

Doing Business in Iloilo



# Inspiring Iloilo

Reimagining VisMin



Isla Lipana & Co.



## A message from the PwC Philippines Chairman



**Roderick M. Danao**

Chairman and Senior Partner, PwC Philippines

I am delighted to present the latest edition of the investment guide, ***Doing Business in Iloilo***. This updated publication builds upon our previous guides, bridging the past and present opportunities. It showcases the vast potential and highly profitable ventures that Iloilo City offers to both domestic and international investors.

Iloilo City has become a regional powerhouse for business and investment, thanks to its strategic location, highly skilled workforce and infrastructure. It is an enticing destination for a wide range of industries, such as technology, agriculture and logistics, propelling the city's economic growth and creating abundant employment opportunities.

*Doing Business in Iloilo* is a valuable resource for those looking to capitalise on the city's potential. It provides comprehensive information on how to set up a business in the city, including requirements and the business registration process. It also discusses the city's major industries, fiscal and non-fiscal incentives and infrastructure.

I invite you to explore the investment opportunities that Iloilo City has to offer. The local government, together with its partners, is dedicated to creating a conducive business environment to help your ventures thrive. We are confident that with the right partnerships and collaborations, the potential for growth and success in Iloilo is limitless.

This guide reflects our ongoing commitment to promote investment throughout the Philippines. We're developing similar guides for other key cities in the VisMin regions and plan to release new editions soon, showcasing the diverse investment landscapes across our nation.

## A message from the City Mayor of Iloilo



**Jerry P. Treñas**  
City Mayor of Iloilo



Through the efforts of our community and the investors who have witnessed our city's growth and promise over the years, Iloilo City has established itself as a regional hub for opportunities.

Coming out of the global pandemic, the city is in a period of recovery and revitalisation. Public-private partnerships on infrastructure are now underway to support growth. Technological advancements and the digitalisation of financial transactions and services continue to keep government efforts competitive. A resilient and empowered population is well-positioned to contribute to innovation.

By integrating sustainability principles into its programmes and activities, the current administration is improving livability for citizens. With transparency and excellence as standards for local governance, Iloilo City is an attractive place for investments.

We welcome PwC Philippines' updated version of the investment guide ***Doing Business in Iloilo***, which allows us to engage with prospective domestic and international investors. We hope that the publication's launch will ignite new collaborations in Iloilo City.

The City Government is optimistic that more may be accomplished by working together to advance investments, developments and opportunities.

## A message from Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)-Iloilo



**Engr. Fulbert C. Woo**

President



Iloilo stands out as one of the most vibrant and beloved destinations in the Philippines—not only because of its long history, rich culture and kind-hearted people, but also because of its wealth of thriving industries and talented workforce. These factors help make Iloilo an exciting location for growing businesses.

At the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)-Iloilo, we aspire to be the voice of Ilonggo businesses and inspire investment through innovation and inclusivity. We share PwC Philippines' commitment to helping businesses capitalise on the opportunities in Iloilo. With the latest edition of *Doing Business in Iloilo*, investors can gain insight into the city's key industries—such as agro-fishery processing, logistics, real estate development and business process outsourcing (BPO)—and find practical information about starting businesses in the city.

With PwC's *Doing Business in Iloilo*, we encourage investors to appreciate the city's rich past, focus on its vibrant present potential and contribute to securing its prosperous future. We hope that this guide will help forge partnerships and connections that will continue to explore the unlimited potential of Iloilo and even the Philippines as a whole.

# Iloilo

Where heritage meets progress



Iloilo City's remarkable journey from a modest fishing village to a thriving regional hub for commerce and investment is a testament to its resilience and potential. Strategically positioned, the city leverages its prime location, skilled workforce and cutting-edge infrastructure to drive growth. Key industries such as agro-fishery processing, information and communication technology (ICT), real estate, tourism and logistics form the backbone of its economy, propelled by a commitment to sustainable and inclusive development outlined in its six-point agenda.



*Doing Business in Iloilo* serves as a window into the city's boundless opportunities. It details Iloilo's strategic advantages, including its business-friendly policies, burgeoning industries, ongoing infrastructure projects, educational excellence and tourism allure.

For investors, Iloilo City represents more than just a business venture; it's an invitation to participate in shaping a sustainable and prosperous future. With its dynamic economic landscape and unwavering dedication to inclusive growth, Iloilo City stands as a beacon of opportunity, promising unparalleled potential for those ready to seize it.

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PwC Philippines has conducted extensive research on selected cities in Visayas and Mindanao to identify opportunities for both local and international businesses. The firm has compiled current local knowledge to assist future investors in these cities.

These investment guides are part of a series of local business guides on cities in the Visayas and Mindanao regions, providing comprehensive analyses and insights for potential investors.



## Iloilo: The city that shines

While Iloilo City was a small fishing community during the Spanish colonial period in the 1500s, resources and traded goods such as tobacco, textiles and sugar eventually placed the city on the map upon the opening of the Iloilo port to international trade in the latter part of the 1800s.

During this period, sugarcane emerged as the region's leading agricultural product, spurring significant infrastructure developments that enhanced business districts with first-class facilities and commercial buildings, while also fostering the growth of educational institutions and enriching the community's social and cultural landscape.

### Strategic location

The city is blessed with a strategic geographical location, a highly skilled labour pool and contemporary infrastructure and amenities. With a 98.94% crime clearance efficiency rate in 2023, Iloilo City is an icon of peace and order, making it a preferred destination for meetings, incentive travel, conventions and events (MICE). Its major industries are education, tourism, agro-fishery processing, services within the banking and finance sector, retail, business process outsourcing (BPO), information and communications technology (ICT), and management of port facilities and harbours. The Iloilo City government offers adequate incentives to assist businesses during the various phases of their life cycle. With



the continuous growth of its major industries, the city is developing into a new Philippine economic powerhouse.

