

## **Exploring Stakeholders Insights on Makati's Poblacion Heritage Sites: Implications to Local Tourism, Development and Strategic Planning**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the potential of cultural heritage as a catalyst for socio-economic development in Makati City's Poblacion Heritage Site. Focusing on four key heritage sites, Museo ng Makati, Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Plaza Cristo Rey, and Poblacion Park, the research examines how preserving these sites can contribute to local tourism, economic growth, and strategic planning. Through a qualitative case study methodology, including stakeholder interviews, the study highlights the intricate balance needed between heritage conservation and urban development. Findings underscore the sites' unique cultural characteristics, their role in fostering tourism, and their significance in driving local development and the city's strategic planning initiatives.

The study proposes policy recommendations, such as establishing conservation zones, involving community stakeholders, allocating funds specifically for heritage preservation, and integrating sustainable practices in restoration projects. The research also suggests embedding heritage preservation within Makati's urban development and tourism planning, advocating for a collaborative and inclusive approach to maintaining the city's cultural fabric. Ultimately, the study positions cultural heritage as an essential component of Makati's long-term development strategy, emphasizing that urban growth and heritage preservation can co-exist harmoniously, fostering both economic prosperity and cultural continuity for future generations.

### **KEYWORDS**

Cultural Heritage Site, St. Peter and Paul Church, Plaza Cristo Rey, Museo ng Makati, Poblacion Park, Heritage Preservation, Makati City

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### **Introduction**

New circumstances and emerging trends have oriented nations and cities to keep up with the modern age (Theodora, 2020), while Labadi et al. (2021) have widely recognized that the safeguarding of cultural heritage is a driving force to development. The importance of values like "social justice and equality, protection of natural and cultural wealth, tradition, and creativity" has been upheld even in mobilizing new realities (Talvitie, 2009). This underlines the need to change the way nations and cities are developed and organized. In this regard, cultural heritage and sustainability have emerged concurrently and have both been incorporated into development discourses. Development has been characterized as a transformational, multifaceted, co-evolving, equitable, human rights-based, and context-dependent approach (Labadi et al., 2021).

Maintaining and harnessing heritage sites and settlements is a means of the socio-economic, cultural, and spatial development of any urban space. Thus, cultural heritage could function as a catalyst for urban regeneration (Theodora, 2019). This has been transcended in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, where countries shall vow to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable” (Sustainable Development Goal 11.4 | UNESCO UIS, 2021). Further, SDG 11.4 of that general goal aims to “strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage” (Sustainable Development Goal 11.4 | UNESCO UIS, 2021), which conveys the total amount per capita that each country spends to protect its cultural and natural heritage. This includes investments made at the local, national, and international levels, either alone or in collaboration with civil society organizations.

Cultural heritage is a multidimensional asset (Capello et al., 2019). It can be defined profoundly, and can manifest in too many forms, but for the purpose of this study, it will be classified in two major ways: tangible and intangible cultural heritage. According to Singer’s (2006) treatment, those that can be considered tangible heritage are buildings, man-made structures, or works of art, basically, those expressed in concrete matter, enduring years or even centuries, and occasionally even carry some of the core of human life, feeling, and thought.

On the other hand, enclosed in the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is a definition that states that intangible heritage refers to “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups, and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003). In a broader sense, cultural heritage is “movable and immovable assets of artistic, literary, architectural, historical, archaeological, ethnological, scientific, or technological values that embody the essence of a nation” (Radzuan and Ahmad, 2015) and is a form of social attachment and a sense of belonging from generation to generation.

From this rationale and to fully comprehend and realize the potential economic impacts of cultural heritage, it must be exhaustively and comprehensively described, and all its conceivable components must be encompassed. With this, the interplay between cultural heritage and economic prosperity will be demonstrated.

