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Ruben G. Mercado

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Metropolitan Cebu: The Challenge of Definition and Management

Ruben G. Mercado¹

1. Introduction

Metropolitan Cebu or Metro Cebu is undoubtedly as well-known domestically and internationally as Metro Manila. Since the early eighties, regional plans refer to Metro Cebu as the principal urban settlement of the Central Visayas Region (Region VII) dominating the region's urban structure. Its preeminence over the rest of the areas in the region has been attributed to its being an important and one of the earliest Spanish settlements, its excellent harbor and its central location in the Cebu island and in the whole region as well.

Composition

What composes Metro Cebu? While the name Metro Cebu has been an accepted term for an extended Cebu City, its composition has yet to be legally defined. Various planning documents, however, have defined the cities and municipalities composing the metropolis. For instance, the Central Visayas Regional Project (CVRP) in 1983 has defined Metro Cebu as comprising the administrative areas of three cities (Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu) and the six municipalities (Naga, Minglanilla, Talisay, Cordova, Consolacion and Lilo-an). The Metro Cebu Development Project (MCDP) which is the reconstituted project of the CVRP has carried on this definition. The Cebu Integrated Area Development Master Plan Study (CIADMPS) undertaken in 1994 redefines Metro Cebu based on a 25 kilometer radius to include the municipality of Compostela. The recently proposed bill for the creation of the Metro Cebu Development Authority (MCDA) defines the composition of Metro Cebu consistent with this metropolitan coverage. Interviews conducted with key informants in the region, suggested the inclusion of Danao City. There are others, however, which provided a not so common opinion by defining Metro Cebu to encompass the whole Cebu island.

Management

The development management of Metro Cebu has been carried out by a council called the Metro Cebu Planning Advisory Council (also known as MCC). It is chaired by the Governor of the Cebu Province with the mayors of the three cities and six municipalities as members. The MCC is supported by a secretariat drawn from the regional offices of the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD), Ministry of Human Settlements (MHS) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

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whose Regional Executive Director serves as the head. The MCC has been beset not only by the problem of insufficient manpower to work full-time on Metro-Cebu planning but more importantly by its weak authority to implement the decisions as city and municipal governments may elect not to adhere to these recommendations of the MCC. The MCC was, thus, a short-lived body as a UP School of Regional Planning (SURP) undertook the Metro Cebu Land Use and Transport Study (MCLUTS) which later became the urban component of the CVRP which eventually became the MCDP. The MCDP structure has taken on the management of development activities in Metro Cebu although geared mostly on infrastructure provision. However, there are only six out of the ten LGUs covered under the MCDP. Four municipalities not included are the municipalities of Liloan, Compostela, Minglanilla and Naga.

This paper is an attempt to present the challenges faced by Metro Cebu in critical services which are metrowide in character and discuss the issues and options for a management structure to deal with these challenges.

2. Metro Cebu Population and Land Characteristics²

There are about 1.4 million people in Metro Cebu based on the 1995 Census of Population and Housing. Metro Cebu's growth rate from the five-year intercensal period from 1990 to 1995 approximates the national average (Table 1). Looking at the cities and municipalities composing the metropolis, one finds that except for the cities of Cebu and Mandaue, population growth rates registered more than the metropolitan average. In fact, except for the municipality of Naga, these areas grew more than three percent during the period.

Table 1
Metro Cebu: Demographic Characteristics

City / Municipality	Population Level 1990	Population Level 1995	Growth Rate 1990-1995	Land Area	Population Density 1995 (prs/ha)
Cebu City	610,417	662,299	1.54	315	21
Lapu-Lapu City	146,194	173,744	3.29	58	29
Mandaue City	180,285	194,745	1.46	25	77
Cordova	22,331	26,613	3.34	17	15
Consolacion	41,270	49,205	3.35	147	3
Liloan	42,587	50,973	3.43	52	9
Compostela	22,006	26,499	3.04	54	4
Talisay	97,955	120,292	3.92	86	13
Minglanilla	50,875	62,523	3.94	66	9
Naga	60,425	69,010	2.52	102	6
Metro Cebu	1,274,345	1,435,903	2.39	923	15
Philippines					

