

Chapter 3

LAND USE RELATED ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS, AND OBJECTIVES

Knowing and understanding what one can and should not do or avoid is the springboard to unleashing ones potential. To actually do so and pole vault to being what one can be requires acting on said opportunities and limitations. Such is true for man and for communities.

Corollary, local development entails harnessing of local resources and dealing with the challenges and constraints facing local communities. Depending on how appropriately and sufficiently such are pursued would tell how fast or how slow would these redound to development. Understanding and appreciation, therefore, of the local area's assets and limitations is vital and critical to the design of strategies for achieving desired growth and development.

The following are the Strengths and Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats facing the City of San Fernando as its stakeholders have identified:

A. Strengths

Strengths are factors within the control of the local government unit with potential of driving the local area's growth and development.

1.02 Business-friendly Investment Approval Process

What used to be days to take has been effectively reduced to just a few minutes. Thus, the City's streamlined business permit and licensing process has been encouraging business interest on the City and promoting investment here. This has as well earned for the City numerous citations for being the most business-friendly and most competitive among local government units from both local and international organizations. Consequently, all these have catapulted the City to a new plane of doing business that is not only efficient but also facilitative of business.

2. Good Governance

No growth is possible with poor or bad administration and management of local government affairs and programs. Fortunately for the City, it came under the helm of a leader with a vision and mission for excellence, who abides in the principles of transparency and accountability, and who believes that development must be pursued with stakeholders sharing responsibility. Such qualities has led to transformation in local government administration by building in the process professionalism among local government employees and efficiency in government systems, as it has also encouraged participation and cooperation from all sectors in development processes. These are hallmarks vital to building confidence and trust on the local government institution and in attracting investments that are the drivers of economic growth and development. Sustaining these qualities in the local government is therefore imperative for the City to continue benefiting from good governance.

3. Availability of Financial and Physical Support Services and Infrastructure

As regional hub, financial institutions, both government and private, abound in the City providing for the financial resources necessary for financing investments. Transport links and services are sufficient allowing for mobility and ease of access to, from and within the City, while telecommunication services complement transportation to make doing business in the City less cumbersome and more efficient. Efforts at improving these support services and infrastructure continue to give boost to economic activities and further ease operations and the flow of people, goods and services.

4. Pool of Skilled and Trainable Labor Force.

Behind the growth of the City are its people who are known for their skills and craftsmanship. Fernandinos are particularly known for their culinary skills and aptitude in lantern and furniture making, skills which are

being wisely tapped to start enterprises that provide local employment and income to local residents. Preserving and harnessing such skills in addition to enhancing the literacy and proficiency of the City's labor force are tools to increasing the City's productive capacity and promoting investment here.

5. Culture-based Tourism Attraction.

Although the City is bereft of natural attractions that are magnets to tourists, the City of San Fernando's rich cultural and historical milieu provides a strong potential for tourism. The City gets its share of food-trippers trooping for a taste of Kapampangan cuisine and delicacies, while seasonal attractions are the City's lantern festival and Lenten rite. San Fernando's historical significance also adds allure to the place, which the City is trying its best to revive and develop by restoring and rehabilitating old edifices or structures for a mix of the old and the modern as the City's environment setting. The City's refurbishing of its look is expected to draw more attention to the place and subsequently foot and vehicular traffic.

B. Weaknesses

These are factors within the control of the local government unit that it should eliminate, avoid or improve otherwise such factors would constrain pursuit of local development.

1. Flooding

Low-lying areas of the City are perennially subjected to flooding during periods of heavy rain. As the areas affected are largely the City's commercial districts, attention then must be given to eliminating this problem, to minimize disruptions on business operations and flooding's ill effects on human activities, productivity and property. This is crucial for the City to sustain and enhance its competitiveness and to continue to attract businesses that would help the city pursue its development goals. Contributing to the flood problem and therefore must be addressed is the lack of an integrated drainage system.

2. Land Use Conflict and Unregulated Land Conversion

With urbanization and industrial crawl, the City of San Fernando's large tract of agricultural land which formerly used to be the base of the City's economy has shrunk to just about a third of the City's land area because of conversion. While conversion per se is not entirely bad if done rationally, its haphazard application in previous years has led to the mix of land uses that now threaten the sustainability and productivity of agricultural land, and to the emergence of environmental issues brought about by settlements encroaching into livestock and poultry farm areas or industrial plants in residential areas. These problems are expected to intensify if proper land allocation and land use management are not accorded proper attention and implemented.

