

AN EX-ANTE STUDY OF THE PROPOSED WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT OF THE STA. ANA PORT FROM THE 25-YEAR DAVAO CITY TOURISM MASTER PLAN PHASE 1

By: Llomar Encenso Aguanta, Michelle Angela Haum Moreno, Marvic Loi Fuentes Landong, John Carlo Tagabunlang Barquin, & Chrystophyr Balsamo Trance

ABSTRACT

This study explores the proposed waterfront development from the ambitious yet promising 25-year Davao City Tourism Master Plan's (DTMP) Phase 1 project in Sta. Ana, Barangay 27-C, Davao City. The master plan aims to make the city's unique identity in promoting sustainable tourism development. Researchers sought to integrate Social, Economic, and Environmental development facets and the Mazmanian-Sabatier Implementation Model to identify the possible outcomes of the project while addressing its encumbered practical, stakeholder, and contextual gaps, and the absence of a related study. As this study employed a qualitative descriptive design while using Creswell's Thematic Analysis, findings revealed the need for stronger grassroots engagement, a comprehensive governance framework, and continuous monitoring of statutory and non-statutory factors. Beyond that, this study champions participatory governance and research-driven collaboration to position Sta. Ana's proposed waterfront development as both a local and global exemplar of sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: 25-year Davao Tourism Master Plan Phase 1, Participatory Governance, Sustainable Tourism Development

INTRODUCTION

Background

The development of coastal areas is characterized by specific traits influenced by multiple factors, including the type of development, visibility, land value, and environmental conditions. Social dynamics, such as community attributes, local customs, and traditions, affect and benefit from its expansion (Mostafa, 2017). Tourism is a crucial element in the economies of numerous countries, as it can generate several beneficial economic outcomes, including job creation and local economic growth. However, numerous challenges hinder the advancement of urban tourism due to inadequate coordination and planning among government agencies (Tseane-Gumbi & Wessels, 2022). The intricate nature of urban tourism encompasses potential impacts on the economy, society, and environment (Edwards et al., n.d.). Hence, the United Nations (n.d.) underscores the critical need for a robust legal framework to safeguard economic, social, environmental, and cultural rights, including the right to development.

The Amended Tourism Code of Davao City, officially known as Ordinance No. 0231-14 Series of 2014, serves as the primary ordinance governing tourism development and aims to create a cohesive strategy to enhance the tourism sector in Davao City (Tourism Code - Davao City Tourism Office, n.d.). In July 2022, the Local Government Unit of Davao (LGU Davao) approved its anticipated yet ambitious long-term tourism master plan. The plan illustrates the city's seamless growth in urban tourism. As the master plan identifies locations for future tourism infrastructure initiatives, the initial phase, which serves as the focal point of this study, will concentrate on tourism development at the Sta. Ana Waterfront Park (Alama, 2022).

The primary legal framework for this study is the Tourism Act of 2009 (RA 9593). Elazique & Javier (2011) emphasize that this act clearly delineates the shared roles of national and local governments in promoting tourism. Both governmental levels are tasked with devising and executing tourism development strategies, enforcing regulations, and collecting tourism-related data. National governments have

a responsibility to assist local governments (LGUs) in establishing and enforcing regulations, underscoring that tourism development is a collaborative responsibility of both national and local authorities.

Given the presence of significant shortcomings in the execution of the Davao Tourism Master Plan, such as inadequate research, weak regulatory enforcement, insufficient community involvement, lack of institutional checks and balances, and negative perceptions regarding tourism activities (Palafox Associates, 2022), the realization of the plan's goals is compromised, hampering sustainable development and growth prospects within Davao City's tourism sector. Hence, this study aims to assess how residents in Sta. Ana, Barangay 27-C, Davao City, and stakeholders perceive the proposed waterfront development outlined in the projected 25-year Davao City Tourism Master Plan (DTMP), evaluate its potential impacts across social, economic, and environmental dimensions, and recommend effective policies to enhance tourism management and government efficiency.

Theoretical Framework

This ex-ante study employed two theoretical frameworks. In the realm of policy development, this study considers national issues and concerns. Specifically, policy formulation is necessary to deliver products and services to the public. Conversely, an ex-ante study aims to anticipate policy outcomes, particularly concerning infrastructure planning (Dooren & Dorren, 2021). This type of evaluation primarily focuses on analyzing the project's necessity, priority, and adequacy, while also considering effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

The first theoretical framework utilized is the Mazmanian-Sabatier Implementation Model established by Paul Sabatier and Daniel Mazmanian in the 1980s. This framework seeks to comprehend the complexities of policy implementation within public administration and public policy. It emphasizes the influence of various actors and factors on the performance of public policy.