Basic Source: National Statistical Office, 1995

² For the purpose of this paper, Metro Cebu shall refer to the CIADMPS definition of Metro Cebu

Population density in Metro Cebu and for the areas composing it is relatively low. However, because of its hilly topography, only 212 square kilometers out of the 708 square kilometers have been assessed to be areas with less erosion potential (CIADMPS, 1994). Thus, rapid urbanization would bring pressure to hilly areas which may lead to environmental problems such as erosion, further deforestation and flooding of lowland areas, in the process. Thus, the CIADMP study team has proposed a desirable urbanization projection for Metro Cebu of 2.3 million or a density of 32 persons per hectare or 92 persons per hectare based on the land area with less erosion potential (Table 2).

Table 2
Urbanization Projection of Metro Cebu

	Population (million)	Area (square kilometer)	Density (persons/hectare)
Metro Cebu in 1990	1.3	708	18
Metro Cebu in 2010	2.3	708	32
Land Area with less erosion potential in Metro Cebu 2010	2.3	212	92

Source: CIADMPS, 1994, Final Report, Vol. 1

3. Current Activities in Metro Cebu

The development of Metropolitan Cebu has been propelled primarily through the various regional projects implemented in the area. This is owing to the fact that the Metro Cebu area has been continuously promoted as the regional administrative and industrial center of the Central Visayas Region and the major link with the rest of the Visayas and Mindanao. With the presence of an international port, airport and other higher-order infrastructures and facilities, it is the most preferred site for the establishment of a regional industrial center (RIC).

Infrastructure Development

The MCDP has been in existence for nine years already implementing infrastructure projects in the Metro Cebu area. These projects include the construction/improvement of national roads, traffic management and bus terminal construction. The goal of these infrastructure efforts is to assist local government in the Metro Cebu area in coping with the rapid urbanization as well as enhance these areas' potential for further economic development. The responsibility for the overall coordination and management of the MCDP is lodged with the Regional Development Council (RDC) of Region VII. MCDP III, which is the last phase of the MCDP, has been completed in 1997.

Health and Sanitation

Cebu City through its City Health Office has been initiating various activities related to health services and sanitation programs together with the other city and municipal health offices in Metro Cebu. For instance, in some foreign-funded projects being implemented in the different LGUs, while each LGU is required to prepare and

submit its work and financial plan, all health officers representing each LGU meet beforehand to discuss on how best they can synchronize their efforts so that complementarities are achieved and duplication or inconsistencies are avoided in the implementation of the project. This applies to purchase of health equipment and other facilities as well as streamlining of activities. Such mechanism for joint planning has been established with the initiative and leadership of the Cebu City Health Officer.

4. Potentials for Cooperation

Solid Waste Management

In the absence of data for the other areas in Metro Cebu, Table 3 presents a picture of the quantity of solid waste generated in Cebu City alone. CIADMP study revealed that a significant volume of garbage remain uncollected as household and industries dump their garbage along the main streets as well as in many rivers and creek

Table 3
Solid Waste Quantity in Cebu City

	unit	1991	1992	1993
Average solid waste Generation	tons/day	363.1	-	-
Total solid waste Collection	1000 cu. m.	-	309.53	343.19
Average solid waste Collection per day	cu. m./day	775.0	859.91	953.31

Source: CIADMPS, 1994

Garbage disposal in the metro area is a growing problem as garbage collection. The absence of a sanitary landfill to contain all the garbage collected in the metropolis threatens the health condition of the people as open dumping increases the risk of disease outbreak and occurrence of epidemic. Moreover, water borne diseases occur as a result of garbage disposal near water systems such as rivers and creek. Sanitary landfill investment is admittedly huge and so is maintaining its operation. Such that one local government may not be able to afford developing a landfill site in both the land and money costs involved. Economies of scale will only be realized through an inter-LGU cooperation in this regard.

Traffic Management

In Metro Cebu, transport and traffic management is one of the topmost priority concerns. Although the traffic situation may not be as severe as Metro Manila, Metro Cebu is confronted with traffic congestion in some major sections of the metropolis and if existing road situations are not improved, i.e., unless new road constructions and/or road expansions are undertaken in the future, all of these road sections will be totally clogged with increasing traffic demand by the year 2000.

