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## Banawe historical preservation sought

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The local government of Quezon City is seeking to preserve the historical significance of Banawe and maximize its tourism potential.

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte stressed that while Banawe is known as the central hub for car parts and automotive services, they also wanted to push it as a destination brimming with historical significance and vibrant tourism potential.

She also said that the local government is envisioning Banawe as a cultural haven that celebrates the city's deep-rooted connection to its Filipino-Chinese community.

During a recent Chinese New Year celebration, Belmonte outlined the city's plans, stressing the growing allure of Banawe beyond its traditional offerings and cited the area's burgeoning culinary scene, boasting an array of delectable Chinese restaurants and its diverse retail shops, drawing in crowds with their unique charm.

"At this point, the local government is at the forefront of preserving Banawe's historical significance and maximizing its tourism potential," Belmonte said.

"As a matter of fact, we are in the process of rehabilitating Quezon City's Chinatown in partnership with the various Filipino-Chinese organizations with the objective of putting this tourism district on the map of the best locations to explore here in our city," she added.

The QC mayor also stressed the importance of preserving Banawe's historical significance as they collaborated with various FilipinoChinese organizations, is actively involved in rehabilitating Quezon City's Chinatown, aiming to place it firmly on the map as a must-visit tourist destination.

And while the project has not been without its critics, with some voicing concerns about the use of taxpayer money, Belmonte firmly addressed these concerns, highlighting the collaborative spirit behind the initiative.

She underscored the crucial role played by the Chinese-Filipino community, their investments in the city and their ongoing partnership in making Quezon City a more attractive destination.

Belmonte's personal connection to the project adds another layer of depth. As a proud member of a FilipinoChinese family, she shared the story of her grandfather, Go Puan Seng, who emigrated from Fujian Province and co-founded the Fookien Times newspaper in the 1920s. She also mentioned her mother, Betty Go-Belmonte, who continued the legacy of responsible journalism with the Philippine Star. These contributions, along with countless others from the Filipino-Chinese community, have significantly shaped the city's landscape and cultural fabric.