

Managing Expansion of Commercial Districts for Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Upper Hill Area in Nairobi, Kenya

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Key words: Sustainable Development, Commercial District, Nairobi, Environment, Urban

SUMMARY

This is a summary on the paper on managing of commercial districts for sustainable development. It is generally accepted worldwide that cities play a vital role in any nation's development. They are key to increasing a country's global and regional competitiveness as they are the hub of commercial and industrial growth and home to learning institutions and governments. The urban population has been growing and it is projected to continue growing. In order to support the three pillars of development i.e. social, economic and environment, growth and development of cities must be sustainable. This will ensure that the current generation meets its needs without compromising the ability of the future generations to do the same.

This paper examines the current environment evolving around the rapid urban environment and in particular, the case of Upper Hill Centre in Nairobi, Kenya that is rapidly transforming from a low density residential area to a commercial hub just within a walking distance from the Central Business District and has become home to a number of offices for foreign missions, multinationals, hotels, banks and other reputable establishments.

This is a primarily a qualitative study. Primary data was collected in the field by use of self-administered questionnaires distributed to targeted respondents categorized into developers, residents, service providers, professionals in the landed sector and other stakeholders.

The study found out that although the development of the commercial buildings is very rapid, there is no corresponding upgrading of the infrastructure and other services to meet the growing demand. This has led to inconvenience and increased cost of running business. The various service providers are uncoordinated and most developments are poorly planned and executed. This has led to a huge strain on facilities that were meant to serve only a few households and is unsustainable in the long term.

The study proposes development of a master plan to incorporate goals, objectives and strategies for the area in a process that is participatory and all inclusive with an effective and efficient implementation and monitoring process.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development as a concept is ambiguous, malleable and non-immutable. These general characteristics of the concept have allowed it to remain, “..an open, dynamic, and evolving idea that can be applied to fit [...]very different situations and contexts across space and time.”¹ The most widely accepted and used definition of sustainable development is the one by the 1987 *Brundtland Commission* in their, *Our Common Future Report: ‘Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the future of generations to meet their own needs’*². Since then the concept has undergone mutations to a broad and deep concept that includes alternative notions of development and alternative notions of nature. For purposes of this paper, sustainable development will be taken to mean a representation of local to global efforts to imagine and enact a positive vision of a world in which basic human needs are met without irrevocably damaging the natural systems we all depend on.

As a result of the ongoing discourse based on the *Brundtland Commission’s* standard definition, the concept of sustainable development has evolved a core set of development guiding principles and values to the present needs and in the future. As a result of this evolution, the concept has been adapted to address a number of challenges of which planning of sustainable cities is one. According to the UN-Habitat Sustainable Cities Program (2009:ix), for cities to develop sustainably they must “[...]find better ways of balancing the environment with the pressures on it by human beings”. The program contends that “[...]properly planned and managed cities hold the key to human development in a safer environment”. Sustainable urban (cities) development should in addition to striking a balance between urban development and environmental protection be taken to mean achieving effective, efficiency and equity in employment, shelter, basic services, social infrastructure and transportation³.

It is a generally acknowledged and accepted that cities play a vital role in any nation’s development and Kenya is no exception. Cities are key to increasing a country’s global and regional competitiveness as they are home to the majority of jobs, firms and higher education institutions amongst others. As a nexus for needs and opportunities, cities offer exceptional

¹ Kates et al 2005:13

² World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), *Our Common Future*, 1987

³ Chattopadhyay B. 2008:2

possibilities for economic development, which as earlier identified has to be sustainable. In Kenya, rapid urban development is being witnessed in the five main towns of which three, Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu are classified as cities thus the need for a sustainable development framework analysis of the ongoing urban development. This paper's analysis shall be based on Upperhill, Nairobi where rapid urban commercial development has been witnessed in the last 20 years.

2. METHODOLOGY

This report is based on a primarily qualitative study. The findings presented in this study are informed by primary data gathered during field work. Sampling for the study followed the non-probability sampling techniques of convenience and judgment sampling.

