

**TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF THE PHILIPPINES**

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**SALAMYAAN: A Community-Driven Modernization of the Marikina Sports Center  
through Universal Design**

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The Project

Globally, modernization in architecture has gained prominence as cities and communities transform aging buildings, structures, and facilities to meet the evolving needs of modern society (Migdol, 2020, para. 2). This trend often involves the revitalization of outdated public spaces and infrastructure to accommodate expanding populations, promote innovation, and enhance functionality. In many cases, modernization also incorporates principles of sustainability, inclusivity, and accessibility, ensuring that new developments address environmental challenges while providing equitable access to resources and services (California College of the Arts, 2017; Welch, 2023; Cromwell Architects Engineers, Inc., 2024). This international movement reflects a shift in architectural practices that embrace adaptive reuse, technological advancements, and community-centered design to create spaces that are both forward-thinking and responsive to societal changes.

In the Philippines, the Marikina Sports Center, established in 1969 (Tugano, 2019, p. 249), stands as an example of an aging facility that no longer fully serves the needs of the modern community. Built over five decades ago, it was designed for a much smaller population and under very different social conditions. The population of Marikina grew by approximately 1027.32% from 40,455 in the 1960s to 456,059 in 2020 (Marikina City Planning Office, 2023). Today, it struggles to provide the level of service and accessibility required by a growing and diverse society, as evidenced with a lack of universal design just by simply visiting the center. Moreover, its aging infrastructure is a cause for concern (Tugano, 2019, p. 251). Marikina City's mission to become a model for local governance—focused on providing participative, inclusive, and high-quality public services—underscores the urgent need to upgrade the sports center. The city is committed to addressing both the practical and strategic needs of its institutions, environs, and constituents, but the current state of the sports center does not entirely reflect these aspirations. Furthermore, Marikina's objective of fostering a "healthier, livelier, and community-centered citizenry" (Marikina City Planning Office, 2018, p. 43) is hindered by the outdated infrastructure of the sports center. One of the ways that the city envisions encouraging a healthy lifestyle is by promoting the use of the Marikina Sports Center for local events. The center boasts numerous amenities, yet, despite these offerings, the facilities require substantial updates to cater to a wide and diverse set of users (Reyes, 2023).



Additionally, Marikina's vision to promote health and wellness includes providing residents with greater access to health and recreational facilities. A key success indicator for this goal is the increased number of visitors and participants in activities at the Marikina Sports Center by 2024. Moreover, Marikina City 1st District Rep. Marjorie Ann "Maan" Teodoro has further emphasized the importance of athletic development by expressing her goal of helping the city produce its first Olympic gold medalist (Quismorio, 2024). However, achieving such an ambitious goal requires the sports center to be upgraded to meet international standards, providing local aspiring athletes with the training facilities they need to compete at the highest level.

Given the current state of the Marikina Sports Center and the evolving needs of its community, modernization is not only necessary but urgent. The transformation into the Modern Marikina Sports Center (henceforth, Modern MSC) would enable the facility to meet the city's vision of promoting health and wellness while aligning with international architectural trends focused on sustainability, innovation, and inclusivity. This modernization would equip the center with updated and adaptable infrastructure, enhanced accessibility, and new innovations, allowing it to serve as a community hub that promotes active lifestyles and supports Marikina's aspiration to develop world-class athletes. By aligning with global trends and local goals, the Modern MSC would stand as a beacon of progress and a replicable model for other sports facilities across the Philippines.



## 1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

### 1.2.

#### **Primary Issue: Outdated Infrastructure and Lack of Accessibility.**

The Marikina Sports Center, built in 1969, was designed for a smaller community with simpler needs. Over time, the facility has become outdated, no longer serving the growing, diverse population of Marikina effectively. Its aging structure lacks the necessary inclusivity and accessibility features, preventing equitable access for vulnerable groups, including PWDs, the elderly, women, and children. As a result, the community is deprived of a sports facility that meets universal design standards and supports broad participation across all demographics, from recreational users to aspiring athletes.