## The SMART City of the Philippines

Iloilo City aims to become a model of a liveable, sustainable and resilient city by 2029. It envisions empowered Ilonggo people who prioritise environmental conservation and cultural preservation, while also fostering a strong, inclusive and innovative economy. In order to realise this vision, the city is guided by the four-year strategic roadmap called “RISE, Iloilo City,” which stands for Responsive and Inclusive Human Development, Innovative Economic Development, Sustainable Environment, and Essential Resilient Infrastructure. This continues the implementation and development

of projects under the WHEELS program, which stands for Welfare, Health and Sanitation, Education, Environmental Management, Livelihood and Sustainability.

To elevate its local economic development efforts, the city has also developed a transitional comprehensive roadmap entitled “Iloilo City...The Way Forward.”

The city also has a thriving startup space. The Iloilo Innovation Roadmap of the Innovate Iloilo project, funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), supports startups and foster innovative thinking among entrepreneurs.

Services, manufacturing and agri-business, arts and culture, research, and technology or tourism (SMART) are among the growth areas of Iloilo City. The growing presence of business outsourcing companies, stronger awareness of arts and culture, and increasing investments in research and development as well as tourism campaigns all help achieve the city’s vision.

Iloilo Province, with its 0.80 human development index (HDI), ranked tenth in the list of best places to live in the Philippines. In that list, Iloilo was the only province outside Luzon to make it to the top ten. The province’s high score indicates its strong performance in social indicators, such as the ability to lead a long and healthy life, acquire knowledge and skills, and have access to necessary resources.



## A model of good governance and sustainability confidence

Iloilo City is hailed by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as one of the most liveable places in the country. It ranked fifth in the 2024 Highly Urbanized Cities of the Philippines. With its enthralling beauty, diverse culture and historical significance, the city emerged as a powerhouse of business and trade, and a haven for those seeking an ideal escape to calm the mind.

Due to the proximity of water sources, utility companies specialising in power generation, water distribution and transportation support have established a strong presence in the city and its surrounding districts. Some of these

companies include Panay Energy Development Corporation, Green Power Panay Philippines, Global Business Power, Metro Iloilo Water District and Metro Pacific Iloilo Water.

### Striving towards growth

The city has been accelerating its socio-economic growth through infrastructure development and the restoration of old heritage structures. As of April 2024, Iloilo City's road network spans 352.265 kilometres, and the construction of new flyovers and roads has improved travel within the city. The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has

approved four multi-million flyover projects located in Ungka II, Aganan, Pavia, Buhang, Jaro, Jibao-an and Mandurriao. Other projects include the road project in Iloilo Sunset Boulevard and the rehabilitation of Iloilo City Terminal Public Market, La Paz Public Market, Jaro Big Market, Arevalo Public Market and Mandurriao Public Market.

The development of Iloilo Commercial Port Complex (ICPC) led by Visayas Container Terminal (VCT), a subsidiary of International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI), will unlock significant economic opportunities in the city. ICPC features modernised infrastructure designed to boost regional trade and expand markets for Western Visayas' leading agriculture and fisheries exports. Dumangas Port is currently undergoing construction of a coastal boardwalk, which is estimated to cost PHP45mn. Once completed, it has the potential to become one of Iloilo's tourist attractions.

Iloilo City, known as the "City of Love," exudes a warm and welcoming atmosphere that attracts tourists, residents and businesses alike. This inviting ambiance is enhanced by a strong sense of safety in the area. Lamudi Philippines even recognised Iloilo City as one of the country's most desirable property hotspots.



**78.34km<sup>2</sup> (7,834 hectares)**

Land area

**180 barangays**

All considered urban

The city proper represents the smallest district, occupying only **6% of the entire city.**



**465.72 km**

Distance from Manila  
(Flight duration: 0.52 hrs)

Majority of Ilonggos speak

**Hiligaynon**



**97.7% (2020)**

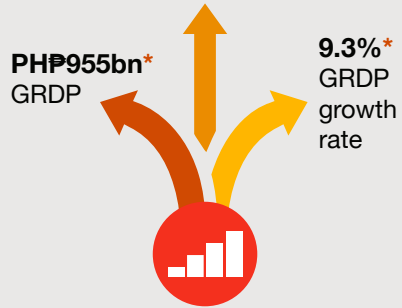
Literacy rate  
(5 years old and above)



### Major educational institutions

- University of San Agustin
- University of Iloilo
- Iloilo Doctors' College
- John B. Lacson Foundation Maritime University
- West Visayas State University
- Central Philippine University
- University of the Philippines Visayas
- Iloilo Science and Technology University
- St. Paul University Iloilo

**PHP141,158\***  
GRDP per capita



\* Western Visayas, 2022



**Iloilo Business Park** - measuring 72 hectares, it was named as the “Best Township Development in Asia” at the 2018 Asia Property Awards by PropertyGuru, which is Asia’s largest online property portal



**Iloilo Convention Center** - 11,832 sqm, with a capacity for 4,000 guests



**Iloilo International Airport** - ranked as the 18th Best Airport in Asia in the 2019 Best Airports in Asia survey conducted by Sleeping In Airports, a traveller’s guide and resource website

**Fifth busiest airport**  
in the Philippines for 2022

**3.4mn**  
traffic capacity

Daily flights to and from **Manila**

**The city has resumed international flights to and from Hong Kong and Singapore (direct flights for these destinations were suspended during the pandemic).**

Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Treñas passed a resolution urging the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) to expedite the review of unsolicited proposals for expanding and upgrading the gateway located in Cabatuan, Iloilo. The Iloilo International Airport experienced a significant surge in passenger traffic in 2022, reaching a substantial volume of 3.4mn and a cargo movement of 4.2mn.



Source: **Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP)**

## Basic infrastructure

The city government ensures that the basic needs of businesses—utilities, easy access, flood control, transportation and communication facilities—are met through initiatives such as:

- supplementing a quality power supply (450 MW standby capacity), which provides steady, dependable and cheaper electricity;
- pushing the Metro Iloilo Water District (MIWD) leadership to develop a mechanism that will ensure sustainability of water supply to cope with the increasing demand;
- maintaining an international-standard airport for easy access to the city;
- conducting a Flood Control Project to mitigate flood damages within the vicinity (the 4.75-kilometre Jaro Floodway is an operational project that provides flood relief);
- managing several modes of transport within the city to serve the public;
- developing and opening the circumferential, radial and coastal roads to reduce traffic congestion; and
- supporting various available communication services powered by the three major telecommunications companies and other service providers.