Primary data for the study was collected by use of a self-administered questionnaire. This was the only instrument used for data collection. The questionnaires were distributed to target respondents i.e. developers, residents, service providers, land sector professionals and other stakeholders.

3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE CONCEPT

The 1987 *Brundtland Commission* whose roots date back to the 1972 Stockholm conference on the Human Environment and the 1980 World Conservation strategy of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, in their *Our Common Future* gave what has come to be the most widely used, cited and accepted definition of sustainable development. They defined the concept as “..the ability to make development sustainable i.e. to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”⁴. According to Kates et al (2005:11) this definition lays emphasis on intergeneration equity and implies limits – “..not absolute limits but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organization on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities”. What may be summed up from the Brundtland Commission's report and definition of sustainable development is the fact that both the environment and development are not inseparable.

Adapting a different approach to the concept, the United States National Academy of Science in their *Our Common Journey: A Transition toward Sustainability*, took sustainable development to imply a linkage between what is to be sustained under the headings *nature, life support systems, and community—as well as their intermediate categories*, and what is to be developed under the headings of *people, economy and society*. In their review of literature on sustainable development they noted that as it concerns the implied linkage there are two

⁴ Kates et al 2005:13

extremes i.e. ‘the develop only’ and ‘the sustain only’, however they were of the opinion this need not be the case as it’s possible to have an “and/or” position. On time they noted that it has been the practice to define it as a ‘now and in the future’ case, where the now implies a generation – when almost everything is sustainable to forever when surely nothing is sustainable.

In 2002, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg marked a further expansion of the concept of sustainable development with the widely used *economic, environmental* and *social pillars* of the concept. As it has been widely noted the Johannesburg declaration created “a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development—economic development, social development and environmental protection—at local, national, regional and global levels.”⁵ The declaration addressed what at the time had been a long running concern over “...the limits of the framework of environment and development...wherein development was widely viewed solely as economic development, a view that had obscured human development, equity, and social justice.”⁶ Though a marked improvement for the sustainability movement, Kates et al (2005:12) criticizes this approach on the ground that there was no universal agreement as to the details of each pillar. This led to the mushrooming of varied characterizations of the pillars with the most varied being the social pillar ranging from; “*generic non-economic social designation such as “social,” “social development,” and “social progress, to an emphasis on human development as opposed to economic development: “human development,” “human well-being,” or just “people.”* And finally..*“the variant which focuses on issues of justice and equity: “social justice,” “equity,” and “poverty alleviation.”*”⁷

As seen above from the brief introduction to the concept of sustainable development, there has been no one, all inclusive and immutable definition of the term as it is constantly evolving with the world discourse on the issues of sustainability. The ambiguous nature of the concept should however not be taken to mean a weakness but an emboldening of the concept’s importance as it allows it to remain “...an open, dynamic, and evolving idea that can be adapted to fit different situations and contexts..”⁸ For purposes of this study the concept shall be adapted to the challenge of planning for a sustainable city.

4. SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

⁵ The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development

⁶ Kates et al 2005:12

⁷ Kates et al 2005:12

⁸ Kates et al 2005:13

According to the Kenyan Draft National Urban Development policy (2011:74) sustainable urban development is:

“a process of synergetic integration and co-evolution among the great subsystems making up a city (economic, social, physical and environmental), which guarantees the local population a non-decreasing level of wellbeing in the long term, without compromising the possibilities of development of surrounding areas and contributing by this towards reducing harmful effects of development on the biosphere.”

The above definition clearly integrates the 1987 Brundtland Commission’s view and the 2002 Johannesburg conference expansion of sustainable development concept.

Sustainable urban development premised on sustainable city planning should aim at achieving equity in the city’s social, economic and environmental spheres while at the same time improving the lives of the people. To realize this, it is generally accepted that there must be a sustainable city form, coupled with effective and efficient provision and management of the requisite services. This in a nutshell implies that in order for a city or urban area to be sustainable it needs to produce and manage basic services like water, waste, energy, and transportation in a way that it conforms to the principles of sustainable development. Thus a sustainable city should be able to produce and distribute the services in an economic, environment friendly and equitable way.

