

Villa Beach Parks

Green-Gray Partnership
Project for Philippine Cities
and Municipalities

Iloilo City, Iloilo

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About the Green-Gray Partnership

Climate change can no longer be ignored. The raging waters of typhoons Ondoy in 2009 and Haiyan 2013 are seared in Philippine collective memory. In the span of three weeks in 2020, three typhoons battered the country, inflicting over a hundred fatalities and at least PHP 25 billion (USD 518 million) worth of damage. The Philippines urgently needs to harness nature to uplift communities not just because it's better for the planet, but because making the most of available resources is an economic necessity.

In the last quarter of 2021, just as the Philippines was reining in the pandemic, Conservation International and AECOM began the Green-Gray Partnership Project with eleven local cities and municipalities to kickstart the adoption of nature-based solutions.

Integrating green natural systems into gray infrastructure provides multi-function and cost-effective solutions. Green-gray combines natural elements with hard infrastructure to protect and restore natural processes and create healthier urban environments. The combination allows the creation of natural habitats or system functionality (green infrastructure) in a resilient and optimized manner (gray infrastructure). Many green-gray solutions incorporate wetland and forest habitats. As with all habitat creation/restoration projects, the success of these initiatives depends on an understanding of the ecological structure and function of the target habitats.

Green-gray infrastructure approaches can apply in coastal, freshwater, and terrestrial settings and accomplish a variety of project goals. The typical infrastructure services such as flood management, coastal protection, and improving water quality are delivered alongside other benefits such as safeguarding biodiversity, providing livelihoods, increasing public space, and even financial returns to local communities through carbon credits.

A key reference for this engagement is the *Practical Guide to Implementing Green-Gray Infrastructure* by the Green-Gray Community of Practice, which is led by Conservation International. The guide, published in 2020, provides green-gray case studies and walks

readers through the process of project preparation, design, and implementation. It also defines the critical elements of the green-gray approach:

1. Using science and engineering to produce operational efficiencies;
2. Using natural processes to maximize benefits (i.e. ecosystem services);
3. Increasing the value provided by projects by including social, environmental, and economic benefits; and
4. Using collaborative processes to organize, engage, and focus interests, stakeholders, and partners.

Conservation International selected the pioneer batch of Green-Gray partner cities and municipalities based on the following criteria:

- **Commitment to a Resilient Future** Good track record and strong interest for pursuing a climate-resilient future for their locality;
- **Drivers of Change** Positioned as municipal leaders for a sustainable future for the Philippines;
- **Rich and Diverse Natural Assets** Representation of the abundant biodiversity of the Philippines; and
- **Vulnerability to Impacts of Climate Change** Exposure to the impacts of climate change.

The Green-Gray Partnership Project was meant to equip local governments units (LGUs) with capacities to identify opportunities for the adoption of nature-based solutions and prepare concept notes to rally support for pilots. At the beginning of the project, it was essential to transfer knowledge of green-gray infrastructure through the guide and workshops focusing on case studies. This built a base from which the local governments drew from in order to craft a Statement of Intent and a Concept Design Note (Annex 1), both of which are contained in this document.

This document, containing a high-level design and assessment, may be used by the local governments to seek support for project preparation (in which the concept should be refined with further studies), detailed design, and implementation. Support may be sought from national government, financing institutions, grant giving foundations, and private sector partners.

Iloilo City, Iloilo, Philippines Villa Beach Parks

Greening and Improving Pedestrian Beach Access along the Iloilo Boulevard Coastal Road



Location
**Iloilo City,
Iloilo, Visayas**

Proposed Site
Villa Beach

Key Thematic Area
Coastal

Key Issue
Coastal Protection

Green-Gray Solution
Coastal Embankment

Proposed Implementation
Timeframe
1-3 years

- Executing Agencies
- City Environment and Natural Resources Office
 - City Planning and Development Office

Executing Agencies
The proposed Green-Gray Infrastructure Solution for this project is to protect the newly constructed and widened national road as it is a critical route for evacuation and aid during natural calamities. Apart from the coastal protection, the GGI solution will take advantage of the city's initiative to use vacated spaces from the relocation of informal settlements along the shoreline for community activities.

