



THE MAKING OF SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ

PROLOGUE

Any place, be it a nation, metropolis, or a lowly settlement just like ant living thing, has its own evolution. From the dawn of civilization, mankind has always been ceaseless in its quest for advancement, hence the present way of life that we live in.

A great philosopher once said that civilization is a voyage or a journey. Civilization is never achieved within a wink of an eye, for not just a moment, an hour, a day, a month or even a year. In most cases, it takes a considerable or longer period of time. Moreover, civilization is not merely dream of but it must be labored, sometimes with blood, sweat and tears, if only to realize or attain the kind of development aspired for.

Civilization or progress of a certain place involves several dimensions just like what happened to the Science City of Muñoz where it's a journey to a lifelong dream. Together let us reminisce the past to discover the pains and pleasures towards cityhood and to give more color and meaning to what the city has become at present.

Just like Rome which was not built in a day, so is the Science City of Muñoz which took more than seven (7) long years in the making from its conceptualization on September 3, 1993 up to the realization of a dream on December 9, 2000, upon the conduct of a plebiscite which overwhelmingly ratified Republic Act No. 8977, "AN ACT CONVERTING THE MUNICIPALITY OF MUÑOZ IN THE PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIIJA INTO A COMPONENT CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ".

THE WAY IT WAS: A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

More than a century ago, Muñoz, was a densely forested area and inhabited by the Baluga tribes who settled along the fertile creeks and rivulets of now barangays Balante, Catalanacan and Matingkis. The tribes-lorded communities were then named "Papaya" and were a sitio of Barrio San Anton of the town of Guimba. With the arrival of more Christian immigrants, including the





Spanish conquistadores sitio Papaya metamorphosed into a pueblo in 1885 with Sebastian del Castro as gobernadorcillo. It was then that the pueblo's catholic devotee's endeared San Sebastian as their patron saint, heightening respect for the gobernadorcillo.

In 1886, Papaya was changed to “Muñoz” to honor Don Francisco Muñoz, the province’s alcalde mayor and the community’s first appointed gobernadorcillo. Muñoz was annexed as a barrio of San Juan de Guimba municipality. Settlers trickled in from Bulacan and the Ilocos Region. In 1991, Factoria (now San Isidro town), the provincial capital, was totally flooded. Muñoz was considered a possible new capital of the province.

At about the same time, the peoples of barrios Muñoz and San Antonio of San Juan de Guimba town, and Palusapis of Sto. Domingo Municipality, together with sitios Kabisukulan, Rang-ayan, Mataas na Lupa, Siniguelas, Pukoc, Agrikultura and Pulong Maragol of Talavera town were organizing themselves to be separated from their three respective municipalities to become a new independent municipality. They were prepared to construct a municipal hall and school building, a requisite for townhood.

Upon the recommendation of the Provincial Board of Nueva Ecija, then headed by Governor Isauro Gabaldon, Executive Order No. 72 dated October 28, 1912, was issued by the Government of the Philippine Islands Executive Bureau, under the then Governor General Gilbert Newton which created the municipality of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija effective January 1, 1913. For some reason or the other, however, the foundation of Muñoz has been observed every January 10. Thus, the municipality of Muñoz was born and steadily grew to become today as the Agricultural Science City of the Philippines.

Muñoz owes a great deal to its early leaders- Tranquilino delos Santos, and other homesteaders like Luis Ramos, Ambrocio Medina, Cayetano Caisip, Victorino Pornuevo and Percy Hill. A municipal Hall, a church building and small public market were erected in Lumang Bayan or old town site (now Poblacion North). A road linking the young Muñoz town with the national highway from Barangay Bacal, Talavera was also constructed.

Muñoz continued to attract more settlers. More barrios were established and were named after their people's aspirations, landmarks and personalities such as Rang-ayan (prosperity), Linglingay (recreation), Mangandingay (company), Magtanggol (defense), and Villa Isla in a leader's honor).



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SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ NUEVA ECILJA



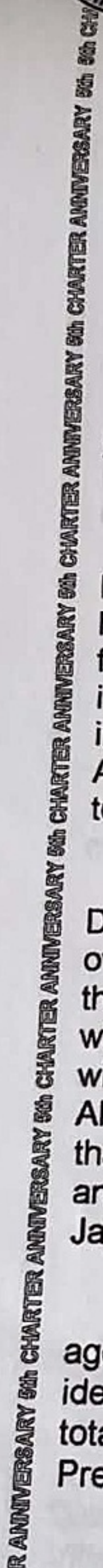
Muñoz was not spared from the pains of the Second World War. It was the last stronghold of the Japanese Imperial Army where one of the bloodiest and fiercest battles during World War II in the Philippines was waged. The whole town was practically leveled to the ground where the Japanese Army before scampering to the Cordilleras committed virtually all forms of atrocities. The Battle of Muñoz started on January 31, 1945 at 7:30 AM where Company K of the 20th Infantry of the 6th Infantry Division figured prominently in the liberation of Muñoz. According to war accounts by February 7, 1945, not a wall or a tree or one Japanese soldier remained standing in Muñoz.

For several days after the battle was over smoke of ruins and the stench of death continue to pervade the area, whatever records/documents stored in the town hall were reduced to ashes. During those 8 days (January 31 – February 7, 1945) of fierce battle 1,935 Japanese Soldiers were annihilated although only 1,527 bodies were found. Total casualties from the liberating force totaled 97 dead and 303 wounded out of which the 20th Infantry suffered 57 and 152 wounded. Survivors from the Red Star Division (20th infantry) used to go on a sentimental visit to our municipality and very recently, on September 4, 2000 seven (7) visitors (5 veterans and 2 spouses) paid a visit to Muñoz where a flag raising ceremony/program was dedicated in honor of the gallantry and heroism of those who shed blood, sweat and tears and precious lives during the battle in Muñoz so that we, the living and all the succeeding generations of Muñozonians shall live in freedom.

Many sets of leadership as Municipal Mayors as shown below have succeeded one after the other since the birth of our community up to the time of its creation as a Science City, all sharing the common vision and mission to establish a community that is physically, socially, politically, economically, and spiritually strong and secured.

- ❖ 1913-1916 – Hon. Tranquilino R. Delos Santos
- ❖ 1916-1919 – Hon. Degracias Delos Santos
- ❖ 1919-1925 – Hon. Eulogio Bayuga
- ❖ 1925-1928 – Hon. Lucio V. Lopez
- ❖ 1928-1931 – Hon. Leocadio Isla
- ❖ 1931-1934 – Hon. Julian Velasco
- ❖ 1934 – Hon. Honorio Calica
- ❖ 1934-1937 – Hon. Leocadio Isla
- ❖ 1937-1939 – Hon. Nicolas Ruiz





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GENESIS OF A DREAM and July 1, 1996. Mufoz became a 3rd and 2nd class municipality respectively where its annual income for expenditures rose to P102,674 in CY 2000.

The first landmark action conducted by the first or original 12-member agencies of the Muñoz Science Community was the preparation of a Master Plan identifying therein the long and medium term projects that would accelerate the total development of the municipality. Dr. Rodolfo C. Undan, present CLSU President who was then Vice-President for Research, Extension and Training,

the Hon. Speaker of the House who personally pledges his support.



1820-1880 - Hon. Juan A. ...
 1821-1882 - Hon. Juan ...
 1823-1824 - Hon. Juan ...
 1841-1821 - Hon. Anastasio ...
 1838-1841 - Hon. Desiderio ...



was the principal author of the Master Plan. About 100 copies of the same in book form were given to senators, representatives, different and private agencies, and even the Muñozonians in USA.

In 1992, the budget for expenditures of the municipality was PHP8.705M. Massive and relentless efforts were exerted by the LGU to maximize the collection of taxes, to support the priority needs of the community and to meet the income requirement for cityhood.

On July 31, 1993 and July 1, 1996, Muñoz became a 3rd and 2nd class municipality respectively, where its annual income for expenditures rose to PHP 67M in CY 2000.

