



NEWS BIT

Strengthening Urban Resilience for Growth with Equity (SURGE) Project

USAID assists CDI cities improve construction permitting processes



(Left photo) Jim Nichols, ICMA construction permitting expert addressed participants in Iloilo City on April 20. (Right photo) A participant in Puerto Princesa City talked about challenges in construction permitting during the workshop in the city on April 12.

On April 12 and 20, department heads, key officials and private sector representatives of four USAID Cities Development Initiative (CDI) partner cities participated in workshops conducted by USAID's Strengthening Urban Resilience for Growth with Equity (SURGE) Project to improve their cities' processes on construction permitting and issuance of certificates of occupancy. Local government and private sector representatives of Puerto Princesa City participated in the workshop held in the city on April 12, and representatives from the city governments of Cagayan de Oro, General Santos and Iloilo participated in the workshop held in Iloilo City on April 20. The two workshops were facilitated by James Nichols, an international construction permitting specialist of the International County/Country Management Association (ICMA). Mr. Nichols talked about the aspects of construction permitting and issuance of certificate of occupancy, appreciating the value of customer service, communication, and the necessity of establishing an automated one-stop-shop. Best practices from model cities in the Philippines implementing streamlined construction permitting processes were presented, along with good international practices from the United States. The cities committed to streamline their processes. For one, Puerto Princesa City, which undertakes 31 steps to complete a building permit and another 31 steps for the occupancy certificate processing, will fast track the implementation of an ordinance and the formulation of an executive order to support the new JMC 2018-01. The city also plans to establish sisterhood with Cagayan de Oro City and Valenzuela City for this initiative.