#### **Sub-Problems:**

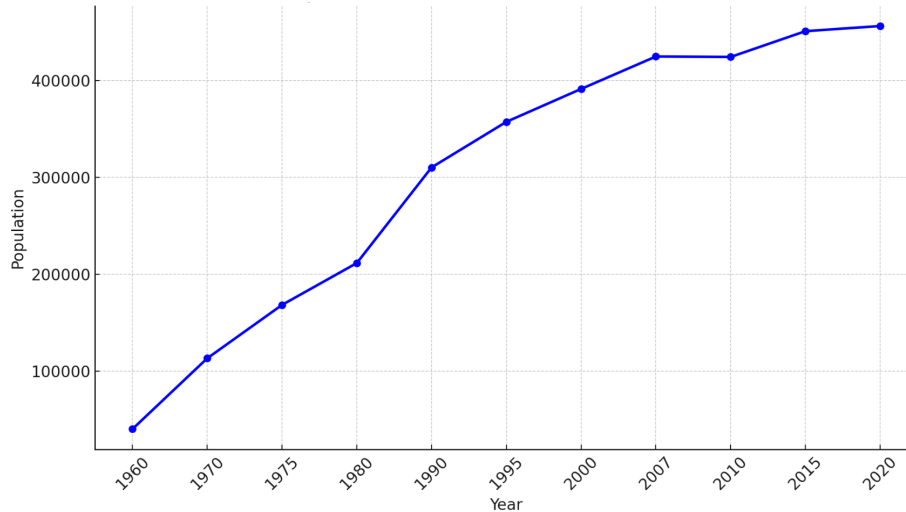
##### **1. Growing Demand and Limited Functionality**

- Marikina's population has surged by over 1,000% from the 1960s, rising to 456,059 residents by 2020. This expansion demands enhanced facilities to accommodate varied sports, training, and community activities. Currently, the sports center's limited layout and outdated amenities do not allow for such versatility, constraining its potential as a vibrant community hub and reducing its overall functionality





Fig. 1.0 - Population Growth of Marikina City (1960 - 2020)



Data from Marikina City Planning Office. (2023, p. 6,) modified By the Author (2024)

## 2. Insufficient Accessibility and Inclusivity Features

- The existing design lacks universal accessibility, failing to provide the necessary features for PWDs and other marginalized users. This exclusionary setup contrasts sharply with Marikina's mission of being a model for inclusive public service. Without architectural interventions that meet universal design standards, the sports center limits opportunities for equitable participation and isolates certain groups from a public resource intended for all.

## 3. Need for Community-Centered, Sustainable Solutions

- Marikina's mission to promote health, wellness, and community cohesion is hampered by the outdated state of the sports center. The current facility does not fully align with Marikina's vision of fostering a healthier, more active community, nor does it support sustainability efforts essential to urban development. An upgraded, sustainable design would not only benefit users but also position the sports center as a model for other facilities nationwide.

**Justification and Need for Architectural Intervention** is that the issues facing the Marikina Sports Center call for an architectural solution that addresses these problems with a comprehensive, design-based approach. Modernizing the facility through community-centered design and universal accessibility features would enable it to serve as a true community resource, supporting both everyday recreation and athletic training. Furthermore, by incorporating sustainable design principles, the modernization can mitigate



environmental impact while meeting Marikina's goals of inclusivity and public wellness. This transformation aligns with global trends in architecture that emphasize adaptive reuse, inclusivity, and innovation, positioning the Modern Marikina Sports Center as a replicable model for inclusive, sustainable design in the Philippines.

**Call for Action** to meet these needs, the modernization of the Marikina Sports Center will focus on adaptable, inclusive, innovative, and sustainable design interventions that address the community's evolving needs and support Marikina's goal of producing world-class athletes. This architectural project will serve as both a local solution and an adaptable model for nationwide application.

### 1.3. POSITIONALITY OF THE RESEARCHER

#### 1.3.

The choice to carry out this study was motivated in large part by the proponent's own experiences as a PWD with an active lifestyle, which is one of the many groups utilizing the spaces within the MSC. Consistent physical activity has improved the proponent's physical and emotional well-being and significantly impacted their life. The researcher's recent experiences have inspired him to continue investigating the many advantages of exercise and how it may improve people's quality of life regardless of their circumstances.