In the Philippines, culture is ingrained in its people. Protecting historical and cultural heritage and resources is a collective endeavor and is being participated by numerous localities. The government and public sector have intensified their efforts to uphold the conservation and promotion of Filipino heritage and identity. The National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009, also known as Republic Act 10066, was passed as part of the national efforts to mainstream culture and heritage. Simply put, the act advocates the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of Filipino culture on the basis of unity in diversity in an environment that allows for unrestricted creative and intellectual expression. This has been the entryway toward incorporating culture and heritage into law. For instance, the Department of Education has been directed to preserve and restore Gabaldon school buildings and other heritage school buildings. Subsequently, by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 439, Series of 2003, May is celebrated as National Heritage Month annually (Proclamation No. 439, S. 2003 | GOVPH, 2003). It strives to instill among Filipinos a sense of awareness, respect, and love for the nation's historical and cultural heritage.

The National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) declared Calle Real, the old Central Business District of Iloilo City, as a heritage zone on August 8, 2014. Prior to that, the city had already organized a Cultural Heritage and Conservation Council through Ordinance No. 2000-054, and it has identified 23 structures within the Calle Real that are of heritage value (Tormi, 2015). Further, the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex has made major contributions to the formation and advancement of Philippine sports since 1934. In 2016, the sports complex was on the verge of being demolished to make way for a commercial center when the NHCP declared it a national historic landmark. The moment the NHCP declares a structure as a heritage zone, it will be saved from demolition, damage, or unauthorized modifications. In addition, varied approaches to heritage conservation that do not obstruct urban growth are becoming more prevalent and are being stimulated. The first is the adaptive reuse or application of structures and sites of value for usage other than those for which they were originally designed, such as converting them into commercial spaces in order to take advantage of them while keeping their engineering integrity and design authenticity. Another one endorsed by the council and the act is the “old-and-new” approach, where new infrastructural developments are permitted to be constructed between older, protected sites. This enables the regeneration of underused property and land by allowing new structures with utmost consideration of their adjacent heritage site or sites.

While there are triumphs, there are also losses. One by one, the heritage buildings on Calle de la Escolta in Manila are being torn down to make way for modern architecture serving new functions and purposes (Cruz, 2017). The 1962-built Philippine National Bank was also set for demolition in January 2016 (Cruz, 2017). The Metropolitan Theatre in Manila, the stage for international performances, was unattended, not cared for, and basically abandoned until the National Commission for the Culture and Arts claimed and rehabilitated the property in 2015 (Cruz, 2017). Likewise, the Intramuros, which used to be the safehold of Spanish forces, is now swamped with urban dwellers. The biggest loss to cultural heritage is structural demolition—all its remnants being wiped out. From this viewpoint, cultural heritage must not be discounted as merely having aesthetic and recreational worth, as was the prevailing belief for a long time, but rather as a multifaceted asset that possesses economic value, which renders it a general asset of places. This has been obeyed by Makati City through the formulation of Ordinance No. 2019-A-094, which declared some edifices in Makati as heritage sites.

Given this, the study explored four (4) out of seven (7) declared heritage sites in Makati City, namely Sts. Peter and Paul Church (also San Pedro Macati Church), Plaza Cristo Rey (former San Pedro Makati Cemetery), Museo ng Makati (former San Pedro Macati Presidencia/Makati Municipal Hall), and Poblacion Park (site of the Casa Hacienda of Ayala y Compania and San Pedro Market Town Market), all of which are from Barangay Poblacion. With a policy in place protecting and restoring these cultural heritage sites by the local government, the study will determine what positive effects these sites bring forward in their local socio-economic conditions. Along this line, what sparked the interest in the subject matter is also being able to identify what distinct cultural characteristics or intangible heritage the city transpires, e.g., shared values and practices of the community, representations, or cultural spaces that leave lasting impacts on its tourists and captivate them into revisiting. Stemming from these considerations, the contribution of cultural heritage to the tourism industry, sustainable growth, and local development will be measured and transposed in the planning processes of Makati City and will, later on, be reflected in the city's long-term strategic plan.