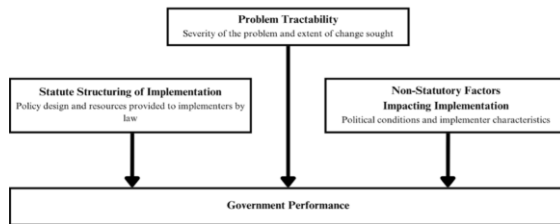


Figure 1: Mazmanian-Sabatier Implementation Model

The second framework applied in this study is the "Sustainability framework." While "sustainable development" can have various interpretations, it generally describes a development strategy that seeks a balance among often conflicting objectives while acknowledging the social, economic, and environmental constraints faced by society (Safdie, 2023).

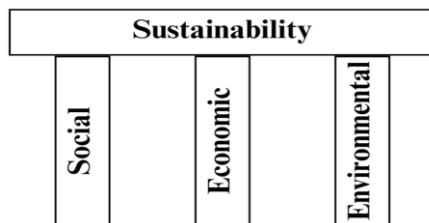


Figure 2: Sustainability Framework

Conceptual Framework

Figure 3 presents the study's proposed conceptual framework, which shows how the 25-year DTMP influences government performance. It considers variables such as statutory structuring (e.g., existing laws and regulations), problem tractability (research gaps in the DTMP), and vital non-statutory factors (e.g., effects on the sustainability pillars of affected barangays) that affect the master plan's implementation.

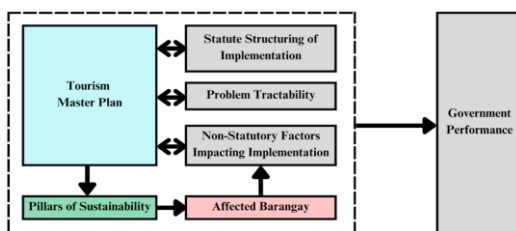


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do the residents of Sta. Ana, Barangay 27-C, and stakeholders perceive the proposed waterfront development project as outlined in the 25-year Davao City Tourism Master Plan Phase 1?
2. What potential social, economic, and environmental challenges may arise during the implementation phase?
3. What recommendations can be made to optimize the waterfront development project's alignment with the

Tourism Act of 2009 and the Davao City Amended Tourism Code?

Research Objectives

The study's objectives are to assess resident and stakeholder perceptions of the proposed development, evaluate its social, economic, and environmental impacts, and recommend policies for sustainable waterfront tourism.

Significance of the Study

The researchers aspire to bring and promote evidence-based tourism planning to fill critical gaps in stakeholders' engagement and coordination under a shared development agenda. Thus, the findings contribute to the tourism-related sectors (e.g., Department of Tourism, LGU Davao, NGOs, Stakeholders, etc.) and the academe to amplify more effective strategic and citizen-centered policy-making and investment planning to achieve long-term tourism pursuits.

Scope and Limitations

The study focuses on the implications of fiscal management on sustainable community factors and well-being over the next 25 years, incorporating perspectives from the technical working group of a proposed tourism master plan. As an "ex-ante" study, it uses a financial analysis based on the master plan's budget. Data collected in May 2024 provides a recent basis for analysis. However, the study is limited by the absence of key informants from the City Economic Enterprise, the City Engineering Office, and the Davao City Investment Promotion Center, which restricts insights into funding, economic impacts, and technical details, potentially affecting the understanding of the project's sustainability and revenue models.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researchers utilized the qualitative descriptive method design. The purpose of descriptive qualitative research is to produce a comprehensive and detailed description of the topic under investigation, which permits researchers to generate new research questions (Regoniel, 2023). This research method also aids decision-making, policy development, and program planning (Voxco, 2021). Moreover, utilizing the qualitative descriptive method gave the researcher more freedom to probe into the participants' comments, asking why or how (Mack et al., 2005), resulting in more in-depth data and a better knowledge of the community perception of Barangay 27-C and the stakeholders on the said waterfront development.

