

Baguio Overview

The name Baguio conjures, for both the international and domestic traveler, a highland retreat in the Grand Cordillera in Northern Luzon, with pine trees, crisp cold breezes and low verdant knolls and hillocks. Through the numerous decades Baguio has morphed from what was once a grassy marshland into one of the cleanest and greenest, most highly urbanized cities in the country. It has made its mark as a premiere tourist destination in the Northern part of the Philippines with its cool climate, foggy hills, panoramic views and lovely flowers. Being the ideal convergence zone of neighboring highland places, Baguio is the melting pot of different peoples and cultures and has boosted its ability to provide a center for education for its neighbors. Its rich culture and countless resources have lured numerous investments and business opportunities to the city.

Geography

Baguio City is approximately 250 kilometers north of Manila, situated in the Province of Benguet. The area of the city is 49 square kilometers enclosed in the perimeter of 30 kilometers. The developed portion of the city corresponds to the plateau that rises to an elevation of 1,400 meters. Most of it lies in the northern half of the city. The City is landlocked within the province of Benguet, thus bounding it on all sides by its different municipalities; on the North by the capital town of La Trinidad, on the East by Itogon and to the South and West by Tuba. With City Hall as reference point, it extends 8.2 kilometers from East to West and 7.2 kilometers from North to South. It has a perimeter of 30.98 kilometers. The City has twenty administrative districts among which its barangays are divided.

Climate

Baguio is 8 degrees cooler on the average than any place in lowlands. When Manila sweats at 35 degrees centigrade or above, Baguio seldom exceeds 26 degrees centigrade at its warmest. Baguio is very wet during the Philippine rainy season, which is from June to October. It gets the biggest amount of rainfall in the country, twice the volume of rainfall in the country as compared to Manila. However from November to May, Baguio becomes a tropical paradise, a refreshing break from the hot and humid Philippine climate. Christmas season is when Baguio glows with the nippy winter air. In the summer month of March, April, May, Baguio lives up to its title as the "Summer Capital" of the Philippines when thousands of visitors from the lowlands and Manila take their annual exodus to the city to cool off. Casual clothing is recommended worn with jackets or sweaters in the late afternoons or evenings.

Demographics

The city's population as of May 2000 was placed at 250,000 persons. The projected population for the current year 2001 is 254,499 and is expected to further increase to reach 275,472 by 2005 and as little over the three hundred thousand mark, 303,540 by 2010. The city has a very young age structure as 65.5 percent of its total population is below thirty years old. Females comprise 51.3 percent of the population as against 48.7 percent for males. The household population comprises 98 percent of the total population or 245,000 persons. With an average of 4.6 members per household, a total of 53,261 household are gleaned. During the peak of the annual tourist influx, particularly during the Lenten period, transients triple the population.

Social Development

Baguio City is now gaining prominence as a regional center for health services in the Cordilleras. The presence of the Baguio General Hospital and

Medical Center as the only tertiary health facility in the area complimented by the modern specialized facilities and services of the private sector greatly enhances the city's capability in the delivery of health services. The presence of a well-placed and community based has prevented the incidence of epidemics and unwarranted breakouts for the past two decades. The health situation in the city can be described as satisfactory. The local health personnel through 8 District Health Centers, 8 Sub-District Health Centers and a Main Health Center ably sustain this. However, while the present systems are functional, foresight in programming available resources as well as expanding the coverage of health services becomes imperative to meet the needs of a rapidly increasing population. Growing concern is becoming evident in the areas of urban housing and sustaining public safety and protection. The city being a high migration area faces problems on squatting due to immigration. The peace and order situation is generally satisfactory and under in public safety and protection proved to be very effective. This approach involves in different barangays in surveillance, intelligence and crime prevention activities. Premised on the concept of police-community partnership, the implementation of the system is assisted by the 8 police sub-stations or Bababayan Centers strategically located in various parts of the city. The Office of the City Social Welfare and Development Officer served a total of 23,742 clients, 3.82 percent higher than last year. Children were the largest group served comprising 37.21 percent of the total; Followed by the Family Heads & Other Needy Adults (FHONA) with 36.30 percent. The third top clientele includes elderly representing 9.53 percent while the youth group comes in fourth with 7.80 percent share of the total clientele served. Temporary shelter and protective custody were provided to 614 individuals. Majority of the clients included children and stranded clients.

Environment

The City's main attraction is still its natural bounties of cool climate, panoramic vistas, its pine forests and generally clean environs. Today, it still boasts of 5 forest reserves with a total area of 434.77 hectares. Three of these areas are watersheds that serve as sources of the City's water supply. Of the City's total land area, only 467.5 hectares (8.1 percent) still have old growths of pine while 1,137.5 hectares (19.8 percent) have production pine stands and 122.5 hectares (2.1 hectares) are brush lands. The remaining area of 4,021.1905 hectares making up 70.0 percent of the total comprises the developed portion. There are five major creeks/waterways that serve as a natural drains leading to the lowlands. These continue to serve as sources for irrigation of cultural lands along its banks. There are also nine major springs that continue to supply water in various areas of the city, mostly those that have not been reached by or cannot be served by the water system. The overall water consumption expanded by 3.05 percent over the previous year, contributing to the increase is the presence of metered deep wells (private wells) wherein volume of production is being paid to Baguio Water District. Continuing efforts to conserve the environment through public and private sector partnerships are being embarked upon. The City has initiated and persistently implemented its solid and liquid waste management program. The Baguio Sewage Treatment Plant, the only one of its kind in the country, now operates at percent of its rated capacity. The city is currently implementing a citywide installation of secondary bilateral inlet pipes to enable majority of the city to gain access to the services of the treatment plant. Solid Waste Management now covers 98percent of the total 128 barangays. Most of the City's total households or 99 percent are served regularly. The average solid waste density per kilograms per cubic meter is 300. The volume of waste collected decreased by 0.31 percent. This is attributed to the proliferation of ambulant scavengers who roam around the

City pulling out recyclable materials from piles of solid wastes before the regular collection. The facility is now operating at 103.97 percent rated capacity more than last year's level of 93.32 percent. Its performance continue to improve with 90.04 and 91.11 percent reduction rate of biochemical oxygen demand and chemical oxygen demand compared to the allowable standard of 85 percent. The average Total Suspended Particulates (TSP) in micro gram per normal cubic meter is 200 in 2003 and 198 in 2004, taking into account the air quality of the surrounding areas of the Central Business Areas which are still within the fair to good condition since Baguio City has a good to fair air quality. The Ambient Air Quality (AAQ) Standard is pegged at 230 TSP.

Source: <https://new.baguio.gov.ph/about-baguio/>

Main source of air pollution in Baguio

The main source of pollution seems to be coming from vehicular exhausts. Over a period of time, Baguio's image was tainted by worsening traffic and pollution. Motor vehicles, whether parked or not, occupied much of the road space. Pavements were narrowed or eliminated in order to widen the roads to create more lanes for cars.

Baguio became notorious for gridlock, especially during the holidays when thousands of cars would ascend from the lowlands. Because of this, the stench of vehicle exhaust replaced Baguio's pine-scented air.

Source: <https://www.iqair.com/philippines/car/baguio>