In developing countries like Kenya cities fall short in the provision of basic services. According to Chattopadhyay (2008) though there are some differences between cities and in rich and poor nations, in general urban infrastructure systems are designed without much attention to environmental and social impacts. And in most cases the delivery of the services like water, energy, waste, transportation, are based on non-renewable energy sources. Moreover, the inequality in the provision of these services is very high.

A quick review of the current Kenyan cities status reveals that they are characterized by a high population density, deficient service provision and pollution in its varied forms.

5. URBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE KENYAN CONTEXT

Kenya’s Constitution and the *Vision 2030* - Kenya’s development blueprint, recognize the need for secure, well governed, competitive, and sustainable urban areas and cities⁹. This recognition has been brought about by the haphazard nature of urban development in the country.

⁹ Ministry of Local Government (2011)

In Kenya, urbanization which in this paper's context is taken to mean – a complex process that involves the complete transformation of social, economic, socio-cultural and political mindsets of the society as a whole – has been characterized by; high levels of urban poverty, proliferation and growth of informal settlements, rising inequalities between the rich and poor, inadequate housing with insecure tenure, limited access to services such as health, education, safe water and sanitation, other physical infrastructures, and culture and recreation facilities. The inequality in these urban areas is significant as aptly exemplified by the Nairobi case where the *Gini* co-efficient measure stands at 0.59 (Ministry of Local Government, 2011).

It is projected by 2030 that half of Kenya's population will be urban making Kenya one of the rapidly urbanizing country. This urbanization trend is and will be dominated by Kenya's five largest urban areas which according to analysts also account for 70% of Kenya's overall GDP (Ministry of Local Government, 2011). Rapid urbanization such as the one being witnessed (and the projected) in Kenya brings with it a myriad of challenges key among them being environmental, housing, transport, and industries. Thus though they contribute significantly to the Kenyan GDP, Kenyan urban areas have not been supported, developed and efficiently managed.

6. THE KENYAN URBAN DEVELOPMENT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK: FROM THE 'OLD' TO THE 'NEW'

Analysts have cited weak urban governance and management frameworks as the major impediment to Kenya's realization of a sustainable urban development. The Local Government Act cap 265 and the Physical Planning Act cap 286 greatly restricted the mandates, operations and functions of local authorities disabling service delivery. Adding unto this was the multiplicity of parallel agencies e.g. Ministry of Lands Director of Planning and the Nairobi City Council (NCC), National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya Roads Board and the NCC's environmental department that further complicated urban areas governance.

In adherence to the new constitutional order and its requirements, the Urban Areas and Cities Act of 2011, was enacted. This Act gives effect to the constitution's section 184 which requires legislation; to provide for the classification, governance principles criteria of establishing as well as the management of urban areas, cities and towns. According to the Act, there shall be established a cities board which amongst the various functions will control land use, land development, land subdivision and zoning by public and private sectors within a framework of spatial and master plans for towns, cities and municipality delegated by County Government and facilitated by the County Transition Authority.

According to the Act planning and development control will be undertaken by the different rural and urban managers at the different level of urban and rural governance set out in the Act. Analysts contend that the full implementation of the Urban Areas and Cities Act 2011 will be controversial as it divests divesting county government functions and allocating them to boards of cities, municipalities and towns created under the Act.

7. KENYA'S RAPID URBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF UPPERHILL

The rapid urbanization process being witnessed in the country has seen the commercialization of residential properties in Nairobi spreading at an alarming rate particularly in surrounding residential areas like Upper Hill, Ngong Road, Waiyaki Way and in neighboring residential areas like Kilimani and Kileleshwa and Lavington. The availability of land for development in these areas has provided an opportunity for the expansion of the already congested Nairobi's Central District. Of interest to this paper is Upperhill area which in the last twenty years has experienced massive development of high rise commercial buildings, with official consent and approvals.