This study looks at the ways in which cultural heritage can be a driver for the local socio-economic development of Makati City. It attempts to find the collaboration between urban development and heritage conservation by seeking approaches in which both can co-exist. That is, protecting and restoring cultural heritage sites without obstructing urban growth or prioritizing urban development projects since it meets the demands of communities without compromising heritage conservation. It is also necessary to examine the distinct cultural characteristics or intangible heritage of Makati City, e.g., shared values and practices of the community, representations, or cultural spaces that leave lasting impacts on its tourists and captivate them into revisiting.

## **1. Objectives**

The study dwells on the four (4) declared Poblacion heritage sites in Makati City, namely Sts. Peter and Paul Church (also San Pedro Macati Church), Plaza Cristo Rey (former San Pedro Makati Cemetery), Museo ng Makati (former San Pedro Macati Presidencia/Makati Municipal Hall), and Poblacion Park (site of the Casa Hacienda of Ayala y Compania and San Pedro Market Town Market). The aim of this paper is to answer the following questions: What are the cultural characteristics or intangible heritage of each of the Poblacion cultural heritage sites, and what is their current status? How can these sites be the driver of local socio-economic development? Finally, it asks about the recommended approaches to cultural heritage conservation that do not hamper urban development or other priority projects of Makati City.

## **2. Scope and Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative research design. This method is more appropriate, as it allows understanding of the research problem in a holistic manner. Key stakeholders from the government, community organizations, and the public sector were interviewed individually or via a focused group discussion to respond to a guide questionnaire crafted by the researchers with questions totally aligned with the research problems and objectives.

This study uses the case study method, which is best suited for drawing out vital details of a specific subject. The subject is the key stakeholders from the government, community organizations, and the public sector. This research design also sets out concrete, contextual, in-depth knowledge about a specific real-world subject. Fieldwork as a tool to gather data and respond to research problems was also employed. The qualitative findings consolidate varying perspectives, viewpoints, and experiences, as well as concerns, apprehensions, grievances, and recommendations of the informants.

### **3. Literature Review**

There are numerous ramifications of the potential symbiosis between culture and development, and it offered an opportunity to rethink the development paradigm. Subsequently, this culture-development discourse has also contributed to a shift in the concept of cultural heritage. Hence, the heritage concept has reached the framework of economic and social development. In terms of heritage, there is a clear transition toward a people-centered, functional approach, jointly refocusing on three overarching elements: “from monuments to people, from objects to functions, and from preservation to sustainable use and development” (Loulanski, 2006).

A notion developed by Prrott (2005) but was not wholly accepted by the greater community was that heritage preservation can exist when the site or portion of it is in actual use and thus capable of generating revenue to pay for its preservation. The author also insists on a more suitable interpretation and protection of heritage based on prioritizing the traditional values of people for whom it holds special social and cultural meaning. This is supported by the advocacy of Jokilehto (2004), which is an integrated heritage management, stressing that each historic site and its surroundings should be taken into account as a whole and coherent body whose total characteristics rely on the inclusion of its parts, which include human activities as much as the buildings, spatial organization, and surroundings.

Many nations desire to broaden the impacts of cultural heritage in the social and economic development process, which is an asset and a resource to a national economy (Gascón, 2013; Gamini et al., 2013). According to Akiwumi (2014), the responsibility of protecting cultural heritage should stem from the collective action of people, society, and government at local, regional, and international levels. In the end, cultural heritage of all kinds and forms serves as a bridge between the past and present and a storyteller of a nation's origin, meaning, and values (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). Accordingly, the present study examines the variability of the general concept of heritage in comparison to social and economic development.

According to the statistics presented in the study by Zhang et al. (2003), “as of February 2022, there are 897 cultural heritage sites in 167 countries on five continents.” Cultural heritage protection in relation to tourism development has emerged as a new subject of concern for academics all over the world. Cultural heritage, as defined by Zhang et al. (2003), includes traditional cuisine, historical architecture, religious beliefs, and other cultural aspects of the destination that draw visitors for sightseeing and experiences. For instance, the Citadel of the Catholic King, the synagogue of Cordoba, and the Mosque-Cathedral, the three from Cordoba, are heritage sites, as they have marked cultural and historical significance to Spain and the rest of the world (Hernández-Rojas et al., 2021). One of the objectives of the present study is to distinguish the best features and characteristics of the four (4) heritage sites in Barangay Poblacion, Makati City, whether it be the historical significance, architecture, view, or the experience that entice tourists to visit and revisit. The aim of the study is also to mark the similarities of heritage assets, what makes them unique or stand out among others, and how locals interact with and provide meaning and value to the site.