## Agro-fishery processing

Agro-fishery processing is one of the province's investment priorities. This includes processing agri-based foods like virgin coconut oil, fruits and vegetables, as well as marine and aquatic food products. The local government is actively pursuing potential economic zones, giving Iloilo the capacity to support raw material production and distribution for processing and manufacturing.

### Total capitalisation of companies in Iloilo City

All registered firms

<b>PHP173.1bn</b>	<b>PHP5.2bn</b>
Gross sales of registered firms in year 2023	Total capitalisation of new businesses in year 2023
<b>18,927 business registrants</b> , including 2,746 new registrations and 16,181 renewals	

### Fisheries profile

Fish and aquaculture production for 2023 in Iloilo City

	<b>71,415.20 mt/</b>
	<b>PHP9,079,538.20</b>
	Commercial
	<b>96,740.60 mt/</b>
	<b>PHP14,438,267.70</b>
	Municipal
<b>156,855.40 mt/</b>	
<b>PHP12,498,497.8</b>	
Aquaculture	

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

## Vegetable production

For year 2023

	Production (metric tonnes)	Planted area (hectares)
Leafy vegetables	2,479.70	672.52
Fruit and vegetables	29,475.91	7,678.74
Root vegetables	1,830.56	540.02
Watermelon	4,100.04	577.70

## Real estate developments

Entrepreneurs have chosen Iloilo as their homebase for many decades. The local government of Iloilo has prioritised infrastructure development, and the influx of migrants from the Visayas region has further enhanced the city's appeal as a favourable location to start a business. Iloilo City continues to attract real estate investors due to several factors: a peaceful environment, stable and cost-effective power rates, reasonable real property and business taxes, and competitive labour rates.

Notable real estate developers who have entered the city include Megaworld and Ayala Group. Megaworld has launched residential developments within Iloilo Business Park such as Richmonde Hotel Iloilo and Courtyard by Marriott Iloilo. Ayala Group has the Atria Park

District, a township with shopping centres, hotels and condo buildings.

Other real property developers that entered the city include Cebu Landmasters, SMDC's residential developments, Sta. Lucia, SM Prime and Robinsons Land. Local real estate developers include Florete Group, Gaisano, Iloilo SouthPrime Developers, Inc, Wee Community Developers, Inc. and Magnum Group of Companies.



### Township developments

- Iloilo Business Park: 72-hectare mixed-use development site by Megaworld Corp.
- Ayala Atria Park and Technohub: 21-hectare mixed-use property
- Gaisano City Center: 16-hectare mixed-use property



### Real estate

- Plazuela de Iloilo: 8,891sqm expansion project
- SM Strata: 23,000 sqm of leasable space across 13 floors, located along Iloilo City's main highway and transport backbone, Benigno Aquino Jr. Avenue



# Tourism

Given its geographical location at the center of the islands of the Philippines, Iloilo City is known as the 'Heart City of the Philippines.' Surrounded by breathtaking bodies of water, it offers a perfect blend of stunning beaches, rich heritage and vibrant culture. With its prime location, the city has become a preferred destination. Notably, Iloilo City has successfully hosted prestigious events such as the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Iloilo Chapter's 33rd Visayas Area Business Conference and the 39th Principals Training and Development and National Board Conference of the Philippine Elementary School Principals Association (PESPA), which were attended by thousands of delegates. It has also been the venue for significant international gatherings like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum in 2015.

Additionally, Iloilo City is conveniently accessible, just a 20–30 minute drive from the Iloilo International Airport. This accessibility, coupled with its captivating charm and excellent infrastructure, makes Iloilo City an ideal destination for businesses, tourists and residents alike.

**886,283** tourist arrivals in Iloilo City for 2023 (852,331 domestic and 33,952 foreign)

**3** Resorts    **13** Pension houses

**38** Hotels    **12** Tourist inns

## Attractions

**54** Cultural

**28** Tourist

**6** Festivals

**2** Man-made



# Logistics

The Iloilo Commercial Port Complex (ICPC) is poised for significant expansion and transformation. The Iloilo City Local Economic Development and Investment Promotion (LEDIP) Office estimates that around 300 container trucks arrive at the port each month, indicating a high volume of trade activity.

To accommodate this growth, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has outlined an expansive development plan for the ICPC.

The development plan includes expanding the port's berths to encompass an 8,888-sqm area, introducing advanced Ship-to-Shore (STS) railing systems and electrical infrastructure for a 488-linear-metre wharf.

Additionally, there is a proposal for a 6,380-sqm expansion, which would involve STS rail lanes and electrical infrastructure for a 135-linear-metre wharf. The plan also involves the development of an additional open storage container yard, which would require the reclamation of 200.35 hectares of land.

These improvements will significantly enhance the ICPC's capacity to handle increasing cargo volumes and support growing trade activities in the region.

## Information and Communications Technology

With its high literacy rate and a significant number of graduates per year, Iloilo serves as the centre of education in Western Visayas. The city is home to major universities such as the University of the Philippines Visayas, University of San Agustin, Central Philippine University, St. Paul University Iloilo, John B. Lacson Foundation Maritime University-Molo, John B. Lacson Foundation Maritime University-Arevalo, West Visayas State University, PHINMA-University of Iloilo, and Iloilo Science and Technology University. These institutions provide a rich pool of skilled workers and professionals for the thriving ICT and other services industries.

The ICT sector has played a crucial role in attracting BPO companies to

Iloilo. Currently, there are over 100 BPOs operating in the city, making it one of the top ten New Wave cities in the country. Notable companies that have established offices in Iloilo include Transcom, Teletech, Nearsol and Yazaki Philippine EDS Techno-Service, Inc.

The rapid growth of the BPO industry has led to an increase in business parks in Iloilo. Local institutions such as the University of the Philippines Visayas, West Visayas State University and Iloilo Science and Technology University play integral roles as collaborators in business and as technology incubators. These partnerships foster the creation of startups and new businesses, driving innovation in the city.