Research Instrument

The researchers employed in-depth interviews (IDIs) and key-informant interviews (KIIs) as data-collection instruments, and the questionnaires were verified and validated by the panel members. In-depth interviews (IDIs) offer the researcher the opportunity to acquire comprehensive and nuanced information, while drawbacks stem from the time required for both data collection and analysis (Jennings, 2005). Also, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) offer a valuable approach for gathering qualitative data, enabling the acquisition of significant insights and perspectives from key individuals within a particular domain

or institution, while also offering flexibility in formulating questions and subsequent inquiries (Brown, n.d.).

Locale of the Study

Located in the southeastern part of Mindanao, Philippines, Davao City spans from 6°58' to 7°34' N latitude and 125°14' to 125°40' E longitude. It is known as the largest city in the country in terms of land area, with a total land area of 2,444 sq km.

Table 1: Davao City Distribution of Overnight Travelers Year 2022 & 2021

Year	Foreign Travelers	Overseas Filipinos	Domestic Travelers	Total
Year 2022	40,930	5,899	850,440	897,269
Year 2021	8,169	1,091	295,082	304,342

Source: http://www.tourism.gov.ph/tourism_dem_sup_pub.aspx, 2021 & 2022

The tourist data for Davao City, sourced from the Tourism Demand Statistics of the Department of Tourism (2022 & 2021), specifically from the Regional Distribution of Overnight Travelers, as reflected in the annual reports for 2021 and 2022. In comparison, 2022 saw more travelers than 2021. Considering the massive tourism data gap due to the COVID-19 pandemic (International Monetary Fund, n.d.), it is observable that over the years, there has been a constant proliferation of the city. As such, approximately one million tourists visited Davao City between January and October 2023, according to Jennifer Romero, Officer-in-Charge of the City Tourism Operations Office (CTOO) (Patumbon, 2023).

The scope of this study is in the community of Sta. Ana, Barangay 27-C, Poblacion District, Davao City. The 2020 census shows that Barangay 27-C, formerly known as Poblacion, had a population of around 2,110, which constituted 0.12% of the city's total population. Meanwhile, in support of the data, the 2015 Census showed that the barangay had a household population of 2,097, distributed among 639 households, averaging 3.28 members per household. From the same census data, the age group with the highest population was 20 to 24 years of age, accounting for 356 individuals, while the age group with the lowest population was 75 to 79, with only 10 individuals (PhilAtlas, n.d.).

Table 2: Barangay 27-C Historical Population

Census Date	Population	Growth Rate
1990 May 1	2,805	-
1995 Sep 1	3,176	2.35% ↑
2000 May 1	2,596	-4.23% ↓
2007 Aug 1	2,331	-1.47% ↓
2010 May 1	2,117	3.44% ↓
2015 Aug 1	2,152	0.31% ↑
2020 May 1	2,110	0.41% ↓

Source: <https://www.philAtlas.com/mindanao/r11/davao-city/barangay-27-c.html>, n.d.

Moreover, the Economic Services Data for Barangay 27-C visualizes data from 2020 to 2022, based on the Davao

City General Profile from the City Planning and Development Coordinator's Office. As such, the data show that total capitalization and the declared number of employees are determinants of the economic status of establishments within Barangay 27-C.

Sampling Method

Purposive and snowball sampling methods were used in this study. By using the purposive sampling method as a nonprobability technique, researchers were able to select participants based on its specificity rather than randomness or generalization. Thus, when interpreted as selective sampling, it aids the study by providing rich data from in-depth interviews.

Sampling Size

In light of the fact that this study aims to investigate the different sectors in the community stakeholders regarding their comments and feedback about the Waterfront Development in their area and their opinions about the 25-year Davao Tourism Master Plan, the researchers aim to collect fair and diverse data from the participants to the best of their ability. This study also aims to explore the perspectives of selected personnel from the Davao City Tourism Operations Office, including the officer-in-charge, to evaluate the waterfront development master plan from their perspectives. In light of Dworkin's (2012) recommendation, this study employed a minimum of fifteen (15) participants.

Accordingly, sixteen (16) participants are from Sta. Ana is composed of nine (9) residents, six (6) business establishments, and the barangay captain. Additionally, one (1) personnel from the Davao City Tourism Operations Office and one (1) from the City Planning and Development Coordinator Office. In total, the study included eighteen (18) participants. Data collection was concluded when theme saturation was reached, indicated by repeated responses and the absence of new themes across subsequent interviews, indicating that the sample size was adequate.

