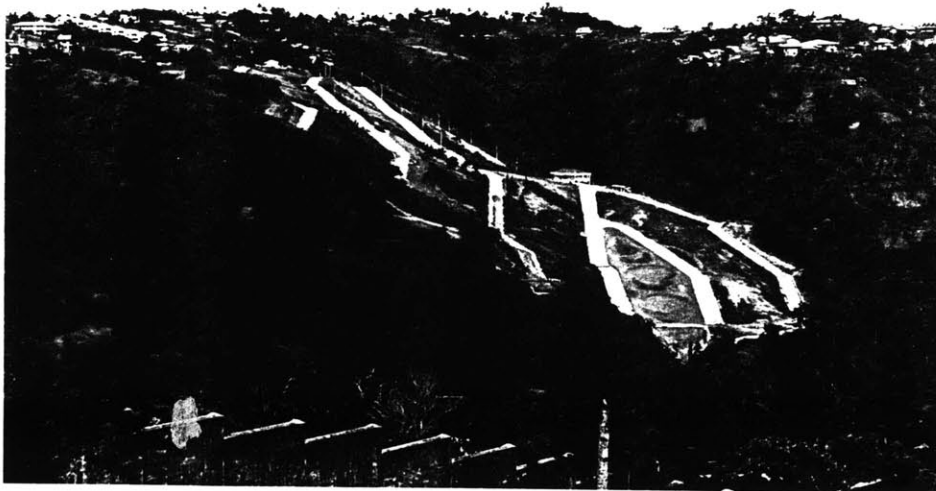


Figure III.15 Leap-Frog Pattern of Residential Development, Tagaytay City

Environmental problems can inevitably arise including health and sanitation problems due to inadequate or untreated water supply, poor drainage, improper garbage disposal, and chaotic and incompatible mix of land uses. There is also an increase risk of land, air, and water pollution in these areas.

Another consequence of undirected urban sprawl is the indiscriminate development of valuable lands suitable for agriculture, for preservation or conservation which are prematurely converted to urban uses. This causes the permanent loss of precious land resources which are part of the environmental ecosystem.

These uncontrolled expansion trends pose potential damage to natural ecological systems. An example of the serious environmental impacts of unplanned growth is the rapid depletion of the water supply in suburban communities along the metropolitan periphery. The water supply of residents in Metro Manila is sourced from two major sources, piped surface water and ground water. The government presently delivers only 55% of the needed metropolitan supply. In areas that are not yet reached by the pipelines, e.g., in peripheral suburban housing subdivisions, deep wells are the main source of water supply.

Fifteen years ago, the water table from which ground water was extracted was at five meters below the sea level. Due to over-extraction, it has been lowered to more than one hundred meters down, resulting in salt water intrusion.³⁴ Pollution from saline intrusion has rendered non-potable the ground water in many areas along the periphery. It is feared that the problems of diminishing ground water resources and saline intrusion will further worsen in the immediate future as urban development intensifies.

Another related environmental problem in Metro Manila is water pollution. This stems from the fact that over 80% of the metropolis remains unserved by a sewerage system.³⁵ Although 85% of solid wastes are effectively collected daily, the remaining 15% ends up in major waterways. Moreover, only 15% of Metro Manila's households are connected to domestic sewerage systems. The rest, including private suburban developments, rely on the use of septic tanks.

³⁴ Oreta, Prospero. *Urban Management in Megacities: The Case of Metro Manila*, p.15.

³⁵ Ibid.. p. 17.

As more intense urbanization occurs in the metropolitan area, the inevitable environmental-related problems such as pollution and waste management, water depletion, traffic congestion, and the rapid loss of agricultural lands become more intractable. Unless sooner addressed, these physical conditions will encroach and intensify in those potentially disaster-prone and environmentally constrained areas. High pollution levels may deter further growth by making the metropolitan area an unattractive place to live and do business in.

IV. A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE METROPOLIS

Recent events in Philippine history have created startling changes in the country's territorial development. Propelled by the accelerated economic growth within the Asia-Pacific Region, there has been a tremendous surge of foreign and local capital into the nation's economy. These economic gains are attributed to the present government's success in achieving political stability and in executing sweeping economic reforms such as trade liberalization, deregulation, privatization and demonopolization.