The personnel of the Assessors Office did a splendid job in their tax mapping campaign. Likewise, it is now official as certified by the Land Management Bureau that the municipality's total land area is 16,305 hectares of 163.5 sq. km.

While the municipality's population of 150,000 fall short of the requirements to become a city, it was offset by its land area which is 63.5 sq.km. more than the required area of 100 sq.km.

As a rule, a bill toward the cityhood of a municipality must emanate from the Lower House or House of Representatives where the concerned District Representative should sponsor the said bill. To this end, the Sangguniang Bayan of Muñoz, passed and approved SB Resolution No. 206 on September 15, 1995, requesting the support and assistance of the 2nd District Representative of Nueva Ecija specially the Hon. Eleuterio Violago of the 2nd District where Muñoz is situated. It did not however merit the favorable consideration of the good representative, much less sponsor the bill in the Lower House anent the said cityhood.

Paradoxically, while the said request to the then District Representative did not elicit his favorable action, many representatives from other provinces even as far as Mindanao signified their interest and full support for the cityhood of Muñoz. These include: Hon. Renato Leviste, 1st District Oriental Mindoro; Hon. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri, 3rd District Bukidnon; Hon. Ramon S. Bagatsing, Jr., 4th District NCR; and Hon. Romeo D. Candazo. Not to be forgotten is Hon. Manuel Villar, then Speaker of the House who personally pledge his support.

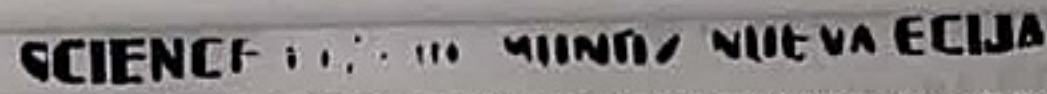


The year 1998 ushered in a new development with the election of Hon. Simeon E. Garcia, Jr. as Representative of the 2nd District of Nueva Ecija. Urged by vigorous request, he and along Hon. Rep. Josefina M. Josen. sponsored HB No. 3338. This bill was deliberated in Congress and eventually a public hearing was held on February 19, 1999, attended by several members of the House Committee on Local Government headed by its Chairman, hon. Romeo D. Candazo of the Lone District of Marikina City participated by more or less 13,000 people from all walks of life. It was a very fruitful public hearing where the proposed cityhood was approved in principle by the said Committee.

From that time on, there was almost no respite in following-up the said proposed cityhood. Even the then president of the Philippines, his excellency Fidel V. Ramos, publicly announced his support during his presidential visit and full cabinet meeting in Muñoz on April 15, 1999 held at the Pag-asa Gymnasium.



The Former Mayor Efren L. Alvarez with then Philippine President, His Excellency Fidel V. Ramos w/ Provincial Governor Tomas N. Joson III during FVR's presidential visit and cabinet meeting in Muñoz.



From that time on, all available manpower was mobilized in the massive preparation for the conduct of the plebiscite such as: publishing RA 8977 both in national and local newspapers, printing campaign materials encouraging YES vote in the urban core and providing tricycles with YES flags. Apart from this municipal officials and employees alike actively campaigned for YES deeply motivated by the battle cry that "there is no substitute of victory."

After the plebiscite on December 9, 2000 where YES votes have 12,468 (95%) as against 602 NO votes (5%), the existence of Muñoz as a town ceased and the blossoming of a new era began – THE BIRTH OF THE SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ, the blissful fruit of long years of December 9, 2000, the commitment in the fulfillment of a dream. At 7:07 in the evening of December 9, 2000, the Commission on Election Municipal representative proclaimed the cityhood of Muñoz as the Science City of Muñoz.

