



FEATURE

Calbayog: A City Going Forward

Calbayog City has become what it is now, a vibrant and progressing city, because of its participation in the City Development Strategy (CDS) 2 awarded by the World Bank and the League of Cities.

The CDS is both a planning process and a product of partnership among individuals who wish to help evaluate and shape the future of every city. Its objective is to guide the LGU to have direction thru vision/mission formulation. Further, it will give the city a clearer direction for economic



*development with the aim of creating more employment opportunities; to develop a consensus building process to establish the city's priorities, strategies and activities; to assist local authorities outline their financing and investment strategies; and to guide local capacity for more effective local government. Further, it is guided by the following principles: **livability, competitiveness, bankability, and governance.***

Vision "Calbayog City, developed and transformed into sustainable agri-industrial community, serves as trading and economic growth center in Region VIII."

The City's vision is anchored on the acronym CALBAYOG, which means "**C**ompetence using its **A**gricultural Opportunities to become **L**ivable and **B**ankable, **A**chieved by **Y**outhful outlook of development through **O**utstanding **G**overnance".

Mission "To uplift the quality of life of God-loving Calbayognons led by well-motivated and professional public officials and employees of integrity, in partnership with self-determining community."

To achieve this, the city has adopted its **GO FORWARD STRATEGY**, which focuses specifically on:

- G** - Good Governance
- O** - Organizational Reform

- F** - Financial Stability
- O** - Ongoing Consultation
- R** - Reduction of Poverty
- W** - Work for the People
- A** - Agricultural Productivity and Economic Recovery
- R** - Rehabilitation of Natural Resources
- D** - Development Anchored on Democratic Principles to Become a Competitive City

Among the projects implemented along this strategy were the Calbayog Mariculture Zone, Reopening of the City High School, Kabuhayan sa Kagubatan, and Susbaranan Barangay Best Practices Award and the Coastal Zoning Project.

History Calbayog began as early as 1600 in a settlement called Hibatang, presently called Barangay Anislag, along the riverbank of Oquendo River, about ten kilometers north from the city. It had 2,000 inhabitants under the spiritual guidance of a Jesuit, Father Ignacio de Alzina. Since the place was often flooded especially during stormy days and made the settlement unsafe, the settlers left the place in "balotos" (banca) and hastily rigged bamboo rafts following the river towards the sea. They stopped for a moment at Cahumpan (now Brgy. Cahumpan) then eventually settled there to start life anew.

As more settlers came, some crossed the river to Sabang (now Brgy. Trinidad). After a period of time, the restless settlers moved again and settled at Taboc (now Brgy. Obrero), a settlement facing the open Samar Sea. The place was once a vast swampland, which extended from the present Nijaga Park, where the monuments of our national and local heroes, Dr. Jose P. Rizal and Benedicto P. Nijaga, are now erected.

The name Calbayog originated from a place called Taboc. As legend says, the place was once abounded with "Bayog" trees. They are cut and burned down for fuel in making "Cal" (lime) out of seashells and corals. From these two things, the Spaniards named the place "Calbayog". The second version says that there was once a man named "Bayog". It so happened that there was no other way leading to the sea except through Bayog's place. Fishermen used to say "tikang kami kan Bayog" (we came from Bayog) or "makadto kami kan Bayog" (we shall go to Bayog). One day, a guardia civil asked for the name of the place but a fisherman mistakenly answered "tikang kmi kan Bayog". The Spaniards took the last words, *kan Bayog* for the name of the settlement. A lot of tongue-twisting and mispronunciation changed the original name to Calbayog.

Calbayog rose to political and religious prominence only after the American era. On April 10, 1910, Pope Pius X separated the island provinces of Samar and Leyte from the Diocese of Cebu, and erected the Diocese of Calbayog comprising both island provinces. Other dioceses in the region were only created later.

It turned into a city on October 16, 1948 through Republic Act No. 328 (Charter of the City of Calbayog) signed into law by then President Elpidio Quirino.

Geography Calbayog City is situated at the western part of Samar Island. It has a total land area of 880.7 square kilometers, the largest area compared to other cities in the region. It lies along the coastal region of Samar province stretching about 60 miles from the northern tip of the island and 180 miles from the south.

The city is bounded on the north by the municipality of Lope de Vega, Northern Samar, on the east by the municipalities of Gandara and Matuguinao, Samar, southeast by the municipality of Sta. Margarita, Samar, and southwest by the Samar Sea.

It consists of 3 districts (Calbayog, Oquendo and Tinambacan) and has 157 barangays.



Demography Calbayog registered a total population of 147,187 in 2000, the biggest population compared to other municipalities in Samar Province. Its population density of 167.1 persons per square kilometers, is however, the lowest compared to other cities in Eastern Visayas.

Financial Resources Calbayog City is classified as a first income class city. In 2005, its Revenue Collection totaled to P146 million. Meanwhile, the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) for the city amounted to P400 million, the biggest among the cities in the region. This translates to a total of P2,361 IRA per capita or the amount to be spent per person.

Socio-Economic Activities Its vast fertile agricultural land covers an area of 39,733 hectares, suited to several types of vegetation. A total of 4,041 hectares has been planted to certified palay seeds during the dry and wet seasons, while a total of 120 hectares were planted to corn. Major products are copra, abaca, rice, vegetables, corn, rootcrops, fruits, bamboo and nipa.