As mentioned earlier, intangible heritage typically receives less attention than tangible assets in terms of cultural heritage dialogues. The complex relationship between tangible and intangible heritage assets, the importance and relevance of the site to its local community, and the multifaceted space in the management of cultural heritage sites are other areas where there is a shortage of knowledge. In their study of the relationship between local communities and Malaysia's George Town World Heritage Site, Bakri et al. (2022) integrated grounded theory, which the findings demonstrated rich knowledge and heightened awareness of relationships between the heritage destination and the surrounding communities, including how locals interact with and provide meaning and value to the site (Bakri et al., 2022).

In addition, cultural heritage tourism practice has two (2) components: dynamic protection of cultural heritage (Aas et al., 2005) and tourism development (Ballesteros & Ramirez, 2007). From another viewpoint, Russo (2002) tapped heritage host cities as research objects and noted that when costs outweigh the advantages, a cultural heritage site is no longer sustainable, and it is urged that key stakeholders should step in and undertake necessary interventions.

#### 4. Result and Discussion



murals, and artifacts are displayed inside it, including the photos of the past mayors who served the city and the old landscape of Makati City. This heritage site, together with the displays it holds, perfectly showcases the history of the city.

Figure 1. Museo ng Makati, formerly known as San Pedro Macati Presidencia (source: Manila Bulletin)

#### Poblacion, Makati's Cultural Heritage Sites

Museo ng Makati (formerly known as San Pedro Macati Presidencia/Makati Municipal Hall) served as a town hall of the city before it was restored and converted into the museum that it is today. The building houses different displays and exhibits, each depicting or showcasing the rich cultures and traditions of different regions across the country. Furthermore, photographs,

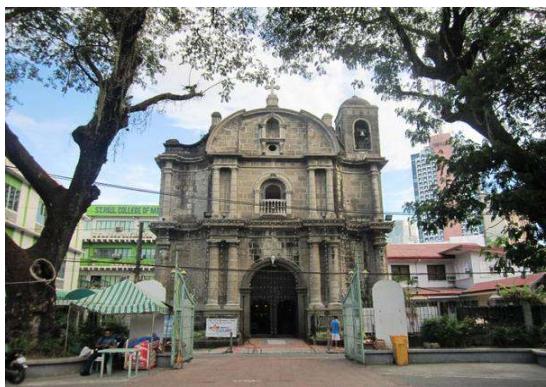


Figure 2. Sts. Peter and Paul Church (source: Touristlink)

Another heritage site is Sts. Peter and Paul Church, which is also known as San Pedro Macati Church. This church is considered one of the oldest churches in the Philippines. Even though located at the heart of the city, the church still completely mirrors the history of the location. Its interior is characterized by the golden altar, religious statues, and relics, including the revered image of the Virgin de la



Rosa. Due to renovations, the church now includes televisions and air conditioners, adding a bit of modernization here. Local residents and visitors describe the place as a very solemn and traditional place and is frequently visited because of this ambience.

Figure 3. Plaza Cristo Rey (source: Yelp)



Plaza Cristo Rey, formerly known as San Pedro Makati Cemetery, is situated just in front of St. Peter and Paul Church. At first glance, you would think that it is just a normal open space for everyone. However, the place holds an interesting part in the history of the city as it was traditionally built as a cemetery. The old cemetery cross was now replaced by a statue of Jesus Christ. The location serves as a space for leisure and other religious activities, including the hosting of Bailes de los Arcos (Dance of the Arches), which is considered a traditional thanksgiving dance and is performed during the feast day of St. Peter and Paul Church.