57 K

Benefitting Residents

source:
Iloilo CLUP, 2021-2029

3.4 B

Increase in Tourism Revenue

1818

Metric tons of Improved Biodiversity

Based only on assumptions and estimates; for verification in next stage



Iloilo Location Map



Iloilo Green-Gray Partnership Project Location Map



Overview

The proposed Green-Gray Infrastructure (GGI) solution for this project will be demonstrated in a section of Iloilo Boulevard Coastal Road in Arevalo District, Iloilo City. This proposed national road along the coast of Iloilo City is will help improve the city's connectivity to and from the port area. Due to its location, the national road may be subjected to coastal flooding, storm surge, and sea-level rise. The GGI is meant to primarily protect the newly constructed and widened national road as it is critical for access between the city and the adjacent town, especially during natural calamities. Apart from the coastal protection, the GGI solution also wants to take advantage of the city's initiative to use the vacated spaces along the shoreline for community activities such as outdoor gatherings and recreation.

The proposed GGI Solution is a pilot project that is envisioned to be potentially scaled-up or replicated to the other parts of the city. Whilst the proposed solution is addressing the key issue at hand, it is important to understand the context where the said initiative will be carried out. The area as it is now, caters to highly dense population with sporadic commercial establishments mostly seafood restaurants, sari-sari stores and small entertainment venues. The restaurants in this area are part of Iloilo's gastronomic culture and tourism economy.

With the national government currently implementing the project, the idea is to design urban green and park amenities that can be integrated with the national road. If executed successfully, the national road along the coast of Iloilo City will not only help improve the city's internal traffic movement to cater to economic development but also increase green spaces, improve coastal resilience, and reinforce the public nature of the city beach.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Targets



Rationale

Due to its location and proximity to the shoreline, the proposed national road in Arevalo District (population: 56,878) is prone to coastal flooding and storm surge, notwithstanding the threat of sea-level rise. The current re-blocking and widening of the national road project has relocated the vulnerable informal settlements along the shoreline, but also exposes the infrastructure to climate and weather impacts from the coast, which also pose threat and danger to coastal neighborhoods.

On the other hand, this national road also provides room for nature-based solutions, and thus opens various opportunities for sustainable growth and re-development of that beach area, which was declared a city park by national legislation. The said policy is still in effect to date and thus will be reinforced as a drive to make the entire boulevard a dynamic place for people to live, work and play as it was originally envisioned. That said area showcases a captivating view of sunset and was naturally gifted with long-lined beach front, a unique feature for a highly urbanized city such as Iloilo.

The proposed GGI solution will primarily protect the national road, thus securing the safety of the users of the vital infrastructure especially in times of calamity. It also provides the community with public amenities along the beachfront as well as activating the whole shoreline for tourism activities. Iloilo City has previously hosted events along the beach, the proposed GGI will help compliment and boost these kind events. The design of the park will also celebrate the coastal view of the city, providing all residents with an unobstructed view and experience of the beachfront.

Due to the road widening, informal settlements along the shoreline have been identified and relocated to other areas that are less vulnerable to coastal flooding. Environmental issues are rampant in this community, with most households violating sanitation and wastewater policies of the city. With the absence of the most needed common system for wastewater treatment, the coastal environment has degraded over time. Solid waste management is another concern. Plastic wastes can be seen along the shoreline especially after a high tide.

Indeed, resilience and sustainability measures should be put forward as key solution to years of coastal

degradation. The project will put the beach into perspective to bring about the residents' adoption of lifestyles that help maintain the natural features in their community. There were attempts in the past that seek to address the long-standing concern but have not been sustainably carried out. This requires a strategic plan for long-term and sustainable solutions, which necessitates the active support and cooperation from both local stakeholders and city executives alike.