The continuous flow of investments has triggered a massive construction boom in Metro Manila as the capital region which is significantly altering much of the existing urban landscape. Undeveloped urban lands are being in-filled. Residential communities, commercial establishments and industries are rapidly developing in outlying areas. Urban land values have soared causing development to go on an upward trend. The construction of skyscrapers (*In 1995, over a hundred 20+ story buildings being built at one time*) has drastically transformed the skylines of many business districts and significantly increased densities in these areas. After decades of political instability and economic hardships, this private sector driven "urban renewal" phenomenon serves as a welcome indication that the country is, indeed, on the road towards national recovery.

However, accelerated economic development and phenomenal urbanization rates have been leading to a rapid transformation of urban land, pushing the metropolis into infrastructure bottlenecks. Problems such as population concentration, road congestion, air pollution, shortage of basic services, environmental degradation and depletion of open spaces have been hounding the metropolis for quite a while but never as severe as now. Without enforceable government development controls in place, failure to manage this growth and the accompanying pressures on the limited resources would only lead to urban chaos and decay and inevitably eat away the foundations of economic and political stability.

In the coming years, the country is likely to face further accelerated development as it seeks to join the newly industrialized countries at the turn of the century. As Metro Manila's population grows and its urban face changes, there is that common perception

that growth may not be entirely desirable if the ills it creates are not effectively addressed. It is not in the public nor private sectors' interests to see the urban environment deteriorated beyond tolerable levels. But with so many people and so little planning, the resounding question is -- what does the future hold Metro Manila?

In 1995, the concern of the national government over the direction of urban growth and development in the capital region brought about the creation of the **Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA)**. It is tasked not only to manage metro-wide operations but also to provide a concrete vision that would guide the future physical development of the metropolis. Its goal is the creation of a long-term (1996-2016) Physical Development Framework Plan for Metro Manila in accordance with the theme, "Towards a Humane World-Class Metropolis." This draws inspiration from the challenge by President Ramos to envision Metro Manila beyond its role as the national capital but also as a premier hub and international gateway to Asia and the Pacific.

Enacted in Congress, MMDA has been vested with broader and more comprehensive powers than its predecessors. It has been granted implementation functions and not just coordinating powers. Other structural innovations include the granting of a more or less permanent term for its Chairman (*rather than having the Chairmanship rotate among the members on six-month intervals*). The officials of the MMDA are the various mayors of the local government units.

The MMDA has moved to institutionalize development planning as a primary function in order to make regulations more effective and to support future planned developments. This bold approach by government aims to strengthen the role of physical planning and growth management in shaping the future of the metropolis.

It is the MMDA's mandate to ensure that the development of Metro Manila, now and in the future, is prudently and efficiently managed. Planning will be used as a tool for development management. Such management is focused on issues at the broader metropolitan level over and above the constituency-oriented priorities of the local governments. This formidable task can only be achieved if political will and commitment to cooperative planning at all levels of governance in Metro Manila is

realized. The usual temptations to resort to expediency or short-term solutions which inevitably compound long-term problems has to be avoided. All these issues present a unique challenge to all sectors who stand to gain from a well-planned and well-managed humane, livable and economically vibrant metropolis.

Viewed from the long history of ineffectual urban planning practices in the Philippines, The MMDA's success over previous planning agencies can only be determined in time. The vision to evolve the National Capital Region as a globally-competitive, sustainable and planned community where urban residents enjoy a better quality of life through access to essential services and facilities and economic opportunities opportunities has been established. The challenge now is in trying to translate this vision into development strategies and policies.

V. REDIRECTING THE GROWTH OF THE METROPOLITAN LANDSCAPE

Metro Manila's worsening urban conditions is a consequence of its continued dominance and primacy over all the regions in the Philippines. This characteristic concentration of population and economic activity in one or a few large cities is typical of many Asian urban systems. In the whole of Asia and Southeast Asia, for instance, Thailand has the highest percentage with 58% of its urban population residing in Bangkok. The Philippines is second with 31.9%.