Figure 4. Poblacion Park (source: spot.ph)

Lastly, Poblacion Park is one of the heritage sites in the city of Makati, where the Casa Hacienda of Ayala y Compania and San Pedro Market Town Market are located. Due to the continuous renovation of the government, it is considered a good spot for various activities. The park is decorated with light poles, stone benches, shaded

resting areas, a playground, and an amphitheater. Furthermore, the park is popular with many visitors due to its location which is situated very near to local restaurants and pubs.

These four heritage sites in Makati City connect the past and present in a dynamic historical exhibition, weaving a comprehensive array of cultural values. Keeping the objects, stories, and other practices that reflect the development of the city's community, each site has a contribution to the rich cultural background of Makati City.

The Museo ng Makati serves as a protector of the city's long legacy. St. Peter and Paul Church, which can be considered a spiritual cornerstone, combines the centuries of faith of the local residents with the architectural magnificence, therefore creating a harmonious line that complements the whole city. Plaza Cristo Rey may be considered a busy center where many traditions come together. It resonates with the energy of the everyday life of the people in the community and the presence of cultural events. Lastly, Poblacion Park offers a tranquil sanctuary, fusing historical elements with modern concepts such as green landscapes.

Through historical narratives, architectural capability, and the richness of cultural aspects, each site depicts a distinct character that, when put together, portrays the grandness of Makati City's history.

#### *Cultural Heritage Sites and Their Influence on Local Development*

<b>GENERATED CODES</b>		
Attractiveness/Appearance	Historical Value	Projects
Conservation and/or preservation	Identity	Rules and Policies
Continuity	Information	Significance
Cultural Activities	Investment	Site-friendly
Economic Potential	Job	Strategies
Heritage Conservation Project	opportunities	Sustainability
Heritage Districts	Link to Past	Tourism
Historical Elements	Local	Urban
Historical Markers	Business	Development
Historical Sites	Local	
	Government	
	Local	
	Planning	
	Past/Present	
	Balance	

Table 1. *Generated Codes Based on the Informants' Answers*

Key informants' interviews included the impact of cultural heritage on the city of Makati's socio-economic development of Makati. Table 1 shows a total of 28 relevant codes determined based on the gathered responses from the informants. The complex connection between cultural heritage and the city's socio-economic development and local strategic planning is constructed via an array of 28 distinct codes. These codes capture a wide range of ideas and components that are essential to understanding this relationship.

*Attractiveness/Appearance* depicts the importance of artistic charm and visual appeal in heritage sites, which frequently have an

impact on local interest and tourists. The fundamental component of preserving cultural heritage is *conservation and/or preservation*, which highlights the necessity of guarding against deterioration or modification. *Continuity* shows how seamlessly historical customs and contemporary behaviors are connected, emphasizing the resilience of cultural components over time.

*Cultural Activities* contain celebrations, festivals, and events about cultural heritage that encourage interaction and understanding between locals and visitors. *Economic Potential* emphasizes the financial gains and business prospects brought about by preserving cultural assets, such as employment growth and tourism-related income. Projects dedicated to conserving or repairing historical sites are referred to as *heritage conservation projects*.

*Heritage districts* are defined areas with several heritage sites that are frequently created to preserve and advance cultural relevance. *Historical Markers, Sites, and Elements* include concrete elements, including historical sites, buildings, and artifacts. *Historical Value* highlights the value and significance of heritage components in telling the story of the city's past and culture.

Furthermore, *Identity* denotes the distinct cultural identity that is ingrained in heritage places and reflects the pride and sense of belonging that the community feels. *Information* includes initiatives to raise awareness of cultural heritage through education and the sharing of knowledge. *Investment* denotes monetary gifts and grants given to programs for the preservation of cultural heritage.

*Job Opportunities* represent the job opportunities created by heritage-related sectors, supporting the expansion of the local economy. *Link to the Past* highlights the relationship between historical roots and modern life, recognizing the impact of history on customs today. *Local Business* indicates how historical sites assist local entrepreneurs by promoting companies that provide goods and services to tourists and those with a connection to the past. *Local Government* highlights the significance of governmental involvement in heritage preservation by reflecting the governance and policy-making role in this area. *Local planning* consists of urban planning techniques that incorporate the conservation of cultural assets with sustainable development.

