

Towards Attaining the Vision “Pasig Green City”: Thinking Strategically, Acting Democratically*

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Abstract

Pasig City aims to prove to the world that it can balance the pursuit of economic development and environmental protection. Hence, its leaders envisioned to transform it into Green City. Is it now a Green City? In the first place, what is a Green City? How does a city attain such status? And if, indeed, the City has metamorphosed into one, what environmental governance practices have helped it to attain that status? In the prestigious *2013 International Awards for Liveable Communities* held in Xiamen, China on November 28 to December 3, 2013, Pasig City bagged three gold awards, one silver award, and one bronze award for its various environmental projects. Specifically, it won the gold award for the “Most Liveable Community” (category E for cities within a population not over 400,000). The paper, used as a reference for presentation in Xiamen, highlights the accomplishments of the city in “greening” its surroundings. With the use of the “Environmental Governance Framework,” the paper narrates the steps the city undertook to implement its three most important “greening” projects, i.e., the car-less day project, green police volunteerism, and the greenheart savers project. The paper concludes that Pasig City has made significant accomplishments towards achieving its vision of becoming a Green City. However, the end is not yet in sight; much needs to be done. The journey of a thousand miles towards that goal has already begun with several giant strides, i.e., the implementation of a long list of environmental protection ordinances, policies, programs, projects, and activities. Good environmental governance practices anchored on “thinking strategically, acting democratically” - apparent in the three cases narrated above – have shown that people can be enjoined to participate in governance no matter how difficult it would be for all them – one that would require them to change their lifestyles or make sacrifices. In participative and collaborative governance, some adjustments had to be made by all stakeholders to achieve a win-win situation for all. The processes may be arduous, but the gain is gratifying – Pasig Green City – for all.

Keywords: green city, green growth, environmental governance

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