Iloilo City has already demonstrated the seemingly impossible initiative of cleaning its waterways through the reviving the Iloilo River. The Iloilo Esplanade was built not only as a river protection but also a green open space to support citizen health and wellness. Moreover, it draws tourists and residents alike for leisure and recreation. It has also become a model for other cities in terms of river management and conservation. The GGI conceptual infrastructure for Iloilo City's coast hopes to replicate the same approach and collective support as that of the Iloilo River.



Beachfront lots and national highway affected by Typhoon Odette, 2021

Project Proposal

A proposed linear park with activity nodes catering to both pedestrian and cyclists will be constructed along the side of the national road fronting the public beach. This linear park will be divided into different phases that will be aligned to the development of the national road.

The local government seeks to employ multi-stakeholder planning, instead of the typical public consultation method, so that the parks are co-designed with the citizens.

The pilot project is designated to be from the area of Breakthrough Restaurant to John B. Lacson University Foundation with an approximate length of 930 meters. The linear park will be designed to be elevated from the national road providing protection from the threat of coastal flooding and storm surge. Planter boxes or concrete divider will also be incorporated within the linear park as an additional layer of protection. Native trees will also be incorporated to provide additional shade to the users and to enhance the natural environment along the beach. The vacant lots will be developed into pocket parks allowing more community activities such as picnics, outdoor exercises and sitting areas can be integrated in the design.

The interface of both the linear park and the pocket parks with the shoreline will consider high tide and sea-level rise. The level difference between the beach fronts the park will be mitigated through ramps and stairs. These parks will become a layer of protection and a place where community can have a better appreciation of the beach. If realized, this is a boost to tourism in the area as there are resort establishments and beloved restaurants that will benefit from these amenities. Overall, this is also favorable to residents who can explore more income-generating opportunities and employment with the opening of various ventures along the rejuvenated coastline.

Green-gray infrastructure impact

Bolstering the coastal edge in Arevalo District using green-gray infrastructure may unlock multiple benefits including:

- Reduce the impact of flooding and storm surges on key infrastructure, homes, and businesses
- Generate jobs associated with improved economic activity along the shoreline
- Improve pedestrian access to the beach
- Improve the livelihoods of smaller scale fisherfolk
- Improve coastal water quality

Ultimately, the pilot can make a case for the city wide adoption of nature-based strategies in aquaculture to:

- Promote low carbon and inclusive development
- Facilitate Iloilo City's adaptation to climate change
- Restore the blue carbon ecosystems in Iloilo City



Beachfront lots and national highway affected by Typhoon Odette, 2021

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Targets



Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all

By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities



By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums

Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage

By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

Substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels



Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection

Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources

Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries

Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed

Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation

Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships



Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

Indicative Implementation Arrangements

Precise implementation arrangements remain to be determined at the pre-design preparation phase, but it is foreseen that the project shall be led and monitored by the Office of the City Agriculturist

Support may be sought from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, which has an environmental monitoring laboratory and water quality monitoring program. Partnership with the national government may happen through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The progress and success of the project can be measured by tracking the following indicators:

- Coastal water quality to meet the standards stipulated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Increased seaweed cultivation production tonnage in the local farms
- Marine biodiversity inventory
- Mangrove growth and survival rate

Due Diligence

This document contains a green-gray infrastructure design concept and high-level assessments. More details are required in order to refine this concept into a robust and detailed proposal; thus, the project preparation phase for this project should include:

- Feasibility Study
- Environmental and social impact assessment or environmental and social management framework
- Stakeholder consultations at national and project level implementation including with indigenous people, if relevant
- Gender assessment and action plan
- Operations and maintenance plan, if relevant
- Loan or grant operation manual, as appropriate
- Co-financing commitment letters

If required, the preparation of this project may include the following studies:

- Diagram of the theory of change
- Economic and financial model with key assumptions and potential stressed scenarios
- Pre-feasibility study
- Evaluation report of previous project
- Results of environmental and social risk screening

Conservation International's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) framework

At Conservation International (CI), we are committed to promoting human rights by reducing equity gaps and facilitating the enhancement of social and environmental sustainability. All of our projects are held to strict social and environmental principles as agreed upon and laid out by internationally accepted standards such as the Community, Biodiversity, and Carbon standard, as well as the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) safeguards. However, CI is taking our responsibility to communities and the environment even further with a commitment to tracking and monitoring Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) benefits through our Environmental and Social Safeguards System (CISS), a system that exceeds international standards. To achieve maximum socio-environmental and climate benefits plus long-term sustainability of any project, we believe that communities must be at the center and actively participate in the design of any conservation initiative in which we engage. Central to this, CI engages communities in:

1. Developing the project components, including governance, management processes, and distribution mechanisms in a consultative, transparent and participatory manner with relevant stakeholders (Conservation Agreements ensure that all parties are heard and decisions are made jointly).
2. Addressing gender inequality in all of our conservation programming, monitoring, and reporting efforts.
3. Guaranteeing the long-term financial viability of the project through optimizing project implementation while maximizing benefits.
4. Prioritizing non-monetary benefits whenever possible to increase the number of beneficiaries and better guarantee long-term project success.

ANNEX

Design Note

Statement of Problem and Thematic Area

Phase 1 of the proposed national road along the coast began with the widening of the existing Baluarte-Calumpang-Villa-Oton Boulevard. The road widening project did not incorporate elevating the existing road; thus, issues related to predicted sea-level rise may arise in the future. Due to the road widening, informal settlements along the shoreline were relocated to other areas that are less vulnerable to coastal flooding. The relocation program created void spaces along the interface of the national road and the shoreline thus exposing the road to potential coastal

flooding and storm surge. Currently, during high tide, the salvage zone (30-meter no build zone serving as a coastal buffer) already gets submerged. This national road is considered as a vital infrastructure for connectivity from the city's port areas to the adjacent municipality on the south. Another issue that the city wants to address is the possibility of informal settlements once again encroaching upon the vacated areas if these are left idle; therefore, the city wants to swiftly utilize these areas for other community purposes.



Beachfront lots adjacent to national highway, formerly ISF residences

Project Aim

The proposed Green-Gray Infrastructure Solution for this project is to protect the newly constructed and widened national road as it is a critical route for evacuation and aid during natural calamities. Apart from the coastal protection, the GGI solution will take advantage of the city's initiative to use vacated spaces from the relocation of informal settlements along the shoreline for community activities.



Undeveloped beachfront potentially as a future seaside tourist destination

Green-Gray Infrastructure Strategy

A proposed linear park that will cater to both pedestrian and cyclists will be constructed along the side of the national road fronting the beach. The linear park will be divided into different phases that will be aligned to the development of the national road. The pilot project is designated to be from the area of Breakthrough Restaurant to John B. Lacson University Foundation with an approximate length of 930 meters. The linear park will be designed to be elevated from the national road providing protection from the threat of coastal flooding and storm surge. A planter box or concrete divider will also be incorporated within the linear park as an additional layer of protection. Native trees will also be incorporated in the design of the linear park to provide additional shade to the users, enhance the natural environment along the beach and

