

WHOLE CITY AWARDS 2011: Iloilo City, Philippines City Population as of August 1, 2007: 418,710

Iloilo City today has transformed into one of the most important business and investment centers in the *Philippine Archipelago*.



The synthesis of accountability and political-will gave a domino effect in forging partnerships for development. *City Mayor Jed Patrick E. Mabilog* undertook an innovative revenue alternative to achieve affirmative resolution of the city's tax and revenue requirements.

A bright economic and investment curtain encompassing the multi-billion implementation of current huge business ventures such as the on-going Megaworld Properties and

Holdings at the old site of Iloilo Airport, the near completion of the Ayala techno hub and business park, the massive real estate and construction projects of INJAP group of companies and the newly opened Plazuela de Iloilo, add to the vast array of malls, punctuating the economic sphere of Iloilo City.

Iloilo City remains a great magnet for investments and economic expansions because of its strategic geographical and socio-political location in the region---including the surfeit of highly skilled word-class labor, modern conveniences and facilities, ideal peace and order climate and a stable political leadership in local governance. Iloilo City being the main gateway to the entire region of Western Visayas, has a population of nearly half a million, with a coastline of 21.3 kilometers making the place a conducive business destination due to its natural harbor. It is a unique urban center where a 16-kilometer stretches of a unique body of water, (an estuarine) most commonly known as the Iloilo River cuts across the heart of the city, emphasizing the rich potential eco-system in a modern community.



Iloilo City is served by an Airport with International Standards on its central side and a full standard capacity port and arrastre facilities located at two strategic areas in the city. It is also a gateway to the world famous Boracay Island and the booming tourism potential island province of Guimaras which is just 15 minutes away from Iloilo City by way of a panoramic sea travel. With the signing of the Presidential Proclamation 201 by President Aquino, the Rotary Park is now under the authority and disposition of the Iloilo City

Government for the Iloilo Ferry Terminal Center project that will soon serve the sea transport and travel needs to and from Guimaras and Negros islands. The institutionalization of transport forum dialogue between the Iloilo City Government and the broad transport leaders created the consultative and reinforced mechanisms for improving traffic management in the city. This initiative resulted to the establishment of the Iloilo City Transport Council which is tasked to provide advisory and recommendatory interventions to further enhance traffic management in the city.

The literacy rate for Iloilo City is marked at 92.3% as per latest data indicator from the National Economic and Development Authority. There are at least 30 main universities and colleges in the city which make Iloilo City the educational center for Western Visayas. At least 40,000 college graduates join the annual labor force which make the city a center as well in manpower and high level literacy labor force. A landmark education project- the Iloilo City Community College would make public education in Iloilo City free from kinder to college.

Iloilo City tops among major urban centers in the country in terms of dynamic financial and banking system. Financial and investment flow are more fluid and extensive in the aspect of monetary capitalization as evidenced by a significant number of commercial banks and financial institutions operating in the city.

To create a more business-friendly Iloilo City, this administration also instituted reforms and put several innovative programs in motion. The most prominent of these are: the fast-tracking of business permits applications and renewals processing to a maximum of 15 days by reducing the bureaucratic baggage and streamlining the red-tape by way of transforming the entire Iloilo City Hall as a One-Stop-Shop government machinery. A remarkable significant increase in business permit approvals constituted a sharp increase in the City's Annual Investment with a growth rate of 695%.



The city administration has initiated the inclusion of representatives from the private sector into the different boards or councils of the city government as a strong manifestation of Private and Public Partnership. The City has taken steps for the construction of a medium-rise building for housing and community development catering to the needs of urban poor and informal settlers of Iloilo City including the provision of basic services to existing relocation communities like electrification and water system.

In the sphere of *environmental concerns*, significant undertakings of the city compose: the improvement in garbage collection through segregation at source system by enhancing community-based materials recovery and waste reduction and recycling practices. In a more long-term management program, the Iloilo City Government is currently initiating strategic dumpsite conversion towards a standard sanitary landfill facility that will eventually incorporate energy conversion procedure as productive result that can generate an estimated 10 megawatt additional power supply augmentation for Iloilo City. These socio-economic and alternative energy conversion programs are expected to be undertaken in partnership with CENOVA, an international bio-energy developer. Sustained, intense and aggressive anti-criminality campaigns and police operations resulted to a steady downtrend in crime volume figures. The prevalence of *peace and order* situation in the city likewise reinforces investors' confidence and tourists' as well as visitors' and balikbayans' travel preference to Iloilo City thereby creating affirmative and conducive business climate which can transform into higher socio-economic productivity and community development. In *good governance*, Iloilo City received the EXCELLENCE distinction in Administrative Governance Award from the Department of Interior and Local Government, making Iloilo City the best in local governance in the region; Rated Very Good by the Commission on Audit (COA) during the most recent exit conference regarding accounting procedures and accounting principles in the city government's transactions; The Iloilo City Treasurer's Office and the City Assessor's Office rated outstanding performers in Region VI in terms of fiscal and revenue management; Created the Spending Assessment for Government Efficiency (SAGE) to monitor and evaluate the utilization of city government resources; Restructured the Task Force on Anti-Squatting and Illegal Structures to rid the city of unsightly and illegal structures; Created the Task Force on Anti-Piracy, Anti-Pornography, Internet and Gaming Centers to go after illegal internet operators and vendors of pirated and pornographic materials.