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On the ground. Wakiso District officials and Works ministry engineers inspect ongoing works on Lufuka drainage channel along Namasuba- Ndege Kitiko road in Wakiso District recently. PHOTO BY JOSEPH KIGGUNDU

Excitement as Wakiso rolls out own physical development plan

WAKISO. As Wakiso opens up debate on a proposal to upgrade the district to a city status, district leaders have unveiled a draft physical development plan to guide planning and bring about orderly settlement and development in the rapidly growing Municipality neighbouring Kampala City.

The plan, which is currently being discussed by stakeholders and a copy of which *Daily Monitor* has seen, stipulates which areas should accommodate such infrastructures as industrial parks, agricultural fields, tourism sites, hospitals and schools among others.

According to the plan, industrial parks will be restricted to Nansana and Kira municipalities, while agriculture will be practiced on a large scale in the rural sub counties of Namayumba, Masuliita, Kakiri, and Mende.

Because of its strategic location on the shores of Lake Victoria, the Entebbe peninsular has been earmarked for fish factories, beaches and tourism.

Under the plan, authorities committed to boosting the water transport system and to redevelop several landing sites.

Landing sites development

At Bukasa where an inland port is planned, Busabala in Makindye/ Ssabagabo, Kyankulu in Kasanje, Kinyawante in Bussi and Kasenyi in Katabi- are some of the landing sites lined up to get modern passenger vessels.

According to the plan, educational centres will be set up in Kyengera Town Council, which already hosts prestigious schools such as Budo Junior School and King's College Budo, to help promote the education sector in the district.

Wakiso is one of the most rapidly urbanising districts in Uganda.

However, it has not had an up-to-date planning scheme despite the current urban sprawl and extension into the rural areas of the district.

The district has got a combination of both fast-growing urban areas such as those close to Kampala City and along the highways such as Bombo, Masaka, Hoima, Mubende, Mityana and Jinja roads connecting to the entire country and beyond.

To decongest the notoriously busy Kampala City, authorities in Wakiso further propose a comprehensive railway transport system with three railway stations; one at Nakigalala-Kajjansi Division, Matugga in Gombe Division and another on Kampala-Masaka road.

The light rail system will also be connected to satellite bus terminals along major road arteries and the buses will be the ones to transport passengers entering Kampala City.

Mr Matia Lwanga Bwanika, the district chairperson, is upbeat about the draft physical development plan, saying it has come at a right time before physical planning in the district gets messed up.

"I personally describe it as a major step in the area of physical planning because if we don't guide developers on what to do now, we risk becoming another disorganised urban area like Kampala," he said.

Bwanika says with or without resources, his administration will ensure that the physical development plan is implemented to the letter after being approved by government.

In the 2017-2018 financial year, the central government allocated to the district only Shs10billion for infrastructural development, particularly roads.

"We have decided to allocate Shs500 million to work on the district physical development master plan this year, which is part of the Shs10b we received for infrastructure and the balance of Sh500m the consultant wants, will be paid in the subsequent fiscal year," he says

Sarvimax Consultancy Company Ltd is the firm the district contracted to develop the physical development plan.

Mr Issa Gumonye, the commissioner of urban administration in the Ministry of Local Government, said Wakiso's earlier proposal for a city status was vague before implementing a compressive physical development plan.

"Proposals for a city status have been vague but with a plan like this one, getting a city status will become easy. You need to quickly work on its endorsement through the ministry and the National Physical Planning Board and move on," Mr Gumonye said during a consultative meeting on the physical development plan at Wakiso District headquarters recently.

Wakiso District senior physical planner, Ms Ruth Nakatude Galabuzi, said the draft physical development plan is going to be displayed at all notice boards at municipalities, town councils and sub-counties headquarters in the district to allow feedback from the public.

"Displaying the plan in all areas will help share views with different stakeholders and we hope they will tell us what should be removed or added in the plan before it is approved by the minister," she added.

A decade ago, government hatched an idea to carve out parts of Wakiso, Mukono and Mpigi districts and annex them to Kampala as a unitary governance entity.

According to the first government plan, Kira Municipality to the east of Wakiso, was to be added to Kampala.

To the south-east, areas of Kajjansi, Sseguku, Lubowa, which are part of Wakiso, were also going to be added to the city, as well as Makindye-Ssabagabo Sub-county in Wakiso District.

The city was also planned to expand to Gayaza and Kawanda on Bombo Road.

Rubaga Division was to be changed into Mengo Municipality in order to cater for the various Buganda cultural sites in this area.

However, it is only under the Uganda Police Force structure where this plan has fully been implemented, with a police administration already in place.

KCCA has since developed a metropolitan physical development master plan, which awaits approval by government and it is not yet clear whether it would incorporate the one drafted by Wakiso authorities.

Although the territorial boundaries of Kampala under KCCA Act 2010, appear to remain intact, the same law creates a Metropolitan Physical Planning Authority (MPPA), parallel to those of KCCA to handle planning issues in the area.

The gap impairs any efforts to expedite the expansion of the authority's planning area and governance structure.

When asked to comment on Wakiso's draft physical plan, Kampala Lord Mayor Erias Lukwago said he first needed time to study the document.

But Mr Bwanika said they chose to develop their own physical development plan because the one by KCCA is not forthcoming.

"They (KCCA) will find us there, after all, we are still governed under the Local Government Act, not KCCA Act," he said.

Prior to the enactment of the KCCA Act, the then Prime Minister, Prof Apolo Nsibambi, warned that expanding Kampala City beyond its current boundaries could contravene Article 178(3) of the Constitution, which determines the boundaries of the constitutional Buganda region.

According to Article 5 of the Constitution, the city, though located in Buganda, belongs to Ugandans. It is not counted among the districts of Buganda.

It is such legal dilemmas that even serve to shade more clouds on the possibility of translating the plan of expanding Kampala into a reality.

ABOUT WAKISO

Population. Wakiso District is the most populous district in Uganda, with close to two million people.

It covers an area of approximately 2,400km2, of which 384 (16 per cent) are wetlands.

Education. The district has three universities, several tertiary, secondary and primary education institutions.

Administration. The district has 27 sub-counties, four municipalities and a couple of town councils.

In 2013, the district council passed a resolution requesting to be granted a city status.

Voices



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