MILESTONES AND EVENTS TOWARDS CITYHOOD

- ❖ September 3, 1993 – Muñoz was declared by the Department of Science and Technology as SCIENCE COMMUNITY, the fifth in the Philippines, where its original 12 member agencies were the LGU of Muñoz, Provincial Government of Nueva Ecija, CLSU, BFAR, NIA, DENR, DOST, PHILRICE, BPRE (formerly NAPHIRE), ATI and PCC. It gave birth to the idea of converting Muñoz into a Science City.
- ❖ June 1995 – Master Plan of Muñoz Science Community was formulated/finalized by the member-agencies where the main author was Dr. Rodolfo C. Undan, then VP for Research, Extension and Training, now the president of Central Luzon State University.
- ❖ September 15, 1995 – Resolution Nos. 199 and 206 were passed and approved by the Sangguniang Bayan of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, requesting for the assistance and support of the four Representatives of the Province of Nueva Ecija. Congressman Eleuterio Violago of the 2nd District of Nueva Ecija was requested to initiate/sponsor a House Bill for the cityhood of Muñoz as a Science City.



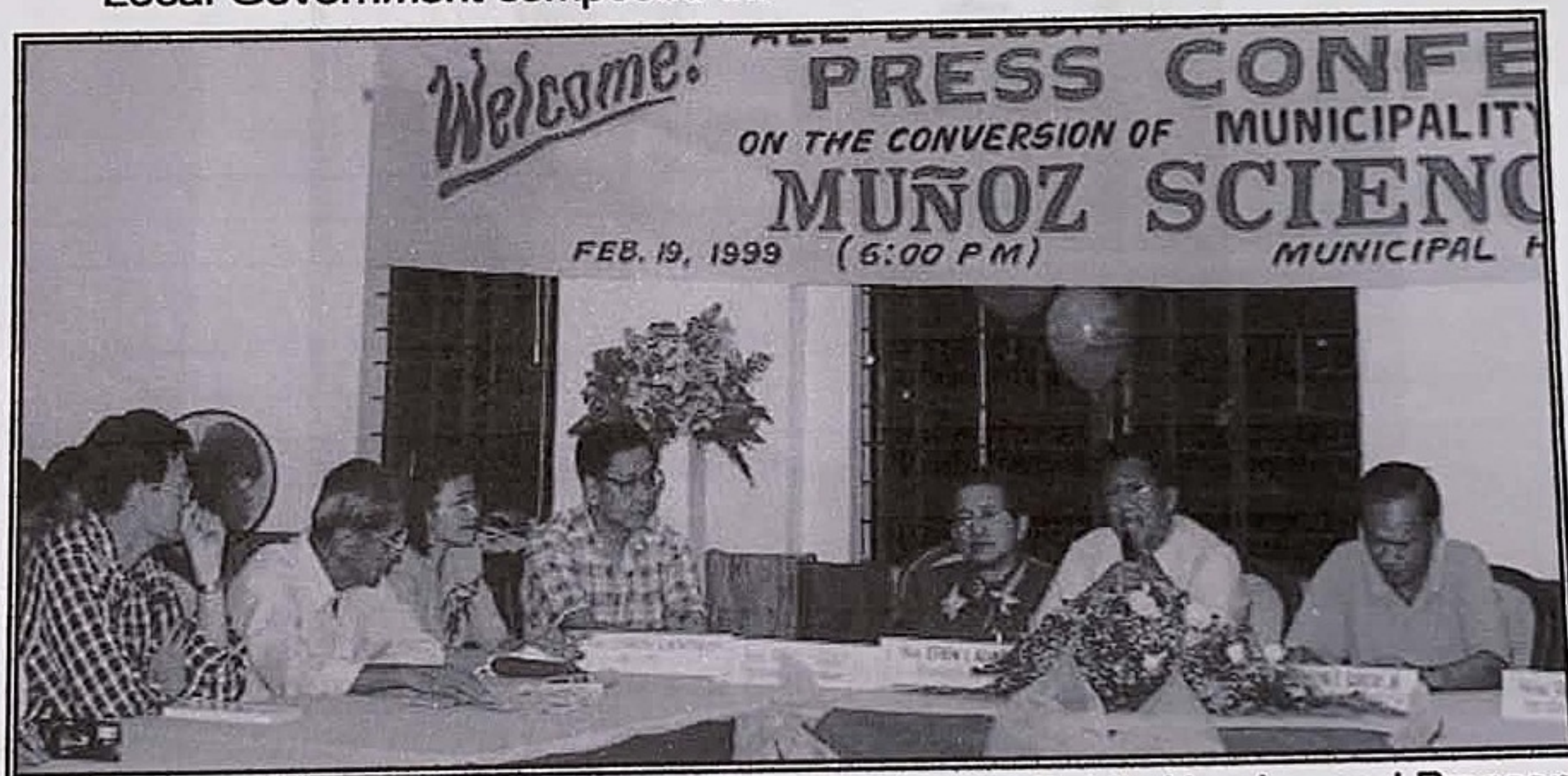
- ❖ April 25, 1997 – Presentation/discussion/evaluation Baños, Laguna attended by the co-author, Engr. Roy Concepcion, all of the LGU-Muñoz employees, Dr. Joselito V. Dela Cruz, Dean, College of Engineering and Dr. Honorato L. Angeles, VP for Research, Extension and Training, both of CLSU.
- ❖ July 23, 1997 – Symposium was held at the CLSU Amphitheatre was the pros and cons of the proposed cityhood of Muñoz was heard, attended by member-agencies of the Science Community and government and private sectors.
- ❖ January 20, 1997 – Senate President Edgardo J. Angara, the first to sponsor a bill towards our cityhood filed his introductory note during