Table V.A
URBAN PRIMACY
Percentage of Urban Population Residing in Urban Agglomerations
(with 1 million + residents in 1990)

Subregion/country/City	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Southeast Asia						
Jakarta, Indonesia	19.9	19.8	19.1	17.9	16.4	15.9
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	16.7	16.7	15.4	19.4	22.2	23.4
Metro Manila, Phils.	27.1	27.2	28.6	33.0	31.9	31.2
Bangkok, Thailand	64.9	65.1	65.5	58.7	56.8	54.7
Ho Chi Minh, Viet Nam	24.9	25.9	25.6	26.4	22.2	18.3

Source: World Urbanization Prospects (1990)
Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries, Asian Development Bank, 1992.

Various governments have come up with spatial policy goals aimed at slowing or reversing the tendency towards urban concentration or primacy. Programs have been formulated to spur development of alternate urban growth centers as well as rural development programs to discourage rural out-migration. Korea has Saenmaul Undong to control the growth of Seoul, Indonesia adapts a transmigration program to lessen the imbalance between Java and the other islands, Malaysia intends to equalize regional development through their Bumiputra policy and Thailand's employs such measures as industrial dispersal, promotion of regional growth centers and development of the eastern seaboard to limit the growth of Bangkok.

Regional Context

Until recently, urban development in the Philippines has largely progressed without a unifying focus. Urban centers developed independently, with little regard to national development. However, the increasing emphasis on global-competitiveness in the world economy has created a need for more integration and cooperation between regions in the country.

Metro Manila's dominance over other regions, however, remains unchallenged. It has a vast pool of highly developed and skilled urban labor force and a huge share of the financial, educational, commercial and industrial infrastructure of the country. But its growth has to be properly managed in order to derive the benefits from its dominant economic role and prevent the further deterioration of its metropolitan landscape. A controlled development scheme for the metropolis should be accompanied with a program for dispersing development to other regions of the country. Therefore, long-range development plans should view the Philippines beyond Metro Manila.

The concept of regional growth centers and medium-size cities are currently being explored to stem the economic dominance of Metro Manila. Within the island of Luzon, national economic development studies have already identified potential

secondary economic enclaves that could serve to decongest activities from the capital region. Subic Bay and Clark Air Base (*US military bases located north of Metro Manila*) are promising developmental opportunities that could open up areas outside the metropolis to urban-related activities. But economic plans have to be accompanied by physical framework plans so as not to repeat the mistakes of unplanned urbanization in Metro Manila. Economic growth should also be encouraged in other urban areas in the country such as Metro Cebu in the Visayas, Metro Davao in Mindanao and Metro Baguio in Northern Luzon.

Metropolitan Context

In the last decade, projects have been carried out independent of one another without an integrated framework for urban growth. The absence of long-range planning resulted to the implementation of urban and infrastructure projects that were mere remedies to existing deficiencies. The failure of government to anticipate and plan for the needs of Metro Manila is exemplified in the inadequacy of transportation networks, water supply and other basic services.

Role of the MMDA

In creating a Physical Framework Plan for Metro Manila, the MMDA should strive to achieve a more rational metro-wide development. This plan should indicate long-range general land uses and major transportation networks that will encourage a more balanced distribution of the population. This plan would serve as a guide for public and private investments and for the provision of future infrastructure services.

The magnitude of the problems of Metro Manila necessitate not just the creation of regulatory measures such as zoning and land use but deliberate action strategies to effectuate rational development. . Government regulations should be more promotive rather than restrictive. This means purposely directing development towards areas that will be able to sustain them based on their carrying capacities.

Specialized policies can be implemented in specific target zones so as to bring about preferred patterns of urban development according to the principles of sustainability and balanced development. An analysis of existing resources and the probable opportunities and constraints for growth in certain areas is needed in order to identify areas for growth and prepare a strategic physical framework plan

The objectives of the plan are to enhance and even-up development concentration in areas that are highly congested and in areas that are lacking in development, to initiate development in underdeveloped areas which are feasible for urban development, to ensure that urban developments are properly founded on appropriate infrastructure facilities and basic services, and to ensure environmentally conscious urban development especially in fragile areas.

For instance, in highly built-up areas where physical developments vis-à-vis population density have reached maximum levels and that additional land uses will result in negative effects, further development should be deterred in order not to put additional pressures on existing amenities and infrastructure support facilities. These areas, mainly in the inner core, tend to be the old, deteriorating structures and facilities. They should either undergo regeneration, redevelopment or preservation.

Regenerative activities are those which modify existing structures in such a way that they are better used. Examples are buildings that could be architecturally changed or remodeled without having to destroy their basic foundations. The objective of regeneration is to maximize the use of existing structures. Redevelopmental activities call for total change in existing structures which may result in corresponding changes in their uses. This involves building more appropriate or conforming structures in specific areas. The preservative activities are meant to highlight the cultural or historic

significance of unique structures or places. The walled city of *Intramuros*, for instance, and old Roman Catholic churches are historically valuable and should be preserved.

There is an urgent need to diffuse business activity from central locations by strengthening secondary business and commercial, especially in suburban areas within the intermediate core. This would minimize the travel distance between residences and workplaces and commercial establishments. A metropolitan population of almost nine million would easily be able to support multiple growth centers.

In ecologically sensitive areas, special types of development are needed to ensure sustainability and prevent adverse effects of pollution.

Short term actions programs to target the immediate urban conditions should have long-term focus towards balanced development. They should allow for consistent testing at different stages and controlled by performance standards to ensure that they are in accordance with the overall guiding Physical Framework Plan for metro-wide development.

Within the metropolis, there is a need to explore the possibilities of utilizing mass transits systems as the more efficient mode of transport over road-based systems. With less reliance on road-based vehicles, air pollution will also be reduced. Investments in mass transit systems should be prioritized over and above more highway projects. Effectively planning for transit infrastructure could serve to rectify the imbalanced urbanization within the metropolis by supporting the development of intermediate-size and secondary cities to ease the pressures from the central areas. The goal is to rationalize these transport systems to support more balance population/employment relationships. The ideal outcome is a network of carefully planned transport infrastructure as well as mass transport utilities integrated with proper land use patterns to ensure unhampered movement of people and goods within and outside the metropolis. Standards for pedestrian amenities should also be improved.

The most important policy for Metro Manila at the present stage is the acquisition of the right-of-way for the future railway networks and enough space for the transfer between transport modes and the control and coordination of land use considering future

transportation systems and demand. Therefore, the long-term transportation master plan and the strict control of land use are essential.

Role of the Local Government Units

Under the Marcos administration, The MMC had prepared land use surveys to document the distribution of the land uses for each local government but since then, these plans have not been updated. The local government units should take upon the task of updating these plans as a basis for development plans.

The local government units should be responsible for the creation of long-range land use and development plans for their specific jurisdictions in accordance with the broader plan for metropolitan-wide land uses of the MMDA. This direct participation of the local government units in planning should be encouraged to strengthen public interest in the plans and to ensure that these would generate the necessary degree of commitment needed for their implementation. The preparation of action strategies to implement these local plans should also be the responsibility of the local government units as they are directly involved with the development issues.

Private Sector Participation

In the last decade, the private sector's continued dominance in urban development is clearly visible in the numerous planned unit developments, industrial estates, residential subdivisions, shopping centers, etc. that are being constructed. However, such projects have been undertaken independently without explicitly linking them to urban development objectives. Government has not provided a venue for the integration of the private sector in the overall development process of the metropolis.

The private sector's involvement and initiative in planning and development activities should be encouraged by institutionalizing them as participants in the planning process.