Forestry remains an important economic activity. The City has 50,000 hectares of forestland, more than half of the city's total area. Source of income come from trees used for lumber or firewood. Also available are its wild flora and fauna.



Its long coastal line that stretches for about 71 kilometers, teeming with fish and other aquatic resources, provides livelihood to many fishermen. Major species abound like anchovies, herring mackerel, red snapper, sardines, squid, prawns, crabs, shells, oyster, and many others. Fish caught everyday are exported throughout the country in huge volume. This makes Calbayog City one of the major suppliers of fish in Metro Manila.

The city has been awarded 1st Place in the League of Cities of the Philippines

Best Practices Award 2003 for its Coastal Zoning – Delineating Coastal Waters for Commercial and Marginal Fishermen Program.

Its ten-hectare Calbayog City Mariculture Park, located in the coastal waters of Brgy. Malajog, was the first mariculture zone in the Eastern Visayas established in 2003. It has an initial investors area of nine hectares subdivided into individual farm plots supported by a communal, storm-resistant mooring system.

It is expected to produce 2,304 metric tons of fish annually or an equivalent of P149.8 million. More importantly, the zone is expected to generate 435 jobs directly, and an additional 5,240 indirect or seasonal labor.

Commerce, Trade and Industry The city serves as a trading center in the region. The volume of trade and commerce in recent years has increased and is being favored by the adequate transportation facilities to Manila, Cebu and Tacloban City as these places serve as major points of distribution of supply of various goods/commodities. Various agricultural and marine products that meet local demands imply favorable trend in production.

The city is still in its infancy stage of industrial growth. The operation of Samar Coco Oil in Bgry. Malajog and Ice Plants in Brgy. Baay and Binaliw, are indicative of business prospects in the city. Meanwhile, the Noodle Factory supplies its noodle products to its neighboring towns and the whole of Eastern Visayas.

Similarly, there are several small-scale industries operating in the city which are assisted by the LGU. Assistance involves capability building and seed capital for the operation of the industry. These include bamboo craft industry, doormat making, upholstery, and aquamarine which engages in bangus, fry and sugpo production. Home industries such as mat weaving, furniture making out of bamboo, rattan, buri midribs and coco lumber are fast flourishing. Candymaking industry (pili nut) and the famous "*Tinapa*" (smoked fish), also produced in the locality, is now a favorite among tourists and travelers.



Facilities Calbayog has one operational airport which can accommodate aircrafts for general aviation. Asian Spirit Airlines flies from Manila to Calbayog at approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes every Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.

The city has 3 operational ports. Calbayog Port, which serves inter-island vessels plying Cebu and other neighboring cities and municipalities, is situated 810 meters away from the city. MV Don Martin facilitate inter-island travel, particularly, Cebu to Calbayog at approximately 10 hours every Tuesdays.

Buses ply Manila-Calbayog and Davao-Calbayog routes daily for approximately 18 hours. It can also be reached from Tacloban City, which is 183 kilometers away, by regular transport vans and buses in about 3 hours.

The Mini-Hydro Plant located at Brgy. Barral, Oquendo District, has a total capacity of 1,080 kwh which could supplement electricity from Tongonan Geothermal Power Plant, through Samar I Electric Cooperative, Inc (SAMELCO). The Bangon-bugtong Falls is also capable of generating additional source of power if fully developed.

Its water needs is being catered by the Calbayog Water District with its main source at Pan-as Falls and Pasungon Falls.

Tourist Attractions Calbayog City is also known as the City of Waterfalls. It has big and mini waterfalls, caves, spoon-like rockslide, hot spring, hanging bridges, beautiful beaches and parks. Among its family of waterfalls, Bangon –Bugtong Falls is one of the most majestic and spectacular spots worth visiting for. As one ascends the stream, he will be amazed to see a circular pond of about 30 meters in diameter, wide enough for swimming and deep enough for diving. Its cascading water seems to come from streams flowing endlessly.



Other tourist destinations include the Busay Falls, Larik Falls, Lologayan Falls, Mawacat Slide, Pan-as Falls, Tabokno Falls, Tarangban Falls, Ton-ok Falls, City Forest and Marble Park, Mapaso Hot Spring, El Rio de Hibatang, Guinogo-an Cave, Bagacay Beach, Baot Beach, Malajog Beach, Naga Beach, Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Samar Archeological Museum and Research Center (Museo de Calbayog), and the Nijaga Park.

Accommodations The City offers facilities and services for different types of activities and occasions – 19 accommodation facilities, 7 dining and entertainment establishments, 20 fastfood and restaurants, and 8 snack inns.

Sarakiki Festival Calbayog City is the center of culture in Samar Island. It takes pride of many composers, choreographers, and artists. It is also proud of its beautiful songs such as “Calbayog Ko”, “An Iroy na Tuna”, among others, and its native dances such as “Aragonza”, “Tiyadot”, “Jota Calbayogueña”, and “Curacha”.

In honor of our Lady of Nativity, the patron Saint of Calbayog City, the Sarakiki Festival is being celebrated. It is one of the most visited festivals in the Philippines celebrated every



September 1-8. Sarakiki is a waray term which describes the movement of a rooster when it tries to court a hen or to provoke another rooster to a fight. Sarakiki has already won several awards in the regional and national competitions.

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