

The Story of the Caloocan City Public Library
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Caloocan became a bustling municipality after the Second World War and found itself joining in the period of national reconstruction and redemption of the pre-war progress. Various infrastructure programs were implemented during the term of Mayor Jesus Basa, as many of them were either dilapidating, non-existent, or destroyed by the battle. The material progress of the town was felt by the people, however, the call for the humane aspect of development was in need. Hence the reason for the Caloocan Youth Civic and Social Club to petition for the establishment of Caloocan Public Library on June 4, 1950. The municipal library was first located in Perpetua Street, near Sampalukan Elementary School under the custodianship of Mr. Manuel Santos, Jr. from 4 June 1950 – 15 August 1951. He was succeeded by Ciriaco Reyes who served until 15 July 1955.

By then, the library relocated to an apartment in P. Zamora St., near the town center under the custodianship of Mrs. Romana Serrano who succeeded Mr. Reyes. In 1962, it became a City Library as Caloocan's status was elevated into cityhood. Mrs. Serrano remained the custodian of the library until 1968 when she resigned. Two years later, a librarian was assigned in the persona of Mrs. Amor Santamaria. As a professional librarian, she began to formally implement the systematization of the library. In the 1970s, the Fider administration planned to establish a library-museum in the City, which was placed under the Office of the Mayor, with former councilor, lawyer, and award-winning writer, Agapito M. Joaquin, Sr., who was already the office's consultant. Plans did not push through as Atty. Joaquin suddenly passed away in 1982.

In February 1983, the Library relocated to a building adjacent to Plaza Rizal, between the Parish of San Roque and the former City Hall of Caloocan. It was during this time that the City Library was placed under the Cultural Affairs and Tourism Office (CATO). Nine years later, on 10 June 1992, the library once more relocated to the building between Caloocan City Schools Division Office and Caloocan High School along 10th Ave. In 1999, the long-time librarian, Mrs. Santamaria, retired, and in 2001, her colleague, Mrs. Cora J. Noble, also a professional librarian, succeeded in her post as the City Librarian. The spacious library catered to all kinds of people and served as the university for the poor man for more than three decades.

The demand for technology and digitization of transactions, the call for an increased prioritization for culture and the arts, and a newer structure for a library have challenged various administrations in the city. In response to the challenges brought by these factors, the City Government under the administration of Mayor Dale Gonzalo Malapitan, heeded the call – to have a new and modern City Library. A new building besides the old City Library was erected in 2024, and in partnership with the Department of Education, Department of Public Works and Highways, the City Government of Caloocan made it possible to establish a new, modern Caloocan City E-Library. The Library left its old home and transferred to the adjacent new building in September 2024.

*Note: Lifted from various souvenir programs and office files of the Caloocan City Public Library, and with the recollection of Mrs. Cora J. Noble.