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- ❖ the 3rd Regular Session of the 10th Congress seeking for the approval of an Act Creating Muñoz Science City.
- ❖ October 19, 1998 – Sangguniang Bayan of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija passed/approved SB Resolution No. 106, s. 1998, requesting Hon. Simeon E. Garcia, Jr. Representative, 2nd District of Nueva Ecija, to sponsor a bill for the cityhood of Muñoz.
- ❖ The Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Nueva Ecija approved SP Resolution No. 183, s. 1998, endorsing to the Congress of the Philippines, thru Speaker Manuel Villar, the cityhood of Muñoz.
- ❖ December 2, 1998 – President Joseph Ejercito Estrada endorse to Speaker Manuel Villar and Senate President, Marcelo Fernan, HB 3338 as priority administration measure.
- ❖ February 19, 1999 – Public Hearing at Pag-asa Gym, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, re: Science Cityhood of Muñoz was held, attended by more or less 13, 000 people and members of the House Committee on Local Government composed of:



Former Mayor Efren L. Alvarez speaking at the Public Hearing and Prescon for the cityhood of Muñoz.

Hon. Romeo D.C. Candazo (Chairman)	Hon. Jerry A. Salappudin
Hon. Josefina M. Joson	Hon. Prospero S. Amatong
Hon. Carlos M. Padilla	Hon. Roilo S. Golez
Hon. Roy A. Padilla, Jr.	Hon. Wilhelmino M. Sy Alvarado



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Hon. Leonardo Q. Montemayor
Hon. Aniceto G. Saludo, Jr.

Also present: Hon. Governor Tomas N. Joson III
Hon. Simeon E. Garcia, Jr.

- ❖ February 25, 1999 – House Committee on Local Government conducted its First Committee hearing at Batasang Pambansa, attended by a delegation of Muñoz residents especially the Science Community member-agencies.
- ❖ April 27, 1999 – HB 3338 was approved by the Lower House in its Third Reading.
- ❖ June 3, 1999 – League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) National President Jinggoy E. Estrada, endorsed to the Hon. Marcelo M. Fernan, the Senate President, the cityhood of Muñoz.



Then League of Municipalities of the Philippines National President Jinggoy Estrada, now Senator during his visit to Muñoz

- ❖ June 16, 1999 – Awarding Ceremony at Malacañang Palace where Muñoz was one of the 20 LGUs in the Philippines with Best programs and winner of the 1998-1999 Galing Pook Award, for its program entry: “Moving Onwards to Muñoz Agricultural Science”. This is its Galing Pook Award, the first in 1995.