3. Environmental Degradation

While the City's urban growth has led in the upwelling of businesses that are driving the City's economic growth, these though have not come without adverse effects on the environment. Concerns include contamination of the groundwater from fecal coliform and high level of manganese; air pollution from smoke emissions of increasing volume of vehicles running the it's thoroughfares; and waste management. Although the City has made progress in managing its solid wastes, more remains to be desired especially in instilling discipline among the City's populace in the proper disposal of wastes. Another concern that must be attended to is the City's lack of an adequate and integrated sewerage system. Non-treatment or management of effluent discharges and sewage cause pollution of the waterways and add to groundwater contamination. Failure to address these concerns would diminish what economic advancements the City would attain in the long-run, with these depriving the City's people and economy of sustainable quality and quantity of environment and resource.

4. Traffic Congestion and Limited Road Network

Population and commercial growth, while driving the economic progress of the City, are also causing traffic congestion. Such is now ordinary in the City's central business district and major thoroughfare. Compounding the problem is the lack of alternate routes to the City's main streets, providing little or no choice hence for traffic to converge here. The effect apparently is longer commuting time and delays, and higher transport and operating cost for businesses and residents. For a City aiming to provide comfort to its residents and a haven for business, addressing the problem of traffic is a matter of need that should therefore be given priority attention.

5. Lack of Open or Green Spaces

Open spaces include parks, greenways or community gardens. Sustainable development entails providing or maintaining these in the local area, with these helping to enhance the local area's environment and subsequently quality of life. Such are attributes essential to enhancing the attractiveness of the local area as investment location and as a place to live. As the City of San Fernando is currently wanting in open or green spaces, it would need to look into providing for these if the City aims to be a prime place for business and living,

6. Housing Problems

Not unlike most if not all cities in the country with fast population growth, the City of San Fernando faces the challenge of ensuring that all families own decent, safe and affordable housing units. Based on the 2007 CPH, the city's household to occupied housing unit ratio stood at 1:1.01873 indicating doubled-up household and shortage of housing units. However, the census also revealed the existence of 4,500 vacant housing units indicating doubled-up housing is due more to the inability of households to afford available housing units rather than the lack of housing units.

C. Opportunities

Opportunities refer to external conditions or factors surrounding the local area which could bring or stimulate growth here when acted upon by the local government.

1. Strategic Location: Proximity to Clark and Metro Manila

The City of San Fernando is endowed with the advantage of a strategic location that is at the heart of Central Luzon. The City serves as the gateway to all directions in the region, while lying proximate to the region's economic zones and Metro Manila, the center of the country's economic activities. These give the City the propitious position of a hub and transit point for travel in the region, at the same time a market advantage for its proximity to centers of demand for economic goods and services.

2. Regional Administrative Center

Being the regional capital the City of San Fernando has the distinct advantage of a quick access to government services, with most if not all of government offices located here. Collaboration and coordination for social and economic programs between the local government and the regional line agencies is made much easy with the presence of the government institutions. The City readily provides a venue for development initiatives or interventions, while an opportunity for other sectors here to provide the goods and services that the government and the people and entities it transact with require.

3. Increasing Visitor Arrival

The world's tourists are growing in number with the Philippines getting more from the international market each year. The trend in the region is also positive with, however, more domestic tourists visiting the region. Bulk of the tourists go to and stay in the provinces of Zambales and Pampanga. For areas within the influence of the two provinces, this means

opportunities to provide for the goods, services and attractions that are required by and that appeal to tourists. The City of San Fernando should, in taking advantage of this opportunity, determine its niche and build on its capacity to provide an attractive offer to tourists.

4. Development of DMIA, SCTEX, Clark

The infrastructure development in the region and developments in the special economic zones, particularly Clark, presents opportunities for growth. Improvements in infrastructure such as road networks (e.g., SCTEX, NLEX, and Manila North Road) stimulate business growth as these allow for faster mobility and leads to efficiency of operation. As the regional capital and located within reach of such developments, the City of San Fernando thus stands to benefit by these developments' impact or influence.

5. Flood Control Project: PHUMP3

The project aims to eliminate or minimize flooding in the Pampanga Delta. The City of San Fernando, being flood-prone, stands to gain from the project as this will help ease the flooding problem here. This will give the City the opportunity to develop areas that are difficult to touch or do improvements or that limit expansion of activities because of flood. The profound implication of completing PHUMP 3 shall be felt in the perennially flooded areas in the southeastern portion of the City. However, this future positive implication can be further facilitated through the opening up of a service road along NLEX.

6. ICT Industry Growth

Not only is the Philippines now the call center capital of the world, but overall the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry is growing. This is a boon for the country needing to provide employment to its ballooning labor force. And as the City of San Fernando is positioning itself or aiming to be an investment location for ICT, the growth of the industry should be a

motivation to prepare its human resources, facilities and infrastructure, and to provide the space where investments can locate.

D. Threats

Threats are factors outside the control of the local government, which could inhibit or stymie local growth and development.