## What it's known for



Iloilo Bike Fest

## Iloilo is known for...

1

### Public and private partnerships with local government

#### Guimaras–Iloilo Ferry Terminal (GIFT) project

The PHP260mn terminal is a collaboration between the local government of Iloilo City and the Double Dragon Properties Corporation (DDPC). This project, located in Fort San Pedro, aims to increase the number of existing wharves and provide a world-class ferry terminal for pumpboat ferries operating on the Iloilo–Guimaras routes. The new terminal will be utilised by passengers bound for Guimaras–Jordan and Buenavista.

#### Molo Mansion

The house, built in 1926, was owned by Estanislao Yusay and Doña Petra Lacson. It later became the property of their daughter, Rosario, and her husband, the Governor of Iloilo, Timoteo Consing.

Today, the mansion is owned by the SM Corp. and serves as a heritage museum and houses food stalls offering cuisine from homegrown brands.

## Iloilo Bike Fest

Iloilo City is known as the Bike Capital of the Philippines because it is home to the longest protected bike lane in the country, stretching along Diversion Road to the city's esplanades. The city also boasts the Iloilo Bike Lanes Network Project, which aims to expand and connect the cycling infrastructure to over 46 kilometres. In 2018, Iloilo City was recognized as the 'Most Bike-Friendly City' by the PhilBike Awards. It also received the Galing Pook and Gold Award for the Wheels for Work and Bike Lane Awards from the DILG and Gold Awardee Mobility Award in 2023.

## Iloilo International Airport

Located in Cabatuan, Iloilo and 24 kilometres northwest of Iloilo City, Iloilo International Airport is the Philippines' fifth busiest airport and regarded as one of the country's most beautiful and efficient airports. It serves direct flights to Manila and domestic flights to and from other major destinations in the country. The airport serves the provinces of Iloilo and Guimaras as well as the general area of Panay Islands.

## ILEDf

The Iloilo Economic Development Foundation, Inc. (ILEDf) is a non-stock, nonprofit organisation founded in 2007 by key representatives from the local government, the business community and private individuals in the City and Province of Iloilo. The Foundation exemplifies the strong partnership between the government and the private sector, who come together to undertake promotional and marketing

activities to promote Iloilo as a premier investment destination.



2

Food

The changing landscape of Iloilo City reflects its remarkable progress and prosperity, establishing it as a rising foodie destination and culinary star. From the emergence of exciting new restaurants to the celebration of locally sourced ingredients, the city's culinary scene showcases the rich heritage and culture of Iloilo. In 2023, Iloilo became the first city in the Philippines to be included in the list of creative cities for gastronomy by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Exploring classic Ilonggo cuisine not only offers a delightful gastronomic experience but also unveils the historical significance and future surprises of the city.

- One must-try local delicacy is the **Queen Siopao of Roberto's**, located in JM Basa Street. This soft and fluffy dim sum is a favorite among locals and visitors alike. It is filled with a delicious combination of bacon, Chinese sausage and chicken-pork adobo with egg, creating a mouthwatering and satisfying treat.

- Another culinary highlight of the region are **Guimaras mangoes**, which are known for their vibrant yellow hue, silky texture and rich sweetness. The island of Guimaras also celebrates the dazzling Manggahan Festival every May, showcasing the abundance and deliciousness of their famous mangoes.
- **La Paz Batchoy** is a hearty noodle soup dish made with pork offal, pork broth and miki noodles and topped with crushed chicharron, garlic and green onions. The rich and flavorful broth combined with the tender pork offal makes La Paz Batchoy a beloved comfort food.
- A classic Filipino soup dish, **Pancit Molo** consists of dumplings filled with a mixture of ground pork and shrimp wrapped in molo wrappers. These dumplings are cooked in a flavorful broth and topped with green onions.
- **Binakol** is a traditional Ilonggo chicken soup dish that is known for its unique combination of flavors. It is made with chicken, coconut water, ginger, lemongrass and other spices. The coconut water gives the soup a refreshing and slightly sweet taste, while the ginger and lemongrass add a fragrant aroma.
- Made from toasted bread slices coated with butter and sprinkled with sugar, **biscocho** is a sweet and crunchy treat that is often enjoyed with a cup of hot coffee or hot cocoa.
- **KBL** or Kadyos, Baboy at Langka is an Ilonggo soup characterised by its sourness. It is often flavoured with a local souring agent called batwan and made with other ingredients

such as pigeon peas (locally called 'kadyos'), pork and jackfruit.



3

Festival

## Dinayang

One of the most successful private and public collaborations is Dinayang Festival, the city's biggest festival. It is held every fourth Sunday of January, or right after the Sinulog in Cebu and the Ati-Atihan in Aklan, to honor the Santo Niño and to celebrate the arrival of Malay settlers in Panay and the subsequent selling of the island to them by the Atis. The natives dance in the streets, their bodies covered with soot and ashes, to simulate the Atis dancing to celebrate the festival.

## Paraw Regatta

The Paraw Regatta festival is a race among seafarers on colorful sailboats called 'paraws' in the straits between Guimaras Island and the City of Iloilo. Over time, the event evolved from a simple boat race to a full-fledged festival with a variety of interesting activities.

## Iloilo Dragon Boat Festival

The Iloilo Dragon Boat Festival is held annually during the third week of August. It was established as a celebration of the Iloilo River's revival and has become a platform to showcase the cleanliness of the river. The festival offers a great venue for water sports, recreational activities and entertainment, which is a result of collective efforts to rehabilitate and develop the river. Moreover, it serves as an opportunity to highlight the sports tourism, economic and environmental potentials of the Iloilo River.

## Other festivals

Iloilo Province's other notable festivals include the Pintados de Pasi Festival of Passi City (every March), the Bayluhay Festival of San Joaquin (every January) and the Salakayan Festival of Miagao (every February).