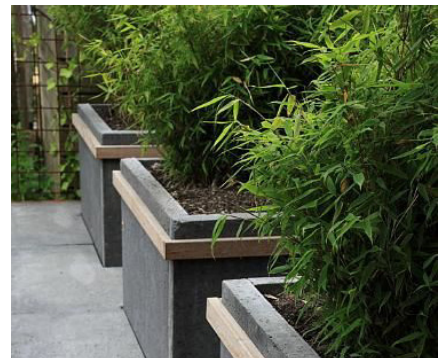
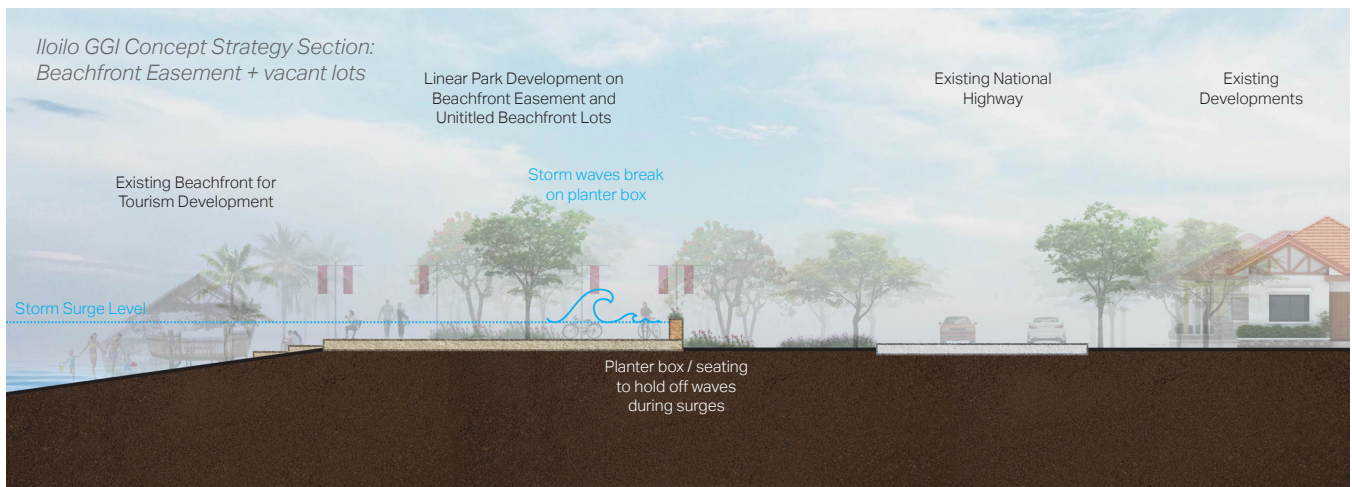
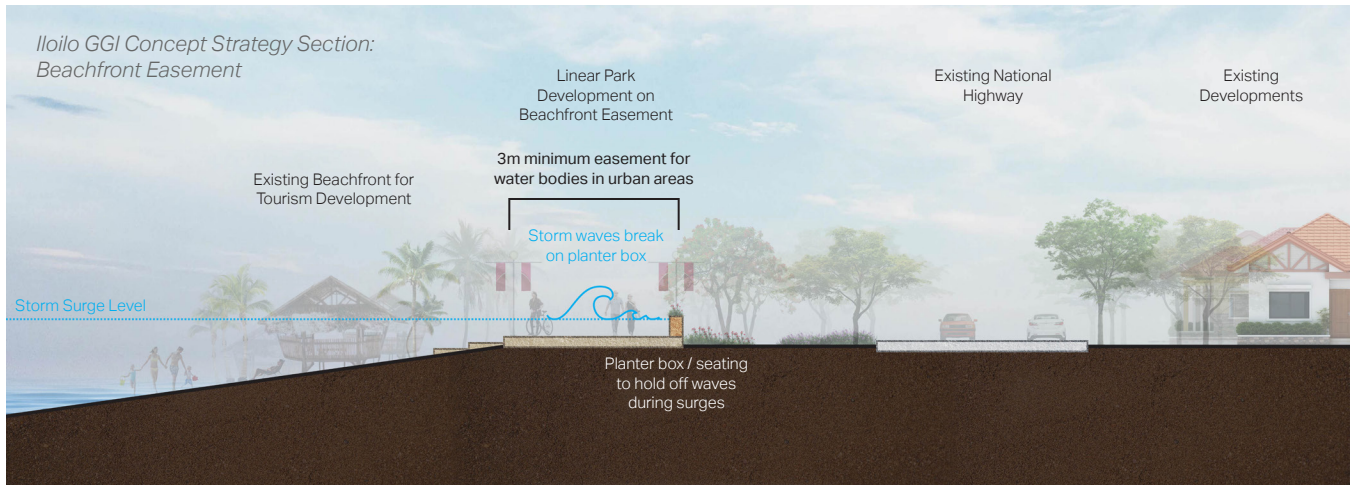
stabilize soils to reduce erosion risk. The vacant lots will be developed into pockets parks allowing more community activities such as picnics and outdoor exercises. Sitting areas can be integrated in the design.

