

# QC dads approve P27.8-b city budget for next year

By Rio N. Araja

**T**HE 37-member Quezon City Council has approved a P27.8-billion budget for 2020, with social services getting the biggest chunk of next year's budget, jumping 32 percent from P8.4 billion in 2019.

It was a 23-percent increase from the 2019 city government budget of P21.3 billion.

The 2020 budget for social services, P12.2 billion, comprises about 44 percent of the total budget, Mayor Joy Belmonte said.

The city government has earmarked P10.1 billion for general public services,

P4.2 billion for economic services, and P1.2 billion for the legislative branch.

"From Day 1, I knew that the bedrock of this administration would be service to the people," Belmonte said.

"We will build on our gains in the past, continue all good programs, projects and create new, stronger sustainable ones," she added.

Assistant city administrator for finance Don Javillonar said the city government has focused on the delivery of social services through the Social Services Development Department and veered away from the usual practice on putting premium on infrastructure.

"We are balancing between growth of the city and the welfare of our people. We want to improve the lives of our people, we need to give back to them

by putting the bulk of the budget on SSDD," he said.

According to Belmonte, for 2020, the city government has multiplied four times the allocation for medicine and medical supplies to P2.2 billion; increased medical assistance from P3,000 to P5,000; and raised burial assistance from P10,000 to P25,000.

Moreover, the city government has allocated P90 million for the healthcare coverage for all city hall employees.

Despite the increase in next year's budget, Belmonte gave the assurance that the city government would not burden residents and businesses with increased taxes.

"We will simply intensify our tax collection efforts to fund our budget," she said.