There is also a need for more studies on citizen participation in the government decision-making process by improving citizen access to policy-making and providing popular feedback on the implementation of urban plans and policies. The public should be consulted in the formulation of programs and policies that directly affect them.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, this study has shown that Metro Manila's continued primacy and its attendant problems are the cumulative consequences of colonial development. Manila's historic role as the national capital encouraged its economic dominance as trade, education and cultural center. Manila's creation and growth was externally determined rather than the result of an evolution of socio-economic and political forces. Spanish, and later, American colonial policies nurtured Manila's urbanization, shaped Philippine economic development, social class formation and politics. The dependent economy developed as a reflection of the country's role as supplier of agricultural products and raw materials for European and American markets, which were exported mainly from the port of Manila. The relationship of Manila with the rest of the regions of the country was established. Social class formation was determined by the land tenure system which gave rise to a dual society of landlords and landless laborers. Economic and political power became concentrated in the traditional landed elite whose interest lay in the continuation of the country's dependent conditions even after political independence had been gained. The emphasis on local autonomy in legislation prevented economic and development reforms for Metro Manila and the country as a whole. Rapid urbanization was, to a large extent, due to in-migration from the rural areas which remained relatively stagnant while the city of Manila prospered. Rural to urban migration accelerated following the Second World War due to import-based industrialization. The rapid population growth taxed the capacity of local governments to provide basic services. Physical land use planning was not given priority in policy-making due to financial and technical constraints, public indifference, political apathy and the adherence to the concept of private property. Market forces and independent private sector decisions determined the form of the urban landscape which resulted to haphazard, scatter and sprawl patterns of land development. This led to many urban problems such as congestion, chaotic land uses and environmental degradation. Solutions to Metro Manila's problems were piecemeal and uncoordinated. As the urban conditions

deteriorated and transcended local boundaries, it was evident that an integrated solution to Metro Manila's problems required intervention by the national government.

The Martial Law government provided the opportunity for national reform and reorganization. The creation of the Metro Manila Commission (MMC) represented an attempt by government to provide metro-wide services as well as to plan for the growth of the metropolis. Its initiatives, particularly on structural planning, collection of data and land use surveys, were clear demonstrations of the government's serious intent to rationalize the development of the country. However, inadequacies in the administration thwarted efforts at implementing planned urban growth. Subsequent changes in the government structure did not allow for much long-range physical planning.

The establishment of democracy during the last decade has brought about tremendous economic and physical growth to the metropolis but the sustainability of such growth has become questionable given the many problems associated with it such as urban congestion, poor infrastructure and utilities, pollution, etc. The worsening urban condition despite economic growth is due to the lack of an overall development policy and framework to guide and gear public and private sector investments towards a more focused and rational urban development. The vision to evolve the metropolis into a humane and international metropolis is an attempt to remedy the lack of a forward-looking tradition in the Philippines. By having this concrete physical vision, efforts can now be channeled towards the attainment of national and local goals towards more planned and sustainable development. The challenge lies in exploring possible prospects for urban development towards the attainment of the metropolitan vision grounded on a firm understanding of the urbanization process.

Appendix A

GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS AT CENTRALIZED REFORM

(This section explains why the government structure was unable to plan and manage the orderly growth of postwar Manila.)

In 1946, the **National Urban Planning Commission (NUPC)**, the first postwar centralized planning body, was created by the newly inaugurated democratic government for the reconstruction of cities and towns destroyed during the Second World War. It was tasked to formulate general plans, zoning and subdivision regulations that focused on long term urban development.

A specific planning body, the **Capital City Planning Commission (CCPC)**, was also formed to resume the master planning of Quezon City and which was interrupted by the war. Beset by other pressing issues and problems during the postwar era such as the economic growth and population pressures, the national government did not give priority to planned urban development and thus, many of the recommendations of the planning commissions remained unheeded.

In 1950, the national government abolished the NUPC and the CCPC and replaced them with the **National Planning Commission (NPC)**. This act integrated all regional and urban planning activities into one single government agency. Four years after its establishment, the NPC produced the Master Plan for the City of Manila which was more of a descriptive documentation of the situation of the city rather than an implementable plan.¹ By this time, much of the city had already been resettled under private auspices. The Manila Plan was never implemented. Manila's growth continued to proceed in a *laissez-faire* manner, based on market-driven and uncoordinated, private decisions.

In its 25 years of existence, the NPC had little to show except for some insignificant plans of a few Philippine cities, many of which were either unimplemented or unimplementable. Most of these plans were little more than sketches for main thoroughfares and proposed land uses and they were not formally approved by city authorities and therefore only treated as guides rather than binding documents.²

The NPC could not entirely be faulted for their shortcomings. It received only nominal support from the government and thus, was unsuccessful in its operations. Because of this, the government found no justification to grant it bigger appropriations. Without adequate financial supports, its programs could hardly take off. There were also, then, very few professional planners that the Commission could tap. *(In the early 1960s, with a national population of 35 million, there were only a dozen or so professional planners, all of them products of foreign schools. The country had no*

¹ Santiago, Asteya. *Urban and Regional Planning in the Philippines*, p.458.