One of the  
“Best MICE Cities”

4

## Iloilo City Convention Center

Committed to upholding global MICE standards, Iloilo has proven itself as a trailblazer by successfully hosting both APEC and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) meetings in 2015 and 2017, respectively. The city demonstrated its excellent facilities and ongoing infrastructure developments, attracting potential investors to consider establishing businesses in the area. In recognition of its achievements, Iloilo was nominated for the Philippines' Best Convention Centre in the third annual World MICE Awards 2022.

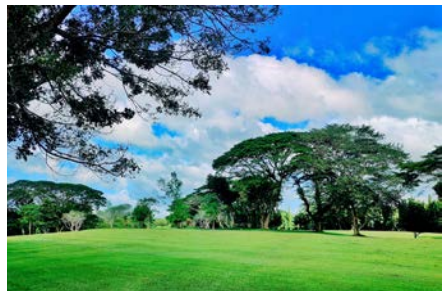
### Here are several notable characteristics of the Iloilo City Convention Center:

- It is a state-of-the-art convention venue in Western Visayas
- It is built on a 1.7-hectare lot in Iloilo Business Park
- It was designed by Ilonggo architect William Coscolluela
- It features exterior fins whose design is inspired by Paraw Regatta sailboats and
- It features abstract designs inspired by the Dinagyang Festival featured on the glass walls
- It is a two-storey structure with a total floor area of 11,832 sqm
- It has a 3,700-seat main hall on the ground floor, 500-seat function rooms on the second floor and a 1,500 rooftop available for outdoor functions
- It offers 233 parking slots



## Homes and history

Iloilo, known for its rich history, boasts a collection of stunning ancestral houses. These architectural gems, dating back more than a century, are now cherished treasures of the city. Visitors have the opportunity to explore and admire the beauty of heritage houses such as Nelly's Garden, Antillan House, Lopez Boat House, Lizares Mansion, Casa Mariquit, Balay na Bato and the Molo Mansion. These historical landmarks offer a glimpse into the city's past and are a must-visit for tourists.



### Iloilo Golf and Country Club

Also known as the Santa Barbara Golf Course, it is the oldest operating golf and country club in the Philippines. It was built by the English and the Scots in 1907 to ease their boredom while they constructed the railways connecting Iloilo and Roxas for the Philippine government.



### Lopez Mansion

This decades-old ancestral house was built in 1928 by the statesman Don Vicente Lopez and his wife Doña Elena Hofileña. It is considered the ‘Queen of Heritage Houses in Iloilo.’



### Museum of the Philippines Economic History

The century-old building consists of 13 galleries showcasing hundreds of artefacts. These include items related to abaca, pottery, boat-making, body ornaments, blacksmithing, textiles and other industries.



### Jaro Metropolitan Cathedral

Also known as the 'National Shrine of Our Lady of Candles,' the Jaro Metropolitan Cathedral is the home of the patroness of the Western Visayas, Nuestra Señora de Candelaria. Ilonggos celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Candles in February by holding a pageant with fiesta queens parading along the streets of Jaro District.



### Iloilo Museum Of Contemporary Art (ILOMOCA)

The ILOMOCA is the first museum in the Visayas region dedicated to modern and contemporary art. It aims to enrich the community life of Iloilo province by way of exhibitions and outreach programs. ILOMOCA is located at the Casa Emperador Building, in the heart of the Iloilo Business Park Township. It has an approximate area of 3,000 sqm comprising three floors, five exhibition rooms, a theatre facility and a souvenir shop. The development of the museum was initiated by Megaworld Corporation through Megaworld Foundation.



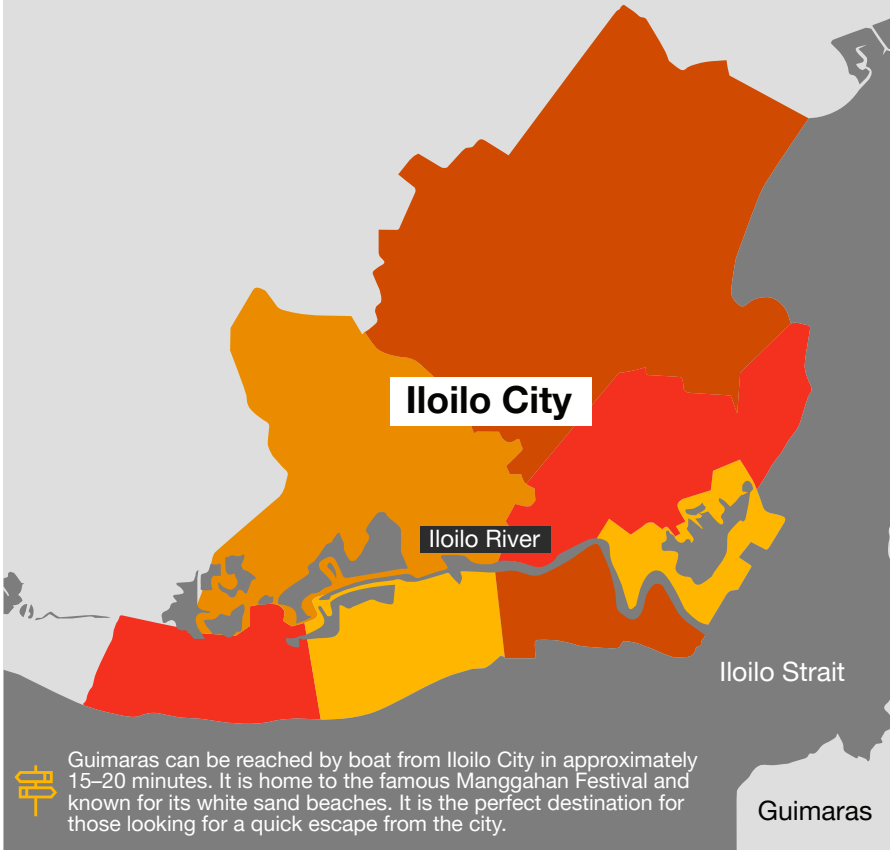
## Other tourist attractions

### Nature/recreational parks

- Iloilo River Esplanade
- Museo Iloilo/National Museum in Iloilo
- Plaza Libertad
- Villa Beach
- Benigno Aquino Avenue
- Iloilo Public Skate Park
- Jaro Plaza

### Historical/Cultural:

- Molo Church
- Western Visayas Regional Museum (Old Iloilo Provincial Capitol)
- Casa Real de Iloilo (Old Provincial Capitol Building)
- Heritage houses such as Casa Mariquit, Molo Mansion and Vicente Lopez Heritage House
- Calle Real (also known as the Central Business District of Iloilo)
- Fort San Pedro



Guimaras can be reached by boat from Iloilo City in approximately 15–20 minutes. It is home to the famous Manggahan Festival and known for its white sand beaches. It is the perfect destination for those looking for a quick escape from the city.



