

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON HOUSING



NAIROBI 1987

UNCHS-PGCHS



SHORT PRESENTATION OF HOUSING

CITY TOUR NAIROBI

presented by :

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## DWELLING ENVIRONMENTS OF NAIROBI

### Introduction

The functional structure of Nairobi has its present condition, state and location determined by the political and economic history. Various stages of deterministic periods can be said to have been the status as a railway town, a settler capital and a colonial capital to the federal and national capital of the independent Kenya nation. Prior to the railway town Nairobi was partly forest, swampy and grassland.

Nairobi was chosen by the railway builders as a camp because it was safe, offering a favourable topography and adequate fresh water supplies. By 1898 a plan for Nairobi was sponsored by the railway to cater for the railway workshops, offices and residence for the staff and an element of commerce.

The railway plan used racial zoning as the functional tool. The senior railway officers (Europeans) were accommodated on the hill while junior (Indians) staff was situated near the marshy areas. The commercial element was also differentiated between European traders and Asian traders. The coolies were camped east of railway station. The Africans were not legal residents by then. But this did not prevent Africans from moving to Nairobi.

In 1927 a settler plan for Nairobi was sponsored which recognized Africans as a racial entity with legal residence status in Nairobi. Nairobi was then planned on racial grounds to suit the interest of the colonialists. The town had zoned residential areas in categories of: