

Breathing new life into KL's heritage districts

KUALA LUMPUR: The city is embarking on one of its most ambitious urban renewal projects to date with the launch of the Warisan Kuala Lumpur (Warisan KL) programme.

This culture-led revitalisation effort is poised to reimagine the city's historic heart as a thriving hub of heritage, creativity and inclusive growth.

Spearheaded by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) and supported by partners including Khazanah Nasional and its subsidiary, Think City, Warisan KL brings together

10 pilot flagship projects aimed at breathing new life into the city's heritage districts.

According to Mayor Datuk Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif, the initiative spans a 20km² focus area across key civic, heritage and commercial precincts, aligns with the Kuala Lumpur Plan 2040 and builds upon earlier development frameworks, including the 2014 and 2020 local plans.

Key components include the revitalisation and restoration of iconic areas like the Masjid Jamek Enclave, Dataran Merdeka

Heritage Area, Carcosa Seri Negara, and Merdeka 118, and transforming the historic marketplace – Trade Quadrant – into cultural and commercial hubs for modern entrepreneurs, legacy trades and creatives.

The Warisan KL initiative also revisits and integrates earlier efforts like the River of Life project, enhancing its public appeal through improved infrastructure, signage and storytelling, while inviting youth and community stakeholders to co-create the space.

“The programme's long-term vision is to create a city that is not only livable, but lovable – a place where the future is shaped by the past, and where development is rooted in identity, memory and pride.

“It is more than urban renewal, it is a national agenda for cultural and creative resurgence, poised to position Kuala Lumpur as a leading creative and cultural capital in the region and on the global stage,” said Maimunah, who chairs the Warisan KL working committee, in an interview with

Bernama yesterday.

She said the initial investment for the Warisan KL programme includes RM600mil announced in the federal budget, but additional allocations are expected to come from private sector investments.

“The initiative will be rolled out in phases, with several short-term and quick-win projects already underway in 2025. Full implementation is expected to span the next five to 10 years, with sustainability, community participation and creative innovation at its core,” she added.