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- ❖ September 25, 2000 – First Committee reading/hearing at the House of Senate attended by a big delegation of Muñozonians. The proposed cityhood was favorably acted upon by the committee chaired by Senator Aquilino Pimentel, Senator Robert Barbers, Governor Tomas N. Joson III, Representative Simeon E. Garcia, Jr., Mayor Efren L. Alvarez, Vice Mayor Marienelia S.R. Coronel, all members of the Sangguniang Bayan and the different presidents of NGOs composed the delegation.
- ❖ October 5, 2000 – Second Committee hearing was held at the Senate where the cityhood proposal was favorably acted upon, without any objection.
- ❖ October 9, 2000 – Third and final Committee Hearing where 15 out of 18 Senators present voted in favor of the cityhood of Muñoz, while 3 abstained. All of these senators present were co-sponsors/author of SB No. 2172.
- ❖ November 7, 2000 – His Excellency, President Joseph Ejercito Estrada, signed/approved Republic Act No. 8977 "An Act Converting the Municipality of Muñoz in the Province of Nueva Ecija into a Component City to be known as Science City of Muñoz".
- ❖ November 9, 2000 – The full text of Republic Act No. 8977 was published in the November 6-12, 2000 weekly issue of the Nueva Ecija Times, a local newspaper. Afterwards, it was also published in two (2) nationwide circulated newspapers, the Daily Tribune and TODAY on November 11, 2000 and November 13, 2000, respectively. Such publications marked the effectivity of Republic Act. No. 8977.
- ❖ November 21, 2000 – His Excellency, President Joseph Ejercito Estrada attended the Multi-Sectoral Forum held at the Pag-asa Gym in Muñoz. The unveiling of the ceremonial marker of R.A. No. 8977 creating the Science City of Muñoz was also done.
- ❖ December 9, 2000 – A plebiscite was held in Muñoz which ratified Republic Act No. 8977, making Muñoz a full-pledge "Science City of Muñoz". After garnering 95% (12,468) YES votes of the total ballots cast (13,090) against 602 NO votes, Mr. Nestor Romano, COMELEC representative proclaimed the cityhood of Muñoz in the Municipal

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Session hall before on exultant audience led by Hon. Mayor Efren L. Alvarez and his First Lady and other officials of Muñoz.

- ❖ July 20, 2002 – Awardee “1st League of Cities of the Philippines Best Practices”
- ❖ November 21, 2002 – Gawad Galing Pook Awardee for “Developing the Matingkis Farm Tourism Program” by Galing Pook Foundation and Local Government Academy.



The Matingkis Farm Tourism Project which was awarded by League of Cities in the Philippines as one of the five Best Practices in 2002

EPILOGUE

From its lowly origins as a nondescript “barrio”, Muñoz has metamorphosed into its present stature of being the first and only Science City in the country.

The overriding objective to transform Muñoz into a center of science and technology, trade, commerce and agro-industry is not far-fetched. After all Muñoz, now a city is financially sound to implement and translate into reality its conceptualized framework of total development.





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Muñoz is now fully confident in its march to history, in treading the path to glory and immortality as the first-ever Science City in the Philippines and most probably also the first chartered city in the world. The city which has a total land area of 16,305 hectares and a population of more or less 70,000, now pursues a beehive of activities towards the immediate implementation of projects towards total development.

The Science City of Muñoz is a heritage from his Excellency, President Joseph Ejercito Estrada; Hon. Efren L. Alvarez, the first mayor of the Science City of Muñoz; the 12,468 plebiscite voters who ratified R.A. 9877; to the present and all succeeding generations of Muñozonians.

The Science City of Muñoz continues to move on and with the incumbent City Mayor Nestor L. Alvarez at its helm, the constituents of Muñoz are confident that the full development of the city will soon be realized. Capitalizing on the strength of the city which consists primarily of its dedicated, hardworking and highly committed people; its natural resource; good governance of local executives and officials; and the presence of various R and D institutions, the city has all the best chances to take on/carry out the mission of attaining progress as a strategic learning laboratory for technology promotion, rural development, education, and agro-tourism.

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