Table 8 shows past and future traffic demand and how this translates in selected road sections of Metro Cebu. Metro Cebu's traffic demand will continue to experience rapid rate of growth of over three percent towards the next century. By then, its major road sections have reached beyond their full capacity as revealed by the computed congestion ratios.

Table 4
Past and Future Traffic Demand in Metro Cebu, 1979-2010

	1979	1992	2000	2010
Person Trips (000)				
Private	111	347	583	901
Public	1029	1346	1728	2309
Total	1139	1693	2311	3210
Annual Growth Rate		3.05	3.89	3.29
Selected Sections (person trips in 000)				
Talisay-Cebu		35	61	85
Cebu-Mandaue		51	110	159
Mandaue-Consolacion		25	55	82
Mactan-Mainland		17	36	58
Road Congestion Ratio				
Talisay-Cebu		1.18	2.03	2.83
Cebu-Mandaue		0.64	1.38	1.99
Mandaue-Consolacion		1.25	2.75	4.10
Mactan-Mainland		0.86	1.8	2.90
ASSUMPTIONS				
Population (000)		1,274	1,712	2,301
Trip Maker (000)		956	1,284	1,726
Trip Rate per Trip Maker		1.68	1.8	1.86
Private Vehicles (000)		65	110	170

Basic Source: CIADMPS (1994)

Traffic management and engineering as well as road development in the metropolis to reduce congestion and to anticipate future problems in transport will need a strong cooperation among LGUs within the metropolitan area. The challenge also applies to the provision of railway transport and reorganization of routes of various existing public transport modes.

Water Supply

As early as 1975, a metropolitan organization has been formed to develop and manage water supply and distribution in Metro Cebu – the Metro Cebu Water District (MCWD). The MCWD is tasked to plan, design, construct, operate and maintain water works within areas of Metro Cebu, namely Cebu City, Talisay, Compostela, Liloan,

Consolacion, Mandaue City and Lapu-Lapu City. Funding is sourced through the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA).

Recent studies (CIADMPS,1994; David, Inocencio and Walag, 1998) have shown that water supply capacity of the MCWD at present is not sufficient for the growing number of urban population in the metropolis. Table 5 provides a picture of the current shortfall and shows the alternative projections of demand and supply of urban water up to the year 2020 based on the implementation of identified water projects during the period, especially the operation of the Lusaran Dam.

Table 5
Water Balance in Metro Cebu
(Figures in cum/day)

	1995	1997	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Water Supply	108,118	116,466	157,000	417,000	547,000	807,000	807,000
				257,000*	387,000*	647,000*	
Water Demand							
PIDS1 (High Use Assumption)	293,483		357,583	429,374	508,092	592,485	680,806
PIDS2 (Low Use Assumption)	254,352		309,905	372,124	440,346	513,487	590,032
CIADMPS (Med. Ass.)	216,374		270,501	331,944	406,877		
Expertelligence	227,744		270,662	309,999	360,067		
Electrowatt	223,540		281,794	349,469	424,543		
JICA	161,918		211,507	316,164	478,356	609,315	763,288

Basic Source: David, Inocencio and Walag, 1998 (PIDS-DENR Study)

* Without Lusaran Dam Project

The challenge for Metro Cebu, therefore, is the need to formulate a long-term plan aimed to solve the current and future water supply problem. This will necessitate the fast-tracking of projects that will allow for the development of other alternative water sources including the rehabilitation of non-operational dams. More importantly, the PIDS-DENR study has called for a more integrated and holistic approach to the current fragmented and relatively weak institutional structure to handle water resource management in the metropolitan area and to address the inability to resolve conflicts

related to inter-LGU water transfers and inter-sectoral use of water such as the case of Compostela wellfield.

5. Institutional Structure For Managing Metro Cebu

Metro Cebu's development has been carried on without a formal interlocal government structure. Cebu City as the Big brother, has traditionally taken the lead in many respects and since the reorganization of the Regional Development Council (RDC) in the region, the concerns of the metropolis has been addressed especially with the implementation of the MCDP.

Lately, there has been a stronger realization of the need to establish a permanent body to look more closely at the various needs of the metropolis beyond the infrastructure needs that the MCDP basically addresses.

