

VARSITY TO DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN



The University of Nairobi will embark on developing a master plan that will act as a guide to the growth and development of the institution.

While meeting the technical committee tasked with the development of the master plan, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi said that the aim of the initiative is to guide the future development within the university in order to enhance distinctness and excellence in form, function and design by facilitating coordinated development and management of university properties and other resources. Prof. Mbithi noted that the University Master Plan will be vital in among others enabling the University provide leadership in infrastructure development within a spatially planned framework.

Driven by academic planning priorities, a university master plan provides a set of guidelines for decisions about where to locate the university's research, teaching, residential and recreational priorities and programs; it also offers a campus-wide frame of reference for the university's current strategic vision and goals.

The committee chairman, Prof. Peter Ngau said that the team has already drafted a work plan that requires them to engage and collect views from the University stakeholders. The stakeholders' consultations will act as guide to the drafting of the master plan.

The master plan is being prepared under the leadership of the University Management Board and the technical committee which is a multi-disciplinary team of 15 members consisting of planners, architects, engineers, land experts, designers, educationists, social scientists and administrators drawn from various departments within the University. The Committee is organized into 7 thematic groups covering key master plan sectors – institutional, land surveying, planning and environment, architecture, socio-economic, infrastructure and utilities and land development. The committee which has been working since July 2014 is expected to deliver the first University of Nairobi Master Plan by April 2015.

The University of Nairobi master plan is being prepared in fulfilment of the requirement by the Commission for University Education (CUE) established under the Universities Act 2012, which requires each university to prepare a master plan. The Commission, through the draft Universities Standards and Guidelines 2013, states that, 'Every university shall have a Master Plan to guide land use at the institution. Nevertheless, established Universities world over operate within the guidance of a Master Plans which based on well thought out concept for a university in terms of space design, landscaping, infrastructure, service provision, circulation and recreational spaces to enhance pursuit of intellectual, physical and social excellence.

The University of Nairobi Master Plan is based on university community input, surveys, planning workshops, existing development and physical characteristics. The approach adopted by the committee participatory and includes consultations with cross-section of university stakeholders including administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The output will comprise two and three dimensional images and models, texts, diagrams, statistics, reports, maps and aerial photos that describe how specific areas of the university will be developed and an implementation strategy. The plan will make recommendations and proposals for the university community's population, accommodation, education facilities, social/recreation facilities, transportation and circulation, and land use.

The general approach of preparing the University of Nairobi master plan is on the basis of the campuses. The planning process is being carried out in 3 distinct phases covering

all the 9 campuses constituting the University. The first phase covers Main, Chiromo, and Parklands campuses. The second phase will cover the city nuclear campuses and their auxiliary properties which are Upper Kabete, Lower Kabete, Kikuyu, Kenya Science and the College of Health Sciences. The last phase will cover regional campuses including Kisumu and Mombasa.

Based on guidelines given, the first phase should be finalized within the first quarter of 2015. It is expected that the Technical Committee will in the next few weeks engage more with all levels and stakeholders of the University to receive views and proposals for the master plan. This will be in addition to the data already gathered. The overall output for this project is a detailed 20 year master plan which will guide the future development of the University.