The researcher approaches this work from both an academic and a personal perspective, having firsthand knowledge of the advantages of keeping an active, healthy body. The proponent hopes to uplift others by sharing personal tales and adding to the expanding amount of research emphasizing physical fitness's vital role in overall well-being. Furthermore, a thorough and impartial strategy will be adopted to guarantee a true and complete perspective that appeals to a wide audience, despite the researcher's awareness that personal experiences may bring bias.



## 1.4. PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### 1.4.

#### 1.4.1. Project Goal

The proposed Modern Marikina Sports Center (Modern MSC) aims to redevelop the facility into a state-of-the-art sports complex that exemplifies inclusivity, accessibility, and sustainability. Designed as a fully modernized space, the project will provide for diverse user needs, including those of individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable sectors, in a facility optimized for environmental sustainability. The Modern MSC seeks to serve as a transformative model for future sports centers across the Philippines, setting a new national standard for inclusive design and sustainable practices within the built environment.

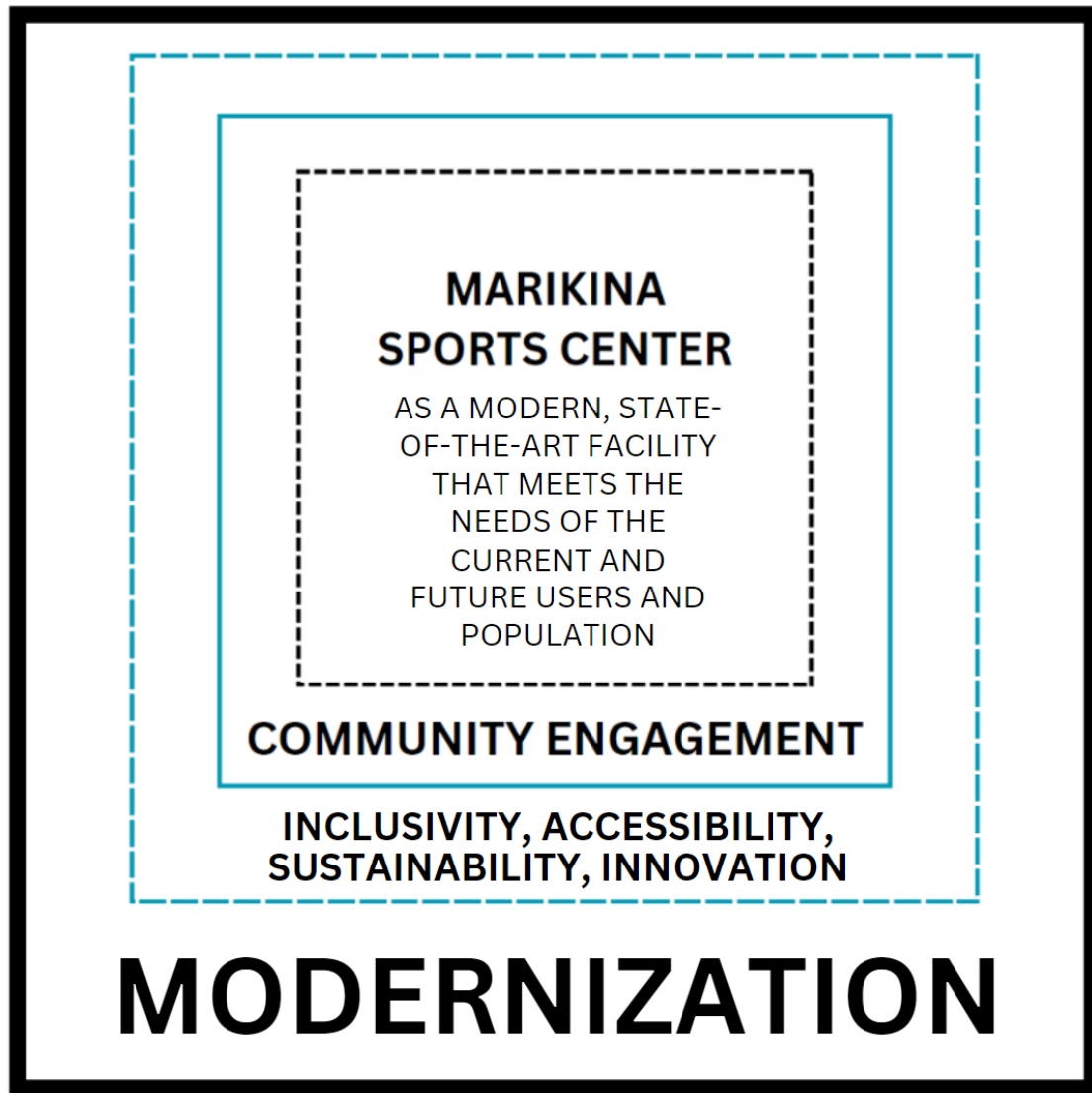
#### 1.4.2. Project Objectives



The primary goals and expected results of the study are highlighted in the objectives of this research, which are listed below:

- To **redevelop** the sports center with innovative technologies design strategies and contemporary accessibility and universal design principles, ensuring all users, regardless of ability, can easily navigate and utilize the facility.  
**(Performance Indicator: Compliance with universal accessibility standards)**
- To create specialized areas and amenities tailored to support a range of abilities and physical activities, encouraging participation from all segments of the community.  