7.1 The Upperhill Case

Upper Hill in particular has become a favorite for development of offices for: multinational companies like Coca Cola; missions like the Japan Embassy, British High Commission and the European Union; international financial institutions like the World Bank and International Finance Corporation; Insurance companies like the British American Insurance Company; high end hotels like Crowne Plaza; and an array of banks' headquarters for example Commercial Bank of Africa, CITI Bank and Equity Bank. Despite these massive investments in developments of high rise commercial buildings, the authorities have not responded by providing services that commensurate this type of development and investment.

As mentioned earlier, in a sustainably developed and planned urban area, the commercial district and its supportive facilities like water, electricity, drainage, water hydrants, and roads among others are planned and provided to support the expected population and commercial activities. These expectations were tested in the Upper case and reveals that the area is one in need of a rethink as it concerns the planning for a commercial district.

7.2 The Analysis Framework

How one defines, conceptualizes and understands theory, concepts or conceptual frameworks is important as it has a bearing on how the analysis is eventually carried out. Therefore, this section maps out the sustainable urban development conceptual understandings within which this study falls. As used in this study's understanding sustainable urban development is one which is premised on sustainable city planning and aims at achieving equity in the city's

social, economic and environmental spheres while at the same time improving the lives of the city's residents. Adopting this cross cutting understanding in analysis leads to the following different analytical components that will form the core discussion of the paper in later sections.

- a) **Transportation:** as one of the key physical infrastructural service it is a key and critical foundation for the sustainable urban development pillars. For purposes of our sustainable urban development context analysis, this paper shall look into issues such as; *waiting hours as it concerns the public transport system, safety and security standards, road networks integration and adequacy, road maintenance and road pollution aspects.*
- b) **Parking:** This is a key infrastructural service in any city. This paper's areas of interest are; adequacy of parking spaces; the distribution of parking lots; quality and quantity of parking spaces and; taxi and bus stops.
- c) **Water and sanitation Services:** Another key and critical aspect in any sustainable urban development. In analyzing this component in this paper's sustainable urban development context, this paper shall focus on: *efficiency of water provision and delivery; effluent discharge into natural water courses within the area; management of storm and flood waters; and the area's water per capita need vis-à-vis the actual provision.*
- d) **Waste Management:** For purposes of this analysis waste here refers to solid, liquid and gaseous substances from different sources that degrade the environment. As an urban area grows its institutional capacity to address this challenge should also grow. For purposes this paper shall focus on: *the practices for waste reduction, reuse, recycling, treatment and disposal so as to reduce disposable materials.*
- e) **Energy:** This is a major development driver in any sector. For purposes of our analysis the paper shall look into: *the sources of energy; the cost of energy; access to energy; the providers; the efficiency of energy transmission and the utilization of renewable energy resources if any.*
- f) **Information Communication Technology:** ICT in this case refers to the science in devices and media used to capture, process, store, and transmit information in various forms.¹⁰ As an important analysis component it shall concern: *infrastructure ownership and service providers; and infrastructure installation services and quality of service delivery.*
- g) **Security Systems:** this is an important function that is primarily the state's role. For our analysis this paper shall generally assess *the neighborhood and community policing strategies within our area of interest.*

¹⁰ Government of Kenya (2007), Kenya Vision 2030 P 25

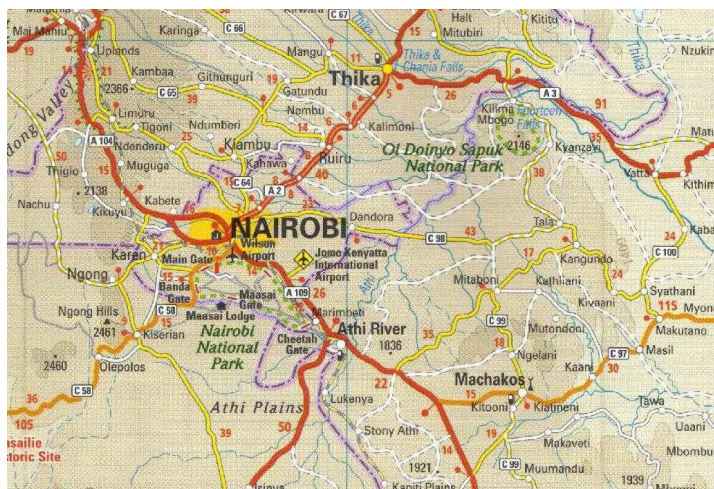
h) Disaster Risk Management: As a result of its complexity, disaster in the urban areas leads to significant social, economic and environmental impacts. For analysis this paper shall analyze our area of interest's response initiatives as it concerns; *urban floods, fire, collapsing buildings, traffic accidents and disease epidemics.*