## A starter pack for business investors

The Iloilo City Government issued a total of 18,927 business permits in 2023.

According to the Business Permits and Licensing Office (BPLO), the number was higher by 8.91% compared to 17,379 permits released in the same period in 2022.

Of the latest figure, 2,746 were new permits and 16,181 were renewals. Applications for new permits went up by 6.02% while applications for renewal of permits increased by 9.41%.

### Business-friendly

#### Registration and permits

**#20**

Rank in ease of starting a business

**8 hours**

processing time for a new regular business application

**30 mins**

processing time for business permit renewal

#### Requirements for regular business

- Barangay clearance

- Certificate of occupancy (issued by the City Engineer’s Office)
- Fire safety inspection certificate (issued by the Bureau of Fire Protection)
- DTI/SEC/CDA registration and/or permit from national agencies for regulated businesses
- Notarised lease contract (if lessee)

### Online business registration

In 2022, the Iloilo City Government launched the **Integrated Business Permits and Licensing System (iBPLS)**. This system, adapted by the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), enables businesses to apply for business permits online at their convenience and from any location.

**A tutorial video is available here:**



### Requirements for business permit renewal

- Declaration of gross receipts
- Barangay clearance
- Prior year’s fire safety inspection certificate

### Fiscal incentives

On 23 November 2021, the City issued Regulation Ordinance No. 2021-406 (The Iloilo Economic Recovery Incentives Ordinance of 2021), further expanding and enhancing “The Expanded Iloilo City Investment Incentives Ordinance of 2006.”

Likewise, on 13 July 2021, the City issued Regulation Ordinance No. 2021-196, which provides investment incentives for businesses located in the following specific areas of development within the City:

- along the entire stretch of the Circumferential Road;
- along the entire stretch of the Coastal Road; or
- along the entire stretch of the Radial Road.

### Investment tax holidays

	General	For specific areas of development
1 year	PHP50mn but less than PHP40mn	PHP50mn but less than PHP40mn
2 years	PHP40mn but less than PHP100mn	PHP40mn but less than PHP100mn
3 years	PHP100mn and above	PHP100mn and above

## Reduction of business taxes

For new and expanded enterprises

	General	For specific areas of development
First year	75% reduction	100% reduction
Second year	50% reduction	75% reduction
Third year	25% reduction	50% reduction

## Qualifications

- Place of operation is within Iloilo City (or in specific areas of development)
- Engaged in the following industries unless approved by 2/3 of the Iloilo City Investment Incentives Board (ICIIB) (refer to the ordinances for the specific business types covered):
  - Manufacturing and processing
  - Export-oriented
  - Tourism-oriented
  - Utility companies engaged in power generation and distribution, water transportation or transportation supporting facilities and similar services
  - Information and communication technology

- Agro-fishery
  - Social services and facilities
  - Commercial and industrial buildings
  - Solid/liquid waste management
  - Green projects
  - Research and development/innovation startups
- Actual investment of more than PHP3 million (or at least PHP5 million for specific areas of development)
  - Employment to bonafide residents of the City under the following conditions:

Number of people	General	For specific areas of development
10	for investments more than PHP3mn to PHP15mn	for investments from PHP5mn but less than PHP20mn
20	-	for investments from PHP20mn but less than PHP40mn
40	-	for investments from PHP40mn but less than PHP60mn
60	for investments more than PHP15mn to PHP100mn	for investments from PHP60mn but less than PHP100mn
100	for investments more than PHP100mn	for investments from PHP100mn and above

### Requirements to avail the above incentives – three sets of the following:

1. Notarised application
2. Certified true copy of certificate of registration (with SEC/DTI/ any other licensing agency) together with the articles of incorporation and by-laws
3. Secretary's certificate of the Board's resolution authorising the representative to sign documents and transact with the ICIB, if applicable
4. For existing businesses, prior-year audited financial statements and income tax return
5. Non-refundable filing fee of PHP1,000

### Requirements to avail the above incentives (for specific areas of development) – three sets of the following:

1. Notarised application
2. Business permit and BIR registration
3. Certified true copy of certificate of registration (with SEC/DTI/ any other licensing agency) together with the articles of incorporation and by-laws
4. Secretary's certificate of the Board's resolution authorising the representative to sign documents and transact with the ICIB, if applicable

5. Certification for the City Planning and Development Office (CPDO) declaring the location of buildings/ machineries/other improvements within the specific areas for development
6. Non-refundable filing fee of PHP1,000

### Non-fiscal incentives

- Assistance in securing additional business permits and other related data
- Facilitating access to financial and technical assistance programs of the government
- Facilitating service connections with local utilities and other services as may be recommended by the Executive Committee

### Efficient public utilities

#### Communication network



**10**  
Print media



**7**  
Television stations



**20**  
Radio stations



**40**  
Government postal services

## Telecommunications



3

Telephone companies



3

Mobile phone companies



5

Internet service providers

## Competitive cost of doing business

### Average rental prices per sqm

#### Residential

- Duplex: PHP6,283
- Apartment: PHP6,833
- Condo: PHP9,100

Industrial: **PHP3,517**

Commercial: **PHP9,100**

Commercial space rentals (average per sqm) **PHP250 – 12,000**

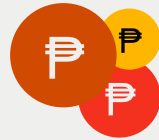
Commercial space rentals (average per sqm) **PHP250 – 12,000**

## Labour force



- **95.7%** high employment rate (Region VI) in 2023
- **65.7%** labour force participation rate (Region VI) in 2023

### Daily minimum wages per sector



**PHP480.00**

Non-agriculture/Industrial/Commercial employing more than ten workers

**PHP450.00**

Non-agriculture/Industrial/Commercial employing ten workers or less

**PHP440.00**

Agriculture

## Competitiveness

Based on the 2024 Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) survey conducted by the Department of Trade and Industry - Competitiveness Bureau (DTI-CB), Iloilo City was the number one most competitive Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs) outside the National Capital Region (NCR), placing in the fifth spot overall.

