

## PROGRESS REPORT □ Metro Manila

**The vision of a humane city**

**T**HE vision of a habitat worthy of men inspired the creation of Metropolitan Manila under Presidential Decree 824 dated November 7, 1975. Against the rising skyline of tall buildings and high-rise hotels, apartments and condominiums, the grand design calls for an environment characterized by equality and dignity for every human being, where each man can develop his full potential. What is envisioned, however, is not a settlement of individuals in isolation but of a "creative, productive and interacting human community."

Metro Manila, on the brink of decay and death before, is now undergoing a process of revival, of renewal. Problems of pollution, floods, peace and order, squatting, transportation crises, garbage, housing, population growth, communications, education and youth are being dealt with by an integrated government entity—the Metro Manila Commission.

Vested with the powers of a corporation, the Commission has jurisdiction over the cities of Manila, Quezon, Pasay and Caloocan and the municipalities of Makati, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Las Piñas, Malabon, Navotas, Pasig, Pateros, Paranaque, Marikina, Muntinlupa and Taguig in the province of Rizal and the municipality of Valenzuela in the province of Bulacan.

**Organizational Structure**

**T**HE Commission is composed of a chairman or governor, a vice-chairman or vice-governor and three commissioners or board members (for planning, finance and for operations), all appointed by the President.

The administration has the First Lady, Imelda Romualdez Marcos on top as Metro Manila governor. Next to the governor is DLGCD Assistant Secretary Eduardo Soliman as executive secretary whose office is the clearing house for coordination and implementation of plans and policies of the Metro Manila Commission. Directly under the governor are several action officers in charge of different aspects of the program to be implemented. They are Gen-

eral Gaudencio Tobias (NHA) for housing/squatters; Undersecretary Aber Canlas (DPWTC) for infrastructure and flood control; General Prospero Olivas for peace and order and traffic; Atty. Jose Crisanto (Metro Manila Transit Corporation) for transportation; Dr. Gabriel Carreon (DOH) for health and sanitation; Director Silvestre Sarmiento (Budget) for finance; Onofre D. Corpuz for education; Atty. Rogelio Quiambao for garbage control; Assistant Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora for legal and youth affairs; Marita Manuel for information; and Joan Fang for cultural program.

Government agencies are being tapped by the governor to help out in the formulation of plans, policies and programs vital to the Commission's operations. Four coordinating agencies are undertaking studies for Metro Manila. These are: the Planning and Projects Development Office (PPDO) of the Department of Public Works, Transportation and Communications; the Human Settlements Commission (formerly Task Force on Human Settlements); the University of the Philippines Law Center, and the Development Academy of the Philippines.

Next in the line of authority are the Metro Manila mayors, with the barangay zone chairmen, barangay captains and barangay councilmen under them.

Still in its infancy, the Metro Manila Commission does not yet have a working diagram of their structural organization. The three commissioners as provided for in the decree has not yet been appointed by the President.

In charge of administration, operation and coordination is the Office of Secretary Eduardo Soliman. He has seven special executive assistants responsible for various aspects of administration. Arthur Acasio is in charge of Plans and Research which takes care of the processing of plans, statistics, research and proposals from the public sectors; Marcelliano Ganay Jr. is in charge of complaints, correspondence and public service; Dominador Perena takes care of general administration and approval of subdivision plans; Hector Punzalan co-

ordinates special projects; Rosalina Guerrero is in charge of exemptions from municipality and city requirements and Atty. Adriano Apostol and Atty. Luis Rivera handle the legal problems.

The Metro Manila mayors are: Ramon D. Bagatsis (Manila); Adelina S. Rodriguez (Quezon City); Pablo Cuneta (Pasay City); Alejandro Fider (Caloocan City); Felimon C. Aguilar (Las Piñas); Nemesio R. Yabut (Makati); Maynardo Espiritu (Malabon); Renato R. Lopez (Mandaluyong); Osmundo de Guzman (Marikina); Maximiano Argada (Muntinlupa); Felipe A. del Rosario (Navotas); Florencio Bernabe (Paranaque); Emiliano R. Caruncho (Pasig); Nestor U. Ponce (Pateros); Joseph Estrada (San Juan); Monico A. Tanyag (Taguig); and Gerónimo S. Angeles (Valenzuela).

With a total land area of 636 sq. kms., Metropolitan Manila's estimated population is 4.9 million or roughly 10 percent of the total population of the Philippines. This figure does not include the transients—students, employees etc. who commute from the provinces or those staying in boarding houses. When they are included, the population estimate will increase by three million.

Population per city and municipality is as follows (as based on the residency): Manila — 1,454,352; Caloocan — 393,251; Pasay — 186,920; Quezon City — 960,341; Paranaque — 155,358; Las Piñas — 83,703; Malabon — 174,091; Navotas — 96,926; Valenzuela — 150,057; Taguig — 73,650; Marikina — 165,266 — Pasig — 210,839; Makati — 331,613; Mandaluyong — 180,904; Muntinlupa — 91,909; and San Juan — 121,419.

