
Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Small communities are vital components of the nation's economic, social, agricultural, historic, and cultural fabric. Our national character has been shaped by and is forever tied to the landscape of surrounding small communities. A growing number of small communities are facing significant challenges that place their long-term viability at risk, including economic hardship, declining population, eroding tax bases, and environmental pressures. Revitalizing and strengthening small communities begins by helping residents of those communities to articulate and formalize their vision for the future and to develop an action plan to achieve that vision, including in the areas of economic development, agriculture, tourism, transportation, land use, education, recreation, and culture, and by understanding the amenity characteristics of landscapes.

In many cases, a community's vision for the future is rooted in and inseparable from the landscape, including the natural and built environments. Landscape architects have the education, training, and skills, including in the areas of community involvement and public participation, land use planning, design, project visualization techniques, scenic resource assessment, mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), environmental analysis, and environmental psychology, that ideally qualify them to lead community visioning efforts.

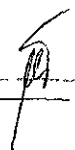
Expanding national support for small community visioning is an investment in the future of small communities and will leverage additional public and private sector participation in such efforts. Successful community visioning efforts have yielded

tangible results with regard to the enhancement of transportation corridors, economic development initiatives, land use policies, conservation of natural and community resources, community master plans, and park and recreation plans.

This bill seeks to develop and facilitate innovative visions that help small communities address pressing local needs; facilitate coordination between small communities, land-grant and other universities, and design professionals; encourage public-private partnerships; and translate the small community's vision into images of design projects that integrate physical planning and design techniques, with sustainable community action, at the appropriate geographic scale.


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

SENATE
S. No. 3125

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1 AN ACT
2 IMPROVING THE CAPABILITY OF SMALL COMMUNITIES TO COORDINATE
3 WITH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS AND DESIGN PROFESSIONALS IN
4 DEVELOPING A VISION TO ADDRESS THEIR LOCAL NEEDS
5

6 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in*
7 *Congress assembled:*
8

9 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Small Community
10 Visioning Improvement Act of 2009."
11

12 SECTION 2. *Community Visioning Pilot Initiative.* - The Secretary of Tourism
13 shall make grants to eligible recipients for the purposes of carrying out small community
14 visioning processes. In order to be eligible for a grant under this section, the applicant
15 must use a small community visioning process that includes the following:

16 A. *Soliciting and Organizing Public Participation* - The broadest segment
17 of the public is invited to participate, and the process is structured to
18 maximize participation and maintain efficiency.

19 B. *Needs Determination* - The small community determines whether the
20 community requires assistance through this process with a broad-based
21 needs assessment or whether it has identified a specific need through a
22 prior community-based process that the community wants to address
23 through the small community visioning process. The community's
24 needs may include the areas of economic development, transportation,
25 land use, agriculture, and the natural, cultural, and aesthetic values of
26 the community.

1 C. *Developing Design Options* - Members of the community engage in a
2 series of discussions to articulate their vision for addressing the
3 identified need. The design professionals facilitate the discussions,
4 help members of the community identify areas of consensus, and begin
5 translating the vision into images, including sketches, maps, digital
6 images, computer simulations, and design concepts. The vision and
7 design options are refined in an ongoing dialogue until community
8 consensus is reached and physical designs for 1 or more projects are
9 finalized.

10 D. *Implementation Planning* - Design professionals, members of the
11 public, and others develop and finalize a plan that describes the
12 specific steps the community would take to achieve its vision. At a
13 minimum, the plan should identify the following:

- 14 1. projects relating to that vision, including projects the
15 community can undertake and complete with existing
16 resources, personnel, and funding, and projects which the
17 community could undertake and complete only with the
18 infusion of additional resources, personnel, and funding;
- 19 2. government agencies, nongovernmental entities, and other
20 potential partners that could participate in implementation;
21 and
- 22 3. possible sources of public and private funding to achieve
23 the vision.

24
25 SECTION 3. *Application Process for Grant Eligibility.* - Not later than 60 days
26 after the Secretary issues final regulations, the Secretary shall solicit applications for
27 grants from eligible grant recipients. The application shall include the following:

- 1 A. A statement of the needs that the small community would address
2 through the small community visioning process, or a statement that the
3 small community requires assistance to identify such a need.
- 4 B. A brief description of process the small community used or will use to
5 involve a diverse cross-section of residents of the community in
6 determining the need.
- 7 C. A description of how the applicant will use the services of design
8 professionals or university programs with demonstrated expertise in
9 small community visioning processes in providing assistance to the
10 small community.
- 11 D. A description of how the applicant will involve a diverse cross-section
12 of residents of the small community in the visioning process.
- 13 E. A description of the phases of the visioning process, the anticipated
14 outcomes of each phase, and of the visioning initiative as a whole.
- 15 F. A detailed budget for the visioning process, including the contribution
16 to be provided by the applicant pursuant to subsection (h) or a request
17 for waiver of such a contribution.
- 18 G. A description of the steps the applicant will take to do the following:
- 19 1. assess the effectiveness of the visioning process in
20 addressing the community's need; and
- 21 2. integrate the findings of the needs determination into
22 ongoing efforts to implement the vision developed pursuant
23 to this section.
- 24

25 SECTION 4. *Grant Regulations.* - Within 180 days after the effectivity date of
26 this Act and after opportunity for public comment, the Secretary shall issue such
27 regulations as the Secretary deems appropriate to carry out this section.

28

1 SECTION 5. *Grant Amounts and Administrative Expenses.* - A grant under this
2 section shall not exceed one million pesos (P1,000,000.00) for each grantee.

3 A. *Administrative Expenses* - The Secretary may use not more than 20
4 percent of the total amount appropriated under this section for each
5 fiscal year to administer this section.

6 B. *Limitation* - A grant under this section shall not be used to develop or
7 produce construction documents.

8
9 SECTION 6. *Report to Congress.* - Not later than 3 years after the date of the
10 enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees in the
11 Senate and House of Representatives a report that describes, at a minimum--

12 A. the most effective practices and procedures used to assist communities
13 in the small community visioning process;

14 B. examples of the public-private partnerships developed to identify and
15 implement community goals;

16 C. examples of the tangible, physical outcomes of small community
17 visioning processes funded under this section;

18 D. recommendations for improving, strengthening, and expanding the
19 program carried out under this section; and

20 E. a list of all grantees under this section, the province in which the
21 grantees are located, and grant amounts received by each grantee.

22
23 SECTION 7. *Appropriation.* -- The amount of twenty million pesos
24 (P20,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the grants to implement the
25 community visioning processes. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the operation of the
26 program shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

27

1 SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part thereof is held invalid
2 or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall
3 remain valid and subsisting.

4

5 SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decree or issuance,
6 executive orders, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule and regulation contrary
7 to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or
8 amended accordingly.

9

10 SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
11 following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

12 Approved,

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