**(Performance Indicator: Completion of dedicated inclusive spaces)**
- To incorporate **sustainable architectural practices** from the ground up, emphasizing eco-friendly materials, energy efficiency, and resilience to environmental impacts.  
**(Performance Indicator: Reduction in carbon footprint, surveys one year post-completion)**
- To design spaces that foster a strong sense of community through accessible, inclusive layouts and programming, encouraging participation across all backgrounds.  
**(Performance Indicator: Increased community satisfaction measured through surveys one year post-completion)**

Fig. 1.1 - Project Goals and Objectives



By the Author (2024)

1.5.



## 1.5. THE CLIENTS

### 1.5.1. Background of the Marikina City Local Government

Fig 1.2 - Marikina City Seal



Marikina City 2023

According to the government website, Marikina City (2023, para. 26), is a verdant valley surrounded by mountain ranges and divided by a river, Marikina is one of the sixteen cities and municipalities that make up the Metro Manila region. It is located at 14° 35' latitude and 14° 41' longitude, about 21 kilometers from Manila. Moreover, The Augustinians arrived in 1500, and the Jesuits followed in 1630, founding a mission in what was then known as Mariquina, which was renamed Marikina in 1901. These events marked the beginning of Marikina's history. The city, which was well-known for its shoe manufacturing, had fast industrial expansion in the 20th century but also had to deal with issues including urban sprawl and river pollution. Marikina, which became a city in 1996, has seen tremendous revitalization since 1992. It is now a dynamic, contemporary metropolis renowned for its urban development, government, and well-behaved citizenry (Marikina City, 2023, para. 1-7).

#### 1.5.1.1. Vision and Mission Statement of Marikina City

**Vision:** “A sustainable city of empowered, value-driven, and heritage-rich community-centered citizens; thriving in an orderly and livable environment; propelled by a vibrant economy; supported by well-planned infrastructure systems and responsive public service recognized in the Philippines as a model city for local governance.” (Marikina City, n.d. p.4)