**Barangays**

**T**HE mayors under the Metro Manila Commission, in addition to his regular duties, also presides over the Sangguniang Bayan in each city and municipality. The Sangguniang Bayan is composed of as many barangay captains as may be determined and chosen by the Commission and such number of representatives from other sectors of society as may be appointed by the President upon recommendation of the Commission.

The Metro Manila Sangguniang Bayan or Katipunan ng Mga Sangguniang Bayan is composed of all the members of Sangguniang Bayan in the municipalities and cities who had been elected by the Association of Barangay Captains as well as those elected by their respective sectoral groups (capital, professional, industrial labor and agricultural labor) appointed by the President as of December 31, 1975. This form of Sanggunian is not the legislative authority of the area. It is a recommendatory body that submit legislative proposals to the Commission.

The total number of barangays for Metro Manila is 1,835 broken down as follows: Manila — 913; Quezon City — 134; Caloocan City — 350; Pasay City — 200; San Juan — 21; Las Piñas — 9; Malabon — 21; Marikina — 11; Navotas — 14; Mandaluyong — 27; Makati — 32; Pateros — 10; Pasig — 29; Taguig — 18; Valenzuela — 52; Paranaque — 6; and Muntinlupa — 8.

**Vision and Reality**

**M**ETROPOLITAN Manila has always been the vital nucleus of the national government. As such, the enormity of its problems casts a reflection upon the country's conditions. It becomes imperative then to keep it alive for the decay of these primate cities is sure to affect the rest of the nation.

The appointment of the First Lady, Imelda Romualdez Marcos, as Metro Manila governor, augurs well for the task of restoration, reforms and reconstruction. Her dynamism and vitality has spelled brilliant and certain triumphs in her many various projects that required great managerial skills. This same energy directed towards Metro Manila brings hope to the dying city. Tapping the expertise of individual administrators in an integrated program, Mrs. Marcos

has already made great strides toward the metropolis' renaissance.

To insure Metro Manila's survival, major steps are being taken with regard to the three priority problems: a) floods; b) public transport and traffic; and c) garbage collection.

The flood problem is being solved through opening up, cleaning and dredging the waterways. The funding of an integrated flood control structures was assured under a Presidential mandate; squatters are relocated from the esteros to settlements.

The transportation problem is being solved through the integration of land, rail and water transport facilities to provide efficient service to city residents, minimize fuel consumption and distribute goods and products systematically to keep prices low.

Related to land transport is the traffic problem where about 400,000 of the country's 700,000 vehicles ply over only 2.8 percent of the country's entire road network. Traffic experts are now working on the problem. Additional buses the being provided by the Metro Manila Transit Corporation.

For the garbage disposal problem, the Metropolitan Manila governor plans to recycle garbage into fertilizer. Within the next two years, five composting plants planned for Metro Manila will make the Philippine self-sufficient in fertilizer. This will save the country some 200 million dollars annually in fertilizer imports. Recycling will solve the garbage problem permanently, clean up the surroundings and make the effort profitable. Another recycling plan is the procession of water lilies, which clog up rivers and lakes, into starch, alcohol and fertilizer.

A Metropolitan Manila Refuse Management Operations Center has been established under the Metropolitan Manila Action Center which coordinates all operations by virtue of Executive Order No. 1 of the Metro Manila Governor. The Refuse Management Operations Center will coordinate, supervise, monitor and report on all refuse management operations and activities in Metro Manila. Refuse management involves the collection and disposal of refuse and waste materials, the general cleanliness of public thoroughfares, streets, passages, markets, buildings and the like. All refuse management operations are under the control and supervision of a single public services department, bureau or office in each Metro Manila city or municipality.

Another related measure is the creation of a Metro Manila study committee on vendors and hawkers; it is undertaking comprehensive study on the operations of a flea market. This will solve the problems that result from the practice of numerous vendors and hawkers in plying their trade in the sidewalks of the Metro Manila area. A flea market can also serve as a tourist attraction.

The rapid rate of population growth has outpaced the capacities of existing public facilities in Metro Manila. The Commission is evolving ambitious plans to meet current and future needs of the population. To decongest overcrowded hospitals, the Commission is planning to set up a clinic in every district to attend to cases that do not require hospitalization. Schools are being encouraged to expand outside the crowded commercial areas. A land reclamation program will add 4,000 hectares to Manila from the Manila Bay. The Commission is also promoting the expansion or urban development: in the south toward Tagaytay and in the east toward Sierra Madre. Modern centers for conventions, trade, government, sports and recreation, as well as for resettlements and new industries are scheduled to be constructed on the relatively undeveloped areas of Metro Manila.

As Metro Manila sets the pace for the whole country's development, translating the dreams and visions for a progressive Metro Manila into actual conditions is a task not only of the First Lady and her assistants but of every citizen as well. □



Priority areas: transportation and the cleaning-up of the environment.