The interface of both the linear park and the pocket parks with the shoreline will be elevated with the consideration of high tide and sea-level rise. The level difference between the beach front and the park will be mitigated through ramps and stairs. These parks will become a layer of protection and a place where community can have a better appreciation of the beach. This will also boost tourism in the area as there are a few restaurant establishments that will benefit from these amenities.



Iloilo GGI Concept Strategy Plan

0.9 km	0.1 ha	0.1 ha	0.1 ha	0.1 ha
total length of linear park	total land area for pocket park 1	total land area for pocket park 2	total land area for pocket park 3	total land area for pocket park 4



Beachfront Linear and Pocket Parks

Development of waterfront easement and/or untitled beachfront lots to a public linear park for revitalization of beach as a tourism destination and continuity of access from across the national highway.

Planter Boxes / Seating

Sturdy planter boxes next to linear park could act as public seating areas and hold off waves during surges to protect existing national highway and developments.

Benefits of a GGI Solution

The proposed GGI solution will provide protection to the national road thus securing the safety of the users using the vital infrastructure especially in times of calamities. It also provides the community with public amenities along the beachfront as well as activating the whole shoreline for tourism activities. Iloilo City has previously hosted events along the beach, the proposed GGI will help compliment and boost these kind events. The design of the park will also celebrate the coastal view of the city and provide the residents an unobstructed view and experience of the beachfront.

Integrated Holistic Approach

The local government seeks to employ multi-stakeholder planning to create a feedback loop with the citizens, instead of the typical public consultation method, so that the parks are co-designed with the people who will use them.

The stakeholders include local communities, the City Engineer's Office, Office of the City Agriculturist, CDRRM Office, DPWH, DENR, Sto. Niño Sur barangay government, the United Architects of the Philippines, and local housing/shelter organizations.

The proposed GGI Solution is a pilot project that is envisioned to be potentially scaled-up or replicated to the other parts of the city. Whilst, the proposed solution is addressing the key issue at hand, it is important to note that addressing the root cause of the problem is essential – in this case, regulating of land uses in hazard-prone areas of the city and providing equitable public housing.

The proposed national highway that will run along the coast should be designed with a set of parameters that shouldn't only look at the economic feasibility but also consider the social and environmental aspect of the development. Below are a set of design parameters that can be integrated into the design of the national road that will be newly constructed in the Molo area.

Climate-smart seaweed farming for coastal protection and supplemental livelihood for subsistence fisherfolks in the area may also be explored.

Environmental Considerations:

- The national road should be designed to withstand coastal flooding, storm surge and sea-level rise but with the consideration of incorporating a nature-based approach such as a coastal embankment with green features to reduce the environmental impact of the infrastructure.
- Sediments collected from the dredging activities subject to further analysis regarding its composition.
- The embankment can also integrate green features such as vetiver grass to protect the edge from coastal erosion.
- A layer of mangrove and/or beach enrichment along the coast can also be integrated as an additional layer of protection to storm surge.
- Since the national road is proposed to be running through the informal settlements that are in the mangroves beside the fish port, the national road infrastructure can look into measures to rehabilitate the mangrove area.

Social Considerations:

- The design of the road can incorporate an esplanade for cyclists and pedestrians that wants to appreciate the beachfront.
- A beach enrichment development can be done along specific locations of the shoreline to provide residents some areas to have connection to the beach. These beach enrichment areas can be protected by a breakwater to reduce the impacts of the waves that can contribute to erosion.
- Few establishments can be introduced along the shoreline such as restaurants, fishing village and boat landing areas that provide the residents additional amenities along the coast.