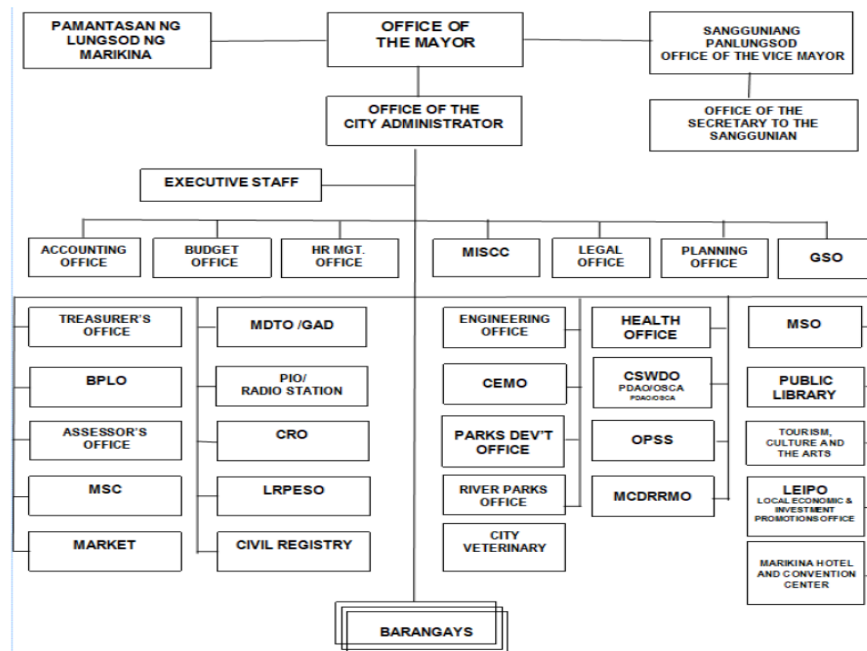
**Mission:** “Marikina City is moving towards becoming a model city for local governance providing participative, inclusive and excellent quality of public services which timely responds to both the practical and strategic needs of the city: its local institution, environs, community and constituents.” (Marikina City, n.d. p.4)



By promoting a modernized environment for all residents, Marikina's goal of a sustainable, community-centered, heritage-rich city backed by well-planned infrastructure is in line with the proposed Inclusive Marikina Sports Center (Modern MSC). The purpose of Modern MSC is to provide world-class sporting facilities that are accessible to a broad range of groups, including women, children, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable sectors, while also encouraging equality and community involvement. This goal is closely linked to the mission's emphasis on engagement and inclusive governance.

### 1.5.1.2. Organizational Chart of the Marikina City Government

Figure 1.3 - Marikina City Government Organizational Chart



Marikina City (2023)

The Office of the Mayor is at the highest level of the Marikina City Government organizational chart, which also shows important divisions including the Executive Staff, the Office of the City Administrator, and the Sangguniang Panlungsod (City Council). Several offices, such as the GSO, the Legal Office, the MISCC (Management Information System & Call Center), and the like, are responsible for certain tasks. These offices include health, engineering, parks development, and local economic investment. The organizational structure makes sure that all sectors work together in collaboration to support the infrastructure, community needs, and administration of the city.



## 1.5.2. Background of the Marikina Sports Center

Fig. 1.4 - Marikina Sports Park Logo



Marikina Sports Center (n.d.)

Fig. 1.5 - Marikina Sports Center Running Track and Swimming Pool



Alvez (2024)

The Marikina Sports Center (MSC), originally established in 1969 as the Rizal Sports Complex (Tugano, 2019, p. 248), has long been a significant fixture in the city of Marikina. Over the years, it has evolved beyond just a venue for sporting events, becoming a vibrant hub for various community activities and civic functions. Its architect was **Arch. Ruperto Cecilio Gaité** (Olivares, 2020). The sports center holds a special place in the lives of Marikina residents, as it serves not only local athletes but also the general public, making it an integral part of the city's social and cultural fabric. The MSC's spacious grounds and accessible location have made it a go-to spot for public gatherings, including recreational and fitness activities for people of all ages (Tugano, 2019, pp. 262-275).





During the COVID-19 pandemic, the MSC took on a new role as one of Metro Manila's largest quarantine facilities, accommodating a large number of patients and serving as a vital component in the city's pandemic response. This transformation into a medical and isolation center was critical in managing the region's healthcare capacity during the height of the crisis (Marquez, 2020, para. 1,3). This highlights the versatility and significance of the facility in addressing public health emergencies, not just sporting needs. In addition to its use during the pandemic, the MSC has hosted prominent events such as the Palarong Pambansa in 2023, a national sports competition that brings together athletes from all over the Philippines (Dioquino, 2023, para. 1). The event demonstrated the center's ability to cater to high-profile sporting events, drawing attention to the potential of the MSC as a prime venue for both national and regional competitions. Despite the milestones achieved by the Marikina Sports Center (MSC), its aging infrastructure has become inadequate for meeting the evolving needs of its users, particularly persons with disabilities (PWDs). The facilities, which have not undergone significant upgrades in recent decades, present accessibility challenges for PWD athletes. Tugano (2019) highlights that the MSC's outdated design falls short in modern safety standards (p. 251).



### 1.5.2.1. Timeline of Architecturally Relevant Events of the Marikina Sports Center

#### May 3, 1914

- The land on which the Marikina Sports Center (MSC) stands was officially registered with the Land Registration Commission (1982). The Transfer Certificate of Title documented the lot as covering approximately 57,305 square meters.
- The initial registration of the MSC land reflects Marikina's long-standing commitment to designated public spaces for recreation and community gatherings. This foundational event underscores the importance of maintaining this historical site while adapting it to meet the needs of a contemporary urban population. The modernization can emphasize respecting this legacy by enhancing the center's relevance and accessibility for future generations.

#### 1969

- The construction of the Marikina Sports Center, then named the Rodriguez Sports Center (RSC), was completed (Tugano, 2019. p. 248). Its architect was **Arch. Ruperto Cecilio Gaité** (Olivares, 2020). This development marked the establishment of a dedicated space for sports and public recreation within Marikina
- The original construction as the Rodriguez Sports Center marks the first formal step toward creating a dedicated sports and recreational facility in Marikina. Modernization efforts can build on this foundation by upgrading the infrastructure to reflect present-day standards and amenities, responding to how recreational and sporting activities have evolved since the center's inception

#### 2001

- Upon Marikina's designation as a city in 1996, full management of the sports complex transferred to the city government. Olivares (2016) and Tugano (2019) stated that the sports was fully renovated when it was under Mayor Bayani Fernando. Moreover, under Mayor Maria Lourdes "Marides" Fernando, the complex was renamed the Marikina Sports Center, later rebranded as the Marikina Sports Park, a name emphasizing accessibility and community use. This rebranding reflected a vision of the complex as an inclusive public park, even amidst Marikina's growth as an urban center (Andres, 2019; ETMSP, 2019, as cited in Tugano, 2019).
- This change represented Marikina's growing urban identity and an effort to make the space more accessible to a broader community, aligning with modernization. This rebranding serves as a precedent for creating an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable facility that accommodates diverse groups and activities.



## **2017**

- Significant renovations were undertaken at the sports center, focusing on upgrading the football field to meet international standards. This enhancement increased the facility's capacity to host official events and large gatherings (Guerrero, 2018).
- The 2017 upgrades, specifically to the football field, marked a shift towards meeting international standards, allowing the MSC to attract and accommodate more competitive and high-profile events. This sets a benchmark for your modernization project, as it indicates the city's willingness to invest in high-quality sports infrastructure.

## **2023**

- The Marikina Sports Center underwent refurbishments in July 2023 in preparation for the Palarong Pambansa. The center was closed for most of the month and reopened in early August. These updates aimed to improve facilities for both athletes and spectators (Vibal, 2023).
- The 2023 refurbishments in preparation for the Palarong Pambansa reaffirm the MSC's role as a key sports and community venue in Marikina and the broader region. These updates show the facility's potential to attract large-scale events, highlighting the need for sustained modernization efforts to ensure that it remains functional, appealing, and fully equipped to handle significant gatherings.

The MSC has evolved over decades, with the 2001 renovation marking its most transformative period. Initially built in 1969 as the Rodriguez Sports Center, it was rebranded in 2001 as the Marikina Sports Park under Mayor Maria Lourdes “Marides” Fernando, integrating significant upgrades to reflect Marikina’s urban growth and community focus. Later efforts in 2017 and 2023, which focused on field improvements and general maintenance, is not as large as the scale of renovations done in 2001.



Fig. 1.6 - Aerial Shot of the Marikina Sports Center when it was still named the Rizal Sports Center during 1969



Marikeno (2022)

Fig. 1.7 - Aerial Shot of the Marikina Sports Center, taken 2019



Metro News Central (2019)



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