² Aragoncillo, Erlinda. *History of Planning in the Philippines: 1946-1972*, p.13.

planning school.)³ Thus, the NPC was ineffective in guiding urban growth and physical development in the country.

Even with an enabling act such as the Local Autonomy Act of 1959 which empowered the local governments to take responsibility for the planning for their respective areas by voluntarily pass zoning and subdivision regulations independent of the NPC, the problems of rapid urbanization such as chaotic land uses, mushrooming slums and squatter settlements, and traffic congestion continued unabated. During that time, the concepts and consequences of urban development, city planning and urban rehabilitation were not fully appreciated by either government or private enterprise. The NPC served only as a planning consultant to the various local government units. Planning was voluntary, at the discretion of individual local governments and since they did not have the necessary funds and administrative capability to take upon the task of urban planning, in most areas, planning was not done at all.⁴ As late as 1963, Manila still did not have a City Local Planning Board. Independent attempts to form planning boards in several other cities were generally unsuccessful due to the lack of financial, technical and administrative capabilities. The mayors merely relied upon their respective City Engineer's Office to perform planning functions.⁵ Proposals drafted in these offices tended to concentrate on public works projects and not on land use planning or other regulatory programs.

The indifference towards planning was clearly manifested by the failure of many succeeding presidents to implement any of the recommendations of the urban plans. The concept of long-range comprehensive planning was in direct conflict with the idea of the ordinary populace who sought only immediate and limited-scope improvements. To the people, planning represented a remote and time-wasting period of inaction and non-accomplishment. The national government concentrated all its efforts in economic development planning while urban physical planning remained a low-priority issue in policy-making.⁶ The government efforts to cope with the increasing demands and problems of rapid urbanization in Metro Manila continued in a piecemeal and uncoordinated fashion.

Government planning focused mainly on the expansion of land areas to accommodate the growing population and the provision of public services. It allowed the private sector to initiate urban growth and physical development.

National government agencies were directly involved in road building, water supply, education and health care services. At the same time, local governments were responsible for similar services as well as law enforcement, fire protection, garbage collection and traffic management within their respective jurisdictions. The need for greater coordination between the national and local governments in the provision of certain services became evident, for instance, in road building. Streets in local areas were classified into national and local roads with the corresponding levels of government assuming responsibility for their construction and maintenance. Officials of the more

³ Santiago, Asteya. *Urban and Regional Planning in the Philippines*, p.460.

⁴ Aragoncillo, Erlinda. *History of Planning in the Philippines: 1946-1972*, p.14.

⁵ Laquin, Aprodicio. "Manila's Urban Renewal Program," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. X, No.2, p. 178.

⁶ Velasquez, Edgardo. *The Politics of Philippine Reform*, p.127.

affluent government units were often frustrated by the fact that while they already had paved roads, national roads in their areas remained poorly maintained. Situations such as these were prevalent and they adversely affected the attempts at more organized urban development and traffic management.

As the urban population grew, local officials became more aware of their interdependent needs in the provision of urban services and solutions to common problems. Various approaches were tried to meet the mounting problems. Voluntary *ad hoc* arrangements were entered into by local officials. An example of these specific service organizations is the Association of Public Service Department which provided garbage collection and disposal.⁷ However, the absence of a clear definition of interrelationships among the local units and the inherent disparities in their financial capabilities hampered the effective functioning of these joint arrangements.

In the early 1970s, numerous proposals were made to replace the disjointed local units into a single government organization. But attempts to superimpose a metropolitan authority were strongly opposed by many local politicians as it meant the loss of their autonomy and control.⁸ The proposal to integrate Metro Manila cities and municipalities also failed to get constitutional support in Congress because of the traditional partisan and vested interests of politicians.

To sum up, the various government planning efforts were not very successful in managing Metro Manila's postwar growth for many reasons namely, the lack of a forward looking tradition in city planning, the lack of political support and the low priority given by the government to urban development, the lack of coordination between local and national governments, the lack of technical capability, uneven financial resources, and the fragmented authority and traditional jurisdictional conflicts.

⁷ Ibid., p. 136-137.

⁸ Ibid.

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