Moreover, *Past/Present Equilibrium* highlights the importance of preserving a balance between historic preservation and contemporary urban requirements. *Projects* describe efforts or programs meant to promote, preserve, or restore cultural heritage. *Rules and Policies* denote the laws and rules that control the preservation of cultural heritage. *Significance* highlights the heritage sites' cultural, historical, and social significance within the city. *Site-friendly* refers to programs or methods designed to make sure that the conservation of cultural assets doesn't conflict with other development endeavors. *Strategies*, which are within strategic planning, indicate intended methods or approaches for preserving cultural resources. *Sustainability* preserves the long-term viability and ecological accountability of cultural preservation initiatives. *Tourism* shows how important heritage sites are to attracting tourists, boosting industry, and improving the allure of the city. *Urban development* denotes the incorporation of historic conservation into the larger framework of urban growth.

The abovementioned codes are defined operationally to provide a comprehensive context of the multidimensional aspects and considerations that are worth considering during the planning of the preservation of cultural heritage sites and leveraging these sites as a catalyst for sustainable urban growth and community development. These codes were then subjected to further analysis by grouping them into similar categories. The categories are presented in the table below.

<b>CODES</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>
Conservation and/or Preservation Heritage Conservation Project Historical Districts Historical Elements Historical Markers Historical Sites Historical Value Significance	Heritage Conservation and Preservation
Cultural Activities Identity Information Link to Past Past/Present Balance Site-friendly	Cultural Heritage and Identity
Economic Potential Investment Job Opportunities Local Business	Socio-economic Impacts
Local Government	Local

Table 2. *Converging Categories Based on the Generated Codes*

A total of six (6) categories were determined based on the generated codes from the informants' responses. These categories are the following: heritage conservation and preservation, cultural heritage and identity, socio-economic impacts, local governance and planning, tourism and attractiveness, and sustainability and continuity. All of this aims to capture the diverse aspects related to heritage conservation, cultural identity, socio-economic aspects, governance, and sustainability.

Local Planning Projects Rules and Policies Strategies Urban Development	Governance and Planning
Attractiveness/Appearance Tourism	Tourism and Attractiveness
Continuity Sustainability	Sustainability and Continuity

*Heritage conservation and preservation* encompasses strategies, regulations, and initiatives to protect historical sites, artifacts, and traditions for the benefit of future generations. *Cultural heritage and identity* indicates the importance of defining a common identity of the community on the basis of cultural heritage and identity, such as rituals, traditions, folklore, language, and customs that represent the identity of a community.

*Socio-economic impacts* considers the actual impact of heritage preservation on the economics and social fabric of modern cities. It examines issues that include job creation, economic growth from tourism, local businesses, and the general improvement of the quality of life of the populace. The *Local Governance and Planning* category highlights the importance of heritage conservation, which is incorporated into city development frameworks as a part of governance, policy, and planning. To ensure the integration of heritage conservation into urban planning, it stresses the need for efficient management and policy making.

*Tourism and attractiveness* is concerned about the relationship between cultural heritage and tourism and how they contribute to each other. This entails the promotion of heritage tourism on the one hand, and the development of infrastructure around sites, and the exploitation of cultural assets to enhance city attractiveness on the other. Within this category, sustainability in heritage conservation was stressed in *Sustainability and Continuity*. It emphasizes the necessity of balancing the conservation efforts in view of today's needs so the conservative heritage is taken care of and possible development is taken place in a sustainable manner.

Each one of these categories gave a unique perspective of the intricacies of heritage conservation. Collectively, they form a sharp framework encompassing the essential elements of the maintenance of cultural heritage, building community identity and fostering socio-economic development, efficient functioning of government and encouraging tourism and the sustainable longevity of heritage assets. Furthermore, these categories represent broader themes that encompass the various codes and provide a structured framework for the study. Based on the categories generated, the underlying themes were determined.