Implementation Period

A timeline of 1-3 years is estimated to prepare, implement, and construct this GGI solution. Due to lack of data and information readily available, additional studies and scoping work shall be required to validate and collect more information regarding the key issues identified by the LGU and the assumptions that have provided during the concept design stage. The proposed project timeline shall cover the following phases:

1. Predesign Phase

3-5 months;

This will include all the necessary study, scoping and data collection needed to establish, verify, and gather information required to proceed with a detailed engineering design.

2. Design Phase

2-4 months

A detailed engineering design shall be required to fully develop the conceptual design after using the verified data to accurately design the infrastructure according to the required specifications to address the key issue.

3. Implementation Phase

12-36 months

This will include the compliance to the required regulations/standards, seeking of approval of concerned agencies, and observance of due diligence. Upon obtaining the necessary approval and permits, the construction of the infrastructure or implementation of the prescribed program shall be done.

4. Operation, Maintenance and Adaptive Management

periodical

This shall include periodic monitoring of the infrastructure, maintenance and repair if required, evaluation of the impacts to surrounding communities, rehabilitation and retrofitting if required.

Facts and figures

1.

AECOM launched when a handful of employees from design and engineering companies shared a dream of creating an industry-leading firm dedicated to making the world a better place.

2.

AECOM became an independent company formed by the merger of five entities. While our official founding was in 1990, many of our predecessor firms had distinguished histories dating back more than 120 years.

3.

Since then, more than 50 companies have joined AECOM and, in 2007, we became a publicly traded company on the New York Stock Exchange.

4.

As the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm with an unrivaled heritage delivering design, planning, engineering, consulting and construction management solutions.

AECOM in the Philippines

Established in 1996, AECOM in the Philippines has grown into a 200+ strong team of planners, engineers, environmental scientists, geologists, landscape architects and technical management specialists driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world.

Creating Sustainable Legacies

We are leading the change towards a more sustainable and equitable future by partnering with our clients to provide solutions that help them achieve their environmental and social value ambitions and advancing sustainable business operations to help prevent the worst impacts of climate change.



47,000 people



Fortune 500 #163



Work across seven continents



2 Million Work Hours Awards



Revenue \$13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020



100% Rating on Corporate Equality Index / Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality 2021

Accolades

- ENR rankings No 1
- Environment Firm
- Transportation Design Firm
- Facilities Design Firm
- Mixed-Used Buildings
- Education Buildings
- Aviation
- Highways
- Chemical Remediation
- Top 10 Military Friendly company 2020
- Military Friendly® Top 10 Company
- Military Friendly® Top 10 Supplier
- Diversity Program
- Military Friendly® Top 10 Employer
- Military Friendly® Top 10 Spouse Employer
- National safety council: 155 Perfect Record Awards
- Achieved a minimum of 12 consecutive months without a recordable injury or illness.
- For each award, achieved a minimum of one million consecutive hours without an injury or illness that resulted in days away from work and zero fatalities.

About Conservation International



Bogota, Colombia (C) Conservation International

Since 1987, Conservation International (CI) has worked to spotlight and secure the critical benefits that nature provides to humanity.

Combining fieldwork with innovations in science, policy and finance, we've helped protect more than 6 million square kilometers (2.3 million square miles) of land and sea across more than 70 countries. Today, with offices in more than two dozen countries and a worldwide network of thousands of partners, our reach is truly global. But we couldn't have made it this far without you. Your contributions support our work to protect nature for the benefit of us all.

CI's work in Asia-Pacific began in 1989 with a pledge to protect some three dozen of the Earth's biodiversity hotspots, including the Philippine archipelago and the Sundaland rainforests of Southeast Asia.

Since then, our focus in Asia-Pacific has expanded across the region to include other ocean and forest areas considered critical to human well-being. We help improve food security, support innovative financing for conservation projects and establish protected area networks that encompass essential ecosystems.

CI's unique combination of experience with ecosystem conservation and restoration, community co-design, and stakeholder leadership allows us to advise and lead [green-gray initiatives](#) around the world in collaboration with local, regional and national governments and engineering partners.

Priorities

- **Stabilizing our climate by protecting and restoring nature**
- **Doubling ocean protection**
- **Expanding planet-positive economies**