Metropolitan Authority

A bill creating a Metropolitan Cebu Development Authority (MCDA) has been filed in Congress. The proposal for the Metropolitan Cebu Development Authority (MCDA) is almost like the replica of the MMDA in both functions and responsibilities as well as the organizational structure. The only deviation is that MCDA is not under the Office of the President and the Chairman will be elected annually from among the members of the Council rather than a Presidential appointee as in the case of MMDA. Interestingly, however, the General Manager and the Assistant General Managers shall be appointed by the President. In addition, the Chairman, chosen annually from among the members of the Council, is vested the rank, rights and privileges of a cabinet member, in effect making him part of the Presidential Cabinet. Because of political complexities in the region, the proposed bill has been stalled and pushing for its passage has received poor reception.

Metropolitan Council

Triggered by the MCDP termination and the long-standing issue of a lack of a coordinating body to plan, implement and monitor metro-wide programs and projects, on 12 December 1997, the RDC passed a resolution approving the creation of a Metro Cebu Development Council (MCDC).

The MCDC shall be the coordinating body that shall deal with the priority concerns of the metropolis including garbage disposal, traffic management, power, water, mass transportation, peace and order and maintenance of basic urban infrastructure.

The MCDC shall be composed of the Governor of Cebu, the Mayors of the Cities of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-lapu and the Mayors of the municipalities of Compostela, Liloan, Consolacion, Cordova, Minglanilla, Talisay and Naga. The former MCDP Office Project Director has been designated as the MCDC Executive Director. Fund balances, records, equipment and facilities of the MCDP Office shall be turned over to the MCDC.

The operationalization of the newly created MCDC is yet to happen. The RDC Secretariat, which is the NEDA Regional Office in Central Visayas has been tasked “to prepare the necessary documents and conduct consultations with concerned LGUs and agencies for the orderly and immediate implementation of the resolution”. As of this writing, a meeting is set next month for this purpose.

One of the most important tasks that this new metropolitan organization could initially take up is to clearly define its authority, delineate the roles and clarify the expectations of the various actors that would be involved in addressing Metro Cebu’s development priorities. There are two levels of coordination that must be addressed. First is the *structural relationship* and second the *functional relationship* of these various institutions.

With respect to the *structural relationship*, two levels of coordination must be clarified: vertical and horizontal.

Vertical coordination refers to how the MCDC shall relate with the regional institutions especially the RDC. Will the MCDC be under the direct supervision of the RDC or can it act independently of it? Can it deal directly with national government agencies, private groups or foreign institutions? What are and how far can the MCDC exert its power and authority considering the fact that it is a body created by the RDC? What does the term “coordinate” mean in operational terms in the aspect of project development planning, implementation and monitoring for the metropolis?

Horizontal coordination refers to how the MCDC shall deal with government agencies, NGOs, private sector and business groups. No mention was made on how these groups will participate in the MCDC as the composition of the MCDC is purely inter-local government based. In terms of the member LGUs, the question of how leadership will be determined would be an important consideration. Will there be an issue of incumbency in the leadership of the MCDC and the RDC?

Regarding *functional relationship*, considering the mandate and responsibilities of existing institutions in the regions with respect to provision of urban services in the metropolis, there might be a need to identify which ones MCDC will take on so that they may assist each other and avoid or reduce overlapping of functions. The result of a preliminary survey of the delineation of roles and functions can provide the initial discussion and facilitate consensus building regarding this matter.

6. Concluding Remarks

The most recent event concerning the management of Metro Cebu, i.e. the creation of the MCDC by the RDC, can be considered the first big step towards a more focused approach to develop Metro Cebu after almost twenty years of dealing with its issues as part of the entire regional development thrust and strategies.

Defining the composition of Metro Cebu is not direct but implicit in the composition of the MCDC. It is not surprising that in the future the compositional definition will expand to include other areas. At first, it has to start somewhere and the ten local areas in the inner core may provide the impetus for such growth and expansion.

The success of Metro Cebu rests primarily on how well the various development actors cooperate and work together. The initiative of the RDC to create the MCDC may provide the initial mechanism to institute a collaborative system between government agencies and LGUs and the other development sectors. Thereafter, a better and more effective and efficient institutional arrangement may develop in the process.

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