**Iloilo Province ranked 50th in the provincial category.**

## Other programs

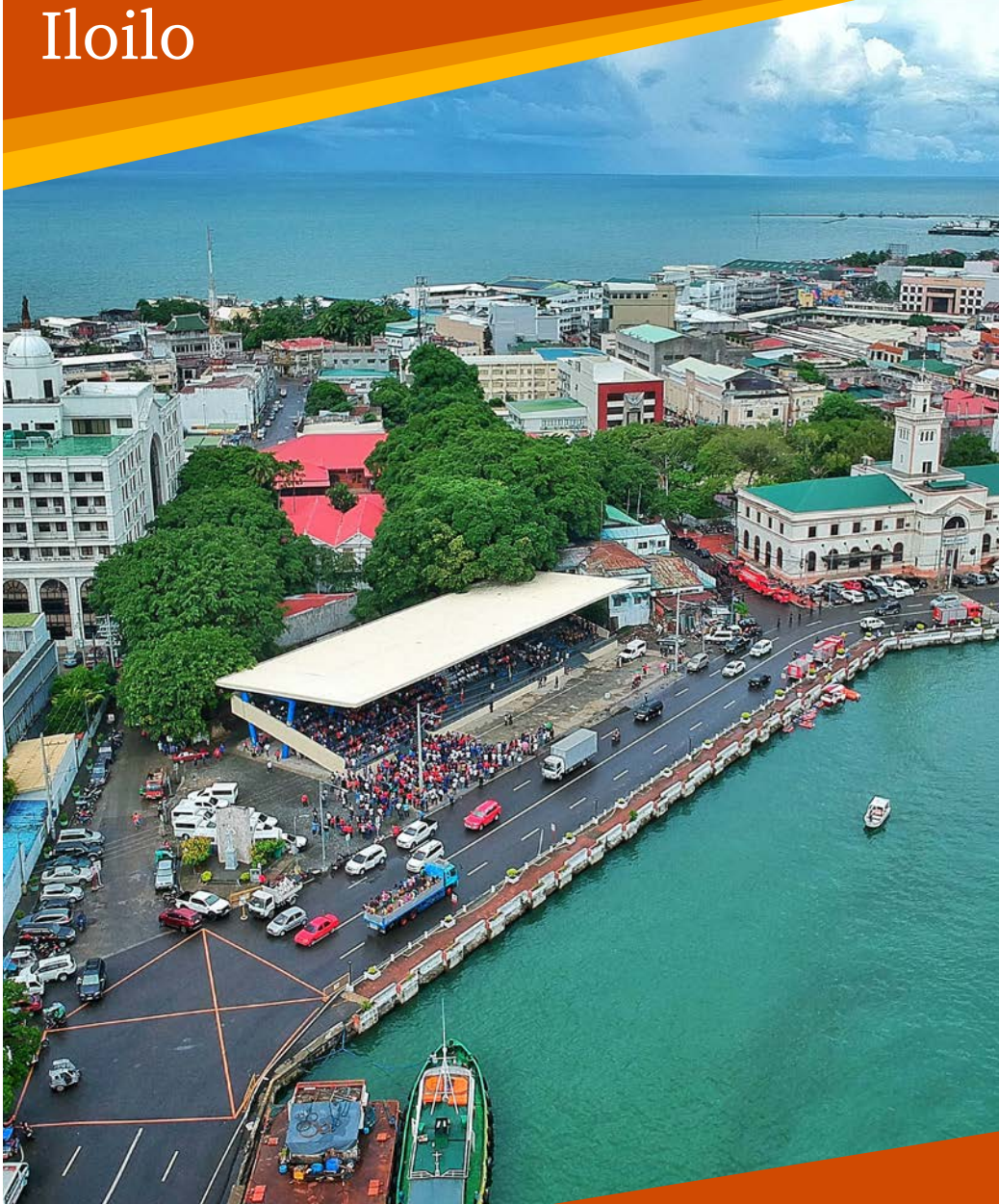
In 2023, the Iloilo City Local Economic Development and Investment Promotion Office launched the Uswag Negosyo Academy, an initiative to facilitate trade and business among NMSEs. The office partners with public and private organisations to offer several trainings on the areas of business registration and accounting. This program aims to produce 12 batches of more than 300 graduates each year. Upon completion of the program, each participant is given additional capital to jumpstart their businesses or expand their operations.

## Recognition

- ASEAN Smoke Free-Award – Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA), 2024
- Certificate of Commendation for iBPLS – Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA), 2024
- Most Business-Friendly Local Government Unit (LGU) – PCCI, 2019 and 2023
- Tholons Global Business Innovation Sustainability Index (TBIS) Super Cities, 2023
- Most Competitive HUC Outside NCR (2023 CMCI Survey)
- Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) for Distinguished Local Government Units – Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), 2022
- First Place, Most Improved Highly Urbanized City and Government Efficiency – DTI-CB, 2022

- No. 2 member of the Executive Board out of the 170 members of CityNet, the largest Asia-Pacific organisation of cities, October 2022
- Gawad Kalasag Seal of Excellence for Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Program – National Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), 2022
- Best Performing Cities Category in the Excellence in Local Governance (Excel) Awards – DILG Region VI, 2022
- Clean Tourist City Award – ASEAN, 2020-2022
- Grand winner for the Best Tourism Event, "Iloilo Dinagyang Festival" – Association of Tourism Officers of the Philippines - Department of Tourism (ATOP - DOT), 2022
- Galing Pook Awardee for the Iloilo City I-BIKE Program – initiated by the Galing Pook Foundation supported by SM Prime Holdings and DILG, 2022
- Hall of Fame, National Red Orchid Award for 100% Tobacco-Free Environment – Department of Health (DOH) and World Health Organization (WHO), 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2021
- Champion, Livable Cities – Asian Development Bank, 2015
- First Place, Government Efficiency among Highly Urbanized Cities – National Competitiveness Council, 2015
- Fifth Most Business-Friendly Local Government Unit Award – Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), 2015