Data Collection Method

Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) were used to collect data in this study. In semi-structured interviews, researchers can follow up on points as needed. Still, the structure is provided by a list of issues to be covered rather than particular questions (Thomas, 2016). Participants also possess knowledge, communication skills, a willingness to engage, objectivity, and a role in the community or understanding of the phenomenon, providing the researcher with the information they need (Marshall, 1996, as quoted by Cossham, 2019).

Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2014), as cited by Moules et al. (2017), a methodical approach to data coding involves analyzing and classifying individual statements into themes. Hence, the outlined process involves six steps for conducting thematic analysis (Caulfield, 2019). The first step is familiarization, where researchers review all gathered data. Second is the coding step, in which researchers highlight specific sections and assign codes to them. In step three, researchers identify patterns among the codes to generate

themes. The fourth step now involves reviewing the themes to ensure data relevance and accuracy; adjustments may be made if necessary. In the fifth step, themes are defined and given concise names. Lastly, the analysis is now written up to present findings and insights gained from the thematic analysis process.

An audit trail was maintained to document the progression from raw interview data to final themes. Initial interview excerpts were coded, grouped into categories, and refined into overarching themes to ensure transparency and analytical rigor.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are crucial in research, not just for achieving research objectives, but also for building trust and upholding human values (Ayenew, 2023). The researchers acknowledge the dignity of all participants and key informants and minimize potential risks, reflecting the Code's call for fairness and just treatment.

Accordingly, the researchers strictly adhered to the University's Guidelines for Ethics in Research in upholding academic integrity, social responsibility, and institutional reputation. With this, informed consents were given by the participants and key informants with utmost confidentiality and anonymity. Researchers also cited reliable sources with proper citation, preventing plagiarism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results highlighted the insights and patterns drawn from the data gathered by using the Thematic Analysis by Creswell. To move beyond descriptive reporting, the empirical themes are examined through the Mazmanian-Sabatier Implementation Model and the Sustainability Framework to explain how governance, participation, and non-statutory factors shape anticipated policy outcomes. This is also supported by using the Sustainability Framework to explain social, economic, and environmental dimensions that are affected and at risk.

Table 3: Integrated Summary of Results

Emergent Theme	Implementation Factor	Sustainability Implication
Balancing Positive Views & Reservations	Non-statutory factors & Problem tractability	Economic optimism tempered by social vulnerability
Relocation Anxieties	Problem tractability & Statute structuring	Community displacement and livelihood insecurity
Community Exclusion	Statute structuring & Non-statutory factors	Erosion of social equity and legitimacy
Long-Term Community Engagement	Statute structuring	Strengthened social inclusion and economic resilience
Socioeconomic Adjustments	Problem tractability	Disrupted livelihoods and household stability
Business displacement	Problem tractability & Statute structuring	Uneven local economic sustainability
Households' Economic Insecurity over Displacement and Relocation	Problem tractability & Non-statutory factors	Heightened social and economic vulnerability

Potential Environmental Impacts	Problem tractability & Statute structuring	Risks to ecological integrity
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Perceptions of Residents and Stakeholders

Balancing Positive Views and Reservations

Participants generally showed the proposed waterfront development as a beneficial initiative in enhancing local tourism and transcending economic growth. It is reflected as favorable non-statutory factors (e.g., public optimism and developmental expectations) that are crucial for public support and policy legitimacy. In the sustainability lens, residents associate the development project for employment generation, aligning with the economic pillar.

In contrast, displacement and community disruption concerns are concurrently expressed by the participants. These agitations transcended problem tractability where livelihood insecurity and community dispersion perplex the implementation. Moreover, these risks undermine the social pillar, especially in community cohesion, social justice, and equity.

Perceptions over Relocation

This theme revealed a profound range of perspectives in regards to the sensitivity of forced relocation. This resulted in participants' apprehension on the project's uncertainties, most especially of the community's survival and livelihood in times of post-relocation. Hence, relocation conveys deep stress and uneasiness on unfairness and inequality in the process. These perspectives represent a high problem tractability that necessitates long-term social support and coordination.

Forced relocation threatens both economic and social sustainability pillars as it compromises household and income security, and intergenerational stability. In connection, such perceptions of injustices stress the non-statutory factors that influence cultural attachment and public trust.

Potential Social, Economic, and Environmental Impact

Assessing in Community Involvement

Participants expressed their frustrations on their exclusion from the project's processes. Many highlighted a lack of opportunity in governance participation and emphasized the importance for stronger community engagement. This erodes statute structuring influenced by the limited institutionalization of participatory governance procedures. Thus, this gap directly implicates sustainability, particularly the social pillar. This is manifested by increasing the risk of conflict and resistance to the affected community.