CATEGORIES	THEMES
Local Governance and Planning Sustainability and Continuity	<i>Strategic Integration of Cultural Heritage</i>
Socio-economic Impacts Tourism and Attractiveness	<i>Cultural Heritage as a Socio-economic Driver</i>
Heritage Conservation and Preservation Cultural Heritage and Identity	<i>Impacts of Cultural Heritage in Strategic Planning</i>

Table 3. *Underlying Themes Based on the Generated Categories*

The analysis showed three (3) converging themes, depicting the effect of these cultural heritage sites in boosting the socio-economic aspect of the city. The three themes are as follows: Strategic Integration of Cultural Heritage, Cultural Heritage as a Socio-economic Driver, and Impacts of Cultural Heritage in Strategic Planning. These themes come together to show how cultural heritage and strategic planning are intricately related and how heritage

preservation is essential to Makati City's sustainable development, in addition to historical conservation.

*Cultural Heritage as a Socio-economic Driver*

Cultural heritage has a great impact on the growth of the socio-economic aspect of the city. It entails assessing the location's concrete effects on the local economy, including their support of tourism, employment growth, income generation, and community development. Furthermore, it can be seen in the way that the community takes pride in its identity and the social cohesiveness that is being enhanced by the promotion and protection of the cultural heritage sites.

Here are some statements from the informants:

*"It will attract cultural tourism. This will help in having more visitors, boosting the local businesses, and creating job opportunities, especially in the hospitality and tourism sectors."*

*"Protecting the heritage can boost the economy of the city. For example, it will provide more opportunities for businesses and for other skilled workforce like craftsmen and artisans, which will be of great help for the renovation of the sites."*

*"It will lead to stronger communities, like fostering a sense of belongingness. Also, heritage conservation that aligns with sustainability will attract environmentally conscious visitors and businesses."*

It can thus be concluded that cultural heritage plays a pivotal role as a socio-economic driver in the city, significantly impacting various aspects of the city's economic and social landscape, including tourism and economic growth, job creation and local businesses, community empowerment and identity, preservation and sustainable development, education, and cultural exchange, and lastly, investment and economic diversification.

*Harmonizing Conservation with Urban Development Planning and Strategies*

Balancing the preservation of cultural heritage with the demands of urban development stands as a crucial challenge for different communities. A planned approach is necessary to navigate the delicate interaction between preserving historical significance and directing urban growth toward progress.

In this study, the informants were asked about the cultural heritage approaches that can be practiced by Makati City to conserve and sustain cultural heritage without impinging on other priority projects. Based on responses, certain conclusions were determined.

Firstly, it is essential to create clearly defined "Conservation Zones" around these locations to guarantee that strict rules and safeguards are followed. It is crucial to allocate funding specifically for the conservation of cultural assets as this ensures a stable financial base for continuing preservation efforts. To guarantee that heritage elements are deeply ingrained in the planning process, it is also essential to incorporate heritage preservation considerations into the first stages or early phases of the development projects.

In addition, by actively involving the community in preservation activities, heritage sites are given importance, and a sense of ownership and responsibility is fostered. Thorough educational initiatives aimed at a variety of audiences, including young people, visitors, and residents alike, are crucial for bringing attention to the value of cultural heritage. Provided that sustainability has been one of the key aspects that have been continuously emphasized in every decision and planning, the usage of sustainable practices, such as using eco-friendly materials and techniques, can be incorporated into restoration projects. To prevent the degradation or destruction of these sites, strict enforcement of rules and policies and constant monitoring are essential components of heritage conservation.

Makati City can strengthen its Tourism Development Plan and guarantee long-term heritage and sustainable management of its cultural assets for future generations by implementing these strategic recommendations. To further describe the contribution of cultural heritage sites, a policy agenda is proposed as part of the current study's output. The policy agenda is based on the current action-oriented research, which aims to integrate heritage

preservation efforts with the Makati City urban development strategy. This program aims to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical implementation, benefiting from the discipline of heritage conservation and the sustainable development of the city.