# Reimagining Iloilo





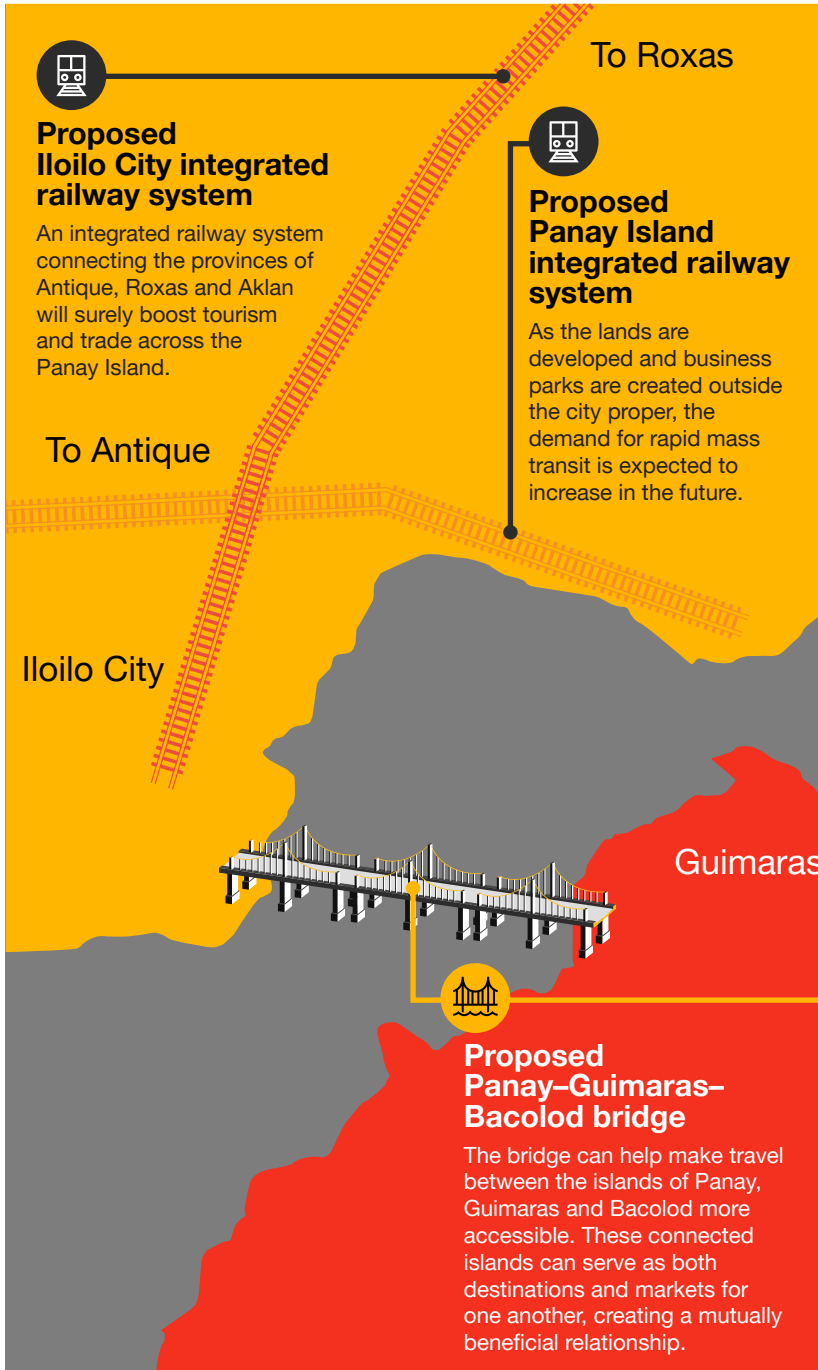


Iloilo City, the bustling epicenter of Western Visayas, serves as a gateway connecting major areas such as Bacolod, Guimaras, Antique, Capiz, Aklan and Negros. With its strategic location, robust infrastructure and thriving economy, Iloilo stands as a prime destination for business, trade and investment.

Exciting infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing trade and accessibility are underway in Iloilo, such as the construction of the Panay–Guimaras–Negros Inter-Island Link Bridge, Iloilo–Capiz–Aklan Expressway and Panay River Basin Integrated Development Project, as well as the renovation and improvement of the Iloilo International Container Port. These projects, endorsed by the Regional Development Council (RDC) VI, are targeted for completion by 2028. The city is also expanding through the proposed Iloilo City Reclamation Project, which will create new business centres and mixed-use real estate developments, fostering growth in the region.

With 94% of its population possessing valuable expertise, Iloilo City boasts a highly skilled workforce that helps drive economic progress. The city also offers a vibrant lifestyle with a strong focus on health and fitness, complementing its role as the central hub of Western Visayas.

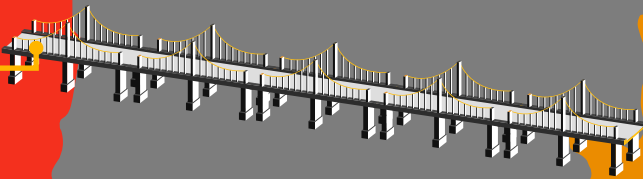
As the epicenter of the region, Iloilo City presents endless opportunities for businesses and investors seeking to tap into new markets and thrive in a favourable business environment. Set your course for success in Iloilo, where possibilities abound.





## Annual Paraw Regatta

It is a captivating spectacle that highlights the city's potential for water travel and a vibrant "yachtie" lifestyle. With a highly skilled workforce and a focus on health and fitness, Iloilo is poised to set sail towards new horizons.



Bacolod

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