1. Global Recession

The current economic slowdown in many parts of the world, especially in the developed economies, is not expected to take a reversal anytime soon, but will continue to drag for years more. With these economies as markets for Philippine products and services as well as source of development assistance, the local economy is thus bound to be affected by the snags the country's development partners and markets are suffering from. Whether at the national or local level, thought then should be given out to devising strategies that would minimize the impacts of the external turmoil on the local economy.

2. Urban Migration

The result of development in urban areas, such as the City of San Fernando, urban migration has the potential of also derailing local development. Migration as it increases the population of an area which may be good for business because this means more people demanding for goods and services tends to affect local resources by causing an increase in the need or demand for these, resources that the local government would need to respond to the demand for more of its services. Hence, urban migration may be a bane if it will lead to problems of limited resources and to other social maladies that the local government would be hard put to address.

3. Climate Change

The study conducted by the Manila Observatory and commissioned by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in 2007 although done on a national level, provides a view of the changing climatic conditions in the country across regions and provinces. The results of the study indicate: (1) surface temperature increases that are consistent with the global and national trends; (2) local variations in rainfall distribution; (3) acceleration of sea level rise; and (4) typhoon occurrences.

The increases in regional land and sea surface temperatures in the past 40 years observed by Manton, et.al. (2001) led the Manila Observatory (2007) to predict more hot days and warm nights with fewer cold days and nights in the coming years. Central Luzon is predicted to have low risk in terms of projected temperature increases except for the province of Pampanga which has medium risk.

Predictions of local variations in rainfall over the country has been limited by research and technical capabilities and utilizes extrapolation of past rainfall trends into the future although global models predict increases in rainfall amount over this part of subtropical

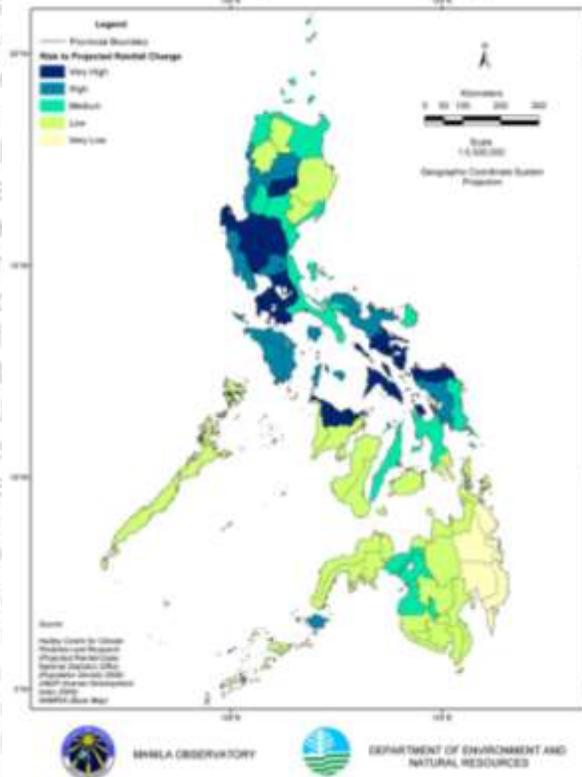


Figure 32 Risk to Projected Rainfall

Asia. Using the Manton, et.al. (2001) study, the Manila Observatory predicts that Central Luzon's provinces shall be subjected to high and very high risks to projected rainfall changes (Figure 32).

Villarín, et.al (2008) advance that accelerated sea level rise resulting from expansion of oceans due to warming and the melting of mountain glaciers and polar ice is a phenomenon that shall affect and threaten the Philippine archipelago. In the same report, the authors cite evidence provided in the results of a study conducted by the UK Climate Research Unit in Manila and Legaspi that show an increase in sea level rise that started in the 1970s. Rodolfo and Siringan (2006) in Villarín, et.al. (2008) advance that ground subsidence due to over-extraction of groundwater compound the impacts of sea level rise in urban centers. It may be worth noting that settlements in the Philippines started to develop along coasts and river deltas. This phenomenon did not spare Central Luzon as its southern coastline abuts Manila Bay, considered a threatened sea body. It was estimated in another study that a seven meter sea level rise shall submerge the southern portions of the City of San Fernando although the likelihood of such occurrence is remote.

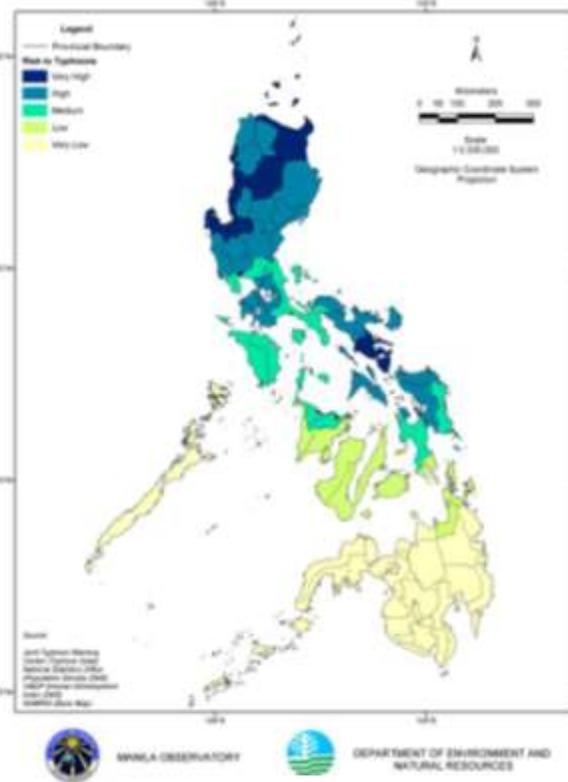


Figure 33 Risk to Typhoons

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There is no definitive statement on the perceived increase in intensity of typhoons that occurred over the Philippines. However, the observed shifts in climate patterns lead to projections of frequency and geographical occurrences in the country. The Manila Observatory (2007) projects fewer typhoons in January to March but will increase in July to November. The increase in frequency is most pronounced over the Visayas area and these trends will continue throughout the present century. Central Luzon is predicted to be subjected to high risks to typhoons (Figure 33).

Table 9 CLUP Objectives

Long Term Goal	Land Use Related Issue(s)	Land Use Objective
(1) Habitat for Human Excellence and Center of Central Luzon (Healthy and Livable Urban Environment)	High in-migration	Provision of adequate land for residential development
	Young population but high literacy	
	Strong and Large Middle Class	
	Accessible and adequate health care facilities and basic and higher education services and facilities	Ensure short travel times between residential areas and social service centers, commercial centers, employment centers, or emergency responders
	Regional Administrative Center	
	Long response time for fire and emergency incidents	Improve the quality of sewerage and septage before releasing to the ground
Deteriorating ground water quality resulting from increased coliform and other microorganisms		

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	Unavailability of air quality information	Increase carbon fixing capacity of the city's land resources
	Absence of solid waste final disposal site	Identification of site of sanitary land fill
	Crowded public cemetery	Redevelopment of the public cemetery
	Low opportunities for communing with the environment especially in built-up areas	Provide for green areas or lanes
	Incompatible land uses, e.g. agri-industries operating adjacent to residential areas	Discourage expansion of agri-industries adjacent to residential areas; Encourage clustered agri-industrial development
	Flash-flood prone areas in the southern part	Minimize or Discourage residential development in the southern part of the city; Improve surface run-off and water flows in natural drainage ways.

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<p>(2) Gateway to North Philippines and Global Gateway (Relevant Transport System)</p>	<p>Inadequate alternative routes (east-west and north-south) Low level of service (LOS) of feeder and access roads</p>	<p>Improve the level of service of key east-west and north-south routes; Complete an eastern north-south and a western north-south alternative routes</p>
	<p>Long travel time during rush hours between the city and Clark, SCTEx</p>	<p>Increase access between any point in the city and the FVR Megadike for light vehicles; Complete a north-south road parallel to the East</p>
<p>(3) Global Gateway #2 (Diverse, Sustainable and Vibrant Economy)</p>	<p>Demand-driven reclassification of agricultural lands to other uses and land conversion</p>	<p>Provision of land for higher value adding economic activities especially in the secondary and tertiary sectors</p>
	<p>Extensive residential area development</p>	<p>Encourage higher value economic activities; Provision of adequate land for commercial uses</p>
	<p>Low occupancy rates of developed subdivisions</p>	<p>Increase residential building construction in existing planned unit development areas</p>
	<p>Limited access between existing industrial zones and the NLEEx, SCTEx or Clark Special Economic and Freeport Zone (CSEFZ)</p>	<p>Shorten travel time between high value adding economic activities and the NLEEx, SCTEx or CSEFZ</p>

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	Extensive swampy lands	Encourage the development of more productive activities on existing swampy lands such as tourism or primary agricultural production
(4) Champion of Good Governance (Relevant Government Structure)	Mismatch between the capability of the Office of the Deputized Zoning Administrator and the demand for zoning clearances	Improve the capability of the Deputized Zoning Officer to monitor and enforce compliance to the zoning ordinance
	Poor coordination of land management efforts among key city government departments or offices	Organize, activate and capacitate a land management cluster under the Office of the City Mayor (The Environment Code provides the organization of the City Land use Committee)