These findings strongly emphasize a call of meaningful community involvement in the government processes beyond consultation and delegations. Participatory mechanisms are requisite ensuring equitable access in decision-making processes.

Community Engagement in Long-Term Planning

The Davao City Tourism Operations Office emphasized the significance of capacity building as a bedrock for meaningful engagement with the community. Meanwhile, the Davao City Planning and Development Office

underscores the significance of conducting community dialogue mechanisms in building communal consensus and understanding. This would navigate disagreements by instituting strong yet transparent communication that reduces problem tractability and further strengthens statute structuring. Therefore, institutionalized participation also bridging the gap for sustainable outcomes.

Socioeconomic Adjustments and Livelihood Security

Diverse perspectives were shared from participants on how government development projects and mandated relocations are expected to disruptively change their living conditions and community dynamics as a whole. Perceptions from the business sector and residents implores for a secure livelihood and providing them housing in the relocation site for their long-term stability. Such apprehensions heightened problem tractability and weakened the economic pillar due to the protracted socioeconomic vulnerability. In addition, participants' anticipations over government accountability implies the robustness of statute structuring in pursuit of social protection and economic inclusion.

Perspectives over Business Displacement

Concerns and worries of the business owners in Sta. Ana were encapsulated due to the looming threat of displacement and relocation. This reflects the structural inequalities driven by urban development initiatives. Business owners reflected their awareness and preparations of relocation despite dealing with the anticipation of income loss. This view suggests the limitation of their agency and establishing a survival-oriented mindset. Contrastingly, the result also revealed the eventual collapse of the business enterprise due to the area trajectory's dependence. Hence, some livelihoods are deeply relying on the geographic site of Sta. Ana. These concerns represent high problem tractability and weak statute structuring in the absence of safeguarding micro- and small-scale businesses, thereby weakening economic sustainability.

Households' Economic Insecurity over Displacement and Relocation

Similar perceptions to other themes, disruption of livelihood is still the major concern as they grapple with uncertainties about their future economic survival. As the proposed waterfront project viewed it with optimism with the aspiration in providing livelihood options to the established businesses and vendors, the fear of loss of income is consistent due to the anticipated movement. In addition, this would result in day-to-day struggles of accessing essential goods in the aftermath of relocation. Such conditions exacerbate problem tractability in the absence of strategic and systematic long-term economic planning of the project.

Potential Environmental Impacts

A wide range of perspectives were emphasized on the complex balance between ecological protection, economic survival, and governance that contribute to high problem tractability. Apprehensions over fishing restrictions were discussed, most especially for small-scale fishermen whose livelihood are dependent on marine resources. Also, concerns were revealed over the long-term effects of the

possible water pollution that may highly affect marine biodiversity. This is supported by some participants who pointed out the prevailing improper waste water disposal practices.

On the level of the barangay and City Tourism Office, they highlight the prominence of community participation in overseeing the enforcement of environmental regulations. This highlights the protection of the environmental pillar and the role of non-statutory factors in pursuit of a balanced ecological resilience and tourism development.

Recommendations to optimize the waterfront development

Legal and Strategic Foundations

The effective implementation of tourism and urban development initiatives in Davao City underscores the critical role of integrating legal and strategic frameworks from the earliest stages of planning. To achieve this, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was formed, which was composed of government offices, private sector representatives, and legal experts to ensure that initiatives such as the Tourism Master Plan are firmly anchored on sound legal grounds. The participation of the City Legal Department further guarantees compliance with both local and national laws to reduce delays and potential conflicts. This collaborative, well-structured approach streamlines implementation and highlights the significance of robust legal and strategic planning in public initiatives.

Governance Continuity and Accountability

The analysis from key informants in the Davao City Tourism Operations Office and the City Planning and Development Office highlights pressing issues of governance continuity, transparency, and accountability in the implementation of the city projects and tourism plans. Participants emphasize the need for a systematic monitoring progress, highlighting the existence of a dedicated unit within the City Planning and Development Office for this purpose. Such mechanisms are vital to prevent project delays and to ensure that initiatives continue despite changes in administration. To safeguard long-term investments, participants proposed the enactment of an ordinance to safeguard the Davao City Tourism Master Plan to protect it from shifting priorities and or being undermined by political changes. Participants also raised concerns about gaps between national and local governmental actions, and advocated for transparency and accountability, particularly in advocating for public access to financial reports from the City Treasurer and the Commission on Audit (COA). Transparency is deemed crucial for fostering public trust and identified as a crucial step towards governance integrity.

