

QC terminates delinquent contracts

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Following an internal review ordered by Mayor Joy Belmonte, the Quezon City government has canceled several non-performing, delinquent or anomalous contracts to free up more resources that may be used in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The city's Internal Audit Service (IAS) has flagged and endorsed for cancellation around 40 projects approved during the previous administration, including Phases II and III of the construction of the QC Convention Center.

"When the IAS was formed in 2019, its main purpose was to ensure that funds are allocated properly and efficiently, toward the best use of taxpayers. This comprehensive review is an essential part of transparent governance, and assures accountability to every QCitizen," Belmonte said yesterday.

"Moreover, given the expected downturn in our revenue due to COVID-19, the termination of these deficient contracts is the solution to free up the necessary resources to address the effects of the pandemic," she added.

During the review, local officials found that several contracts remain unfinished even after months of its supposed completion date.

For instance, the Phase II of the construction of the Convention Center is still less than 75 percent complete more than a year after the initial contract deadline in August 2019.

According to the city government, the contractor requested for repeated extensions of the completion date and even asked for an additional P35 million to cover for the cost of delays.

The Phase III was suspended after its contractor failed to start the project in July 2019.

"Apart from the questionable terms of these projects and the massive delays in their execution, the pandemic has pushed other initiatives ahead of the Convention Center," said city legal chief Niño Casimiro.