#### *Enhancement Strategies*

This study highlights the following broad strategies that may be done to allow cultural heritage to make a contribution to local development. The first is *heritage-driven tourism promotion*. This means giving support to heritage-driven tourism initiatives, such as highlighting cultural assets in promotional campaigns and visitor experiences. *Another is community consultation forums*. This means creating platforms for participation in talks that bring together a variety of stakeholders, such as enterprises, government agencies, experts, and local communities.

*Incorporating heritage preservation guidelines* is another. In order to ensure compatibility with the tourism development initiatives, integrate strict guidelines on heritage conservation into the Tourism Development Program. This inclusion ensures that tourism development initiatives are compatible with heritage preservation efforts and prevent any compromise of the culture's integrity. Finally, the provision of *capacity-building and training programs* for stakeholders in the tourism sector who are interested in heritage-sensitive tourism is another initiative that is worth pursuing.

## **5. Conclusion**

Preservation and conservation of heritage sites are crucial for every community and can be a key element in urban growth. In this study, a comprehensive analysis of heritage conservation and urban development within the city of Makati was highlighted. The investigation focused on the complexities of harmonizing the demands of urban expansion with the protection of cultural heritage. Several individuals were interviewed, including those from the government, community organizations, and the public sector, to determine the features and characteristics of the four heritage sites in Makati City, namely Museo ng Makati, St. Peter and Paul Church, Plaza Cristo Rey, and Poblacion Park. Furthermore, the impact of these cultural heritage sites on the local socio-economic development and strategic planning was highlighted. Lastly, a recommendation based on the responses of the interviewees was developed regarding the approaches to cultural heritage conservation without impinging on urban development projects was determined.

A summary of the characteristics and features of the four heritage sites was presented. It shows how each of them has their unique features, making them stand out among others. Furthermore, what makes them similar to one another is their importance when it comes to historical value, as they represent a part of the history of the city. The heritage sites in Makati City, comprising Museo ng Makati, St. Peter and Paul Church, Plaza Cristo Rey, and Poblacion Park, collectively embody the city's rich historical tapestry while embracing modern adaptations.

Museo ng Makati, formerly the town hall, stands as a testament to adaptive reuse, transformed into a museum showcasing cultural exhibits from diverse regions across the Philippines. It houses artifacts, photographs of past mayors, and immersive displays vividly portraying the city's multifaceted history. St. Peter and Paul Church, an ancient Philippine landmark, retains its traditional architectural allure while incorporating modern amenities like air conditioning and televisions, resonating with its solemn and traditional ambiance. Plaza Cristo Rey, initially a cemetery, now symbolizes transformation with its statue of Jesus Christ replacing the old cemetery cross. It hosts religious activities and traditional dances, narrating a historical shift while serving as a serene leisure spot. Poblacion Park, home to Casa Hacienda of Ayala y Compania and the San Pedro Market Town Market, boasts versatility with its amphitheater, playground, and shaded resting areas. Its modern amenities draw visitors, given its proximity to local dining spots. Each site narrates a unique tale, entwining heritage preservation with contemporary adaptations, illuminating Makati City's diverse cultural heritage.

A thematic analysis was done to determine the underlying themes behind the contribution of cultural heritage to strategic planning and socio-economic development of the city of Makati. A set of approaches to cultural heritage conservation was highlighted, including the establishment of conservation zones, allocation of funds for conservation, integrated planning for development projects, community engagement, adoption of sustainable practices, monitoring and creation of legal protection, and the promotion of responsible tourism and partnership.

Putting together a policy agenda was proposed, aiming to elevate cultural heritage as a driving force in the city's tourism development strategy, supporting inclusiveness, sustainability, and community engagement under the CY 2024-2029 Tourism Development Plan. This inclusive and interactive approach is designed to create a TDP that truly represents Makati's identity, nurtures pride in the area, attracts visitors who seek authentic experiences as well, and preserves its lively cultural heritage for generations to come.

These findings emphasize how important it is to promote a balanced strategy in which historical relevance co-exists with modern requirements. Makati City embodies the fusion of traditional and modernity with its diverse cultural fabric. This study acknowledges that urban landscapes are dynamic. To preserve the legacy of cultural heritage sites, continual study, flexible approaches, and the participation of government are crucial.

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