Constructive Feedback and Adaptive Planning

A participant acknowledges public dissatisfaction, particularly in relation to marine life conservation, and emphasizes the need to address these concerns through improved communication strategies. They assert that such communication is vital for ensuring everyone understands project objectives and potential impacts. The participant also notes the risks of disregarding critical feedback, as it may hinder implementation and create future challenges.

Ignoring key feedback from decision-makers can lead to significant issues, highlighting the importance of continuous dialogue to maintain flexibility in planning. This ensures initiatives are both community-informed and adaptable to evolving challenges and insights.

Implications

Implication to Theory

Rosenbaum (1980) emphasizes the importance of legislative enactments that necessitate significant adjustments to public behavior patterns. The study highlights the importance of community involvement in decision-making and the role of statutes in guiding administrative organizations. It shows that non-statutory factors, such as public awareness and cultural changes, greatly influence waterfront development projects. Wittwer et al. (2017) define problem tractability as the characteristics of a social problem that influence the difficulty of formulating and implementing effective policies. Based on the findings, challenges like business displacement and environmental impacts complicate policy formulation and implementation.

Furthermore, this study contextually extends the Mazmanian-Sabatier Implementation Model to an ex-ante policy setting and barangay level to effectively illustrate how sustainability pursuits and implementation constraints play together in developing urban tourism infrastructure conditions.

Implication to Academe

The study highlights key implications for academic programs in Public Management and Tourism. It emphasizes the need for these fields to develop innovative solutions to address social issues at the grassroots level. The findings encourage these programs to create mechanisms and research focused on community involvement in decision-making, addressing concerns like insecurity related to displacement in areas such as Barangay 27-C, Sta. Ana.

By examining successful cases of community participation, Public Management can learn to frame initiatives that promote citizen engagement. Likewise, Tourism programs can explore the significance of inclusivity in decision-making, supporting sustainable practices. Academe can also foster collaborative research on citizen-government interactions, ensuring community development goals are met through awareness and cooperation.

Implication to Practice

The study highlights important points for the Local Government Unit of Davao, focusing on public management and sustainable tourism development. It emphasizes the need for conservation of the city's socio-economic and environmental aspects. The waterfront development in Sta. Ana, Barangay 27-C is part of a tourism master plan aimed

at driving local economic growth and creating jobs. The involvement of local residents and businesses in planning is crucial for minimizing negative impacts and enhancing benefits. Ongoing capacity building for the Local Government is necessary to manage tourism sustainably, along with enforcing environmental policies and ensuring fair distribution of tourism benefits. Incorporating public management principles into tourism policies is essential for effective governance.

Conclusion

This study intends to assess the perspective of the residents in Sta. Ana and stakeholders on the proposed waterfront development as detailed in the 25-year Davao City Tourism Master Plan, analyze its likely effects on various aspects like social, economy, and environment, and suggest effective policies to improve tourism management and governmental effectiveness. The findings revealed that the project is constrained by citizen engagement, governance and sustainability concerns, aside from being viewed as a catalyst for urban tourism growth.

A core issue pertains to the limited community involvement in decision-making fostered perceptions of exclusions among residents in the planning process. This governance gap resulted from relocation-related anxieties among households and small business owners who are facing insecure tenure, livelihood disruption, and uneven access to support mechanisms.

Issue and concern over environmental sustainability were also manifested. Fishing restrictions, water quality, and waste management were raised that needed for a stronger community participation for monitoring and compliance.

Moreover, this study underscores the essence of establishing a strong legal and institutional foundation, principally on mechanisms that safeguard the tourism development plan from political movements. In maintaining public trust while managing long-term uncertainties, this study suggests having a profound stakeholder engagement, adaptive planning, social and project impact assessments, and contingency plans.

As this study focuses on an Ex-ante analysis, it holds significant potential for future student researchers interested in exploring the practical implementation of the 25-Year Davao City Tourism Masterplan or conducting an ex-post evaluation of this proposed development initiative. Hence, it offers the study with valuable insights and a comprehensive basis for comparison in evaluating the effectiveness of the tourism masterplan's execution.

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