8. CASE STUDY

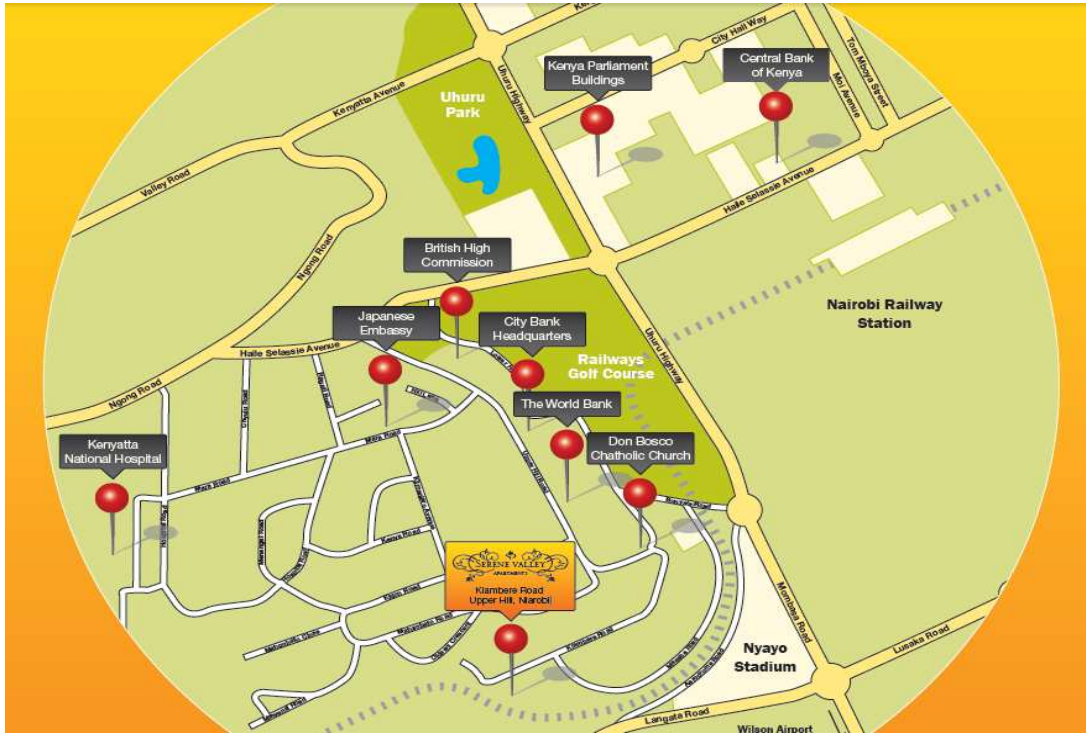
8.1 Introduction

The ever increasing demand for office space in Nairobi has resulted into the rise of satellite commercial centers such as Westlands, Kilimani and others which have been emerging as favorite locations away from the congestion of the Central Business District. An increasing number of international organizations have been moving to the Upper Hill area in a quest to seek a pivot base into the regional markets.

This study's case area of Upper Hill is located approximately 2 kilometers from the Nairobi Central Business District. Its boundary stretches from Ngong Road near the Kenyatta National Hospital to the Nyayo Stadium roundabout at the start of the Bunyala Road. The coordinates of Upper Hill are: 01 18 05S, 36 49 03E (Latitude: - 1.3015; Longitude: 36.8175).



Map of Nairobi and Upper Hill



As earlier stated Upper Hill begun as a residential area for Government housed officers. Most of these bungalows were built in the 1960's and 1970's and indeed Upper Hill was historically a residential neighborhood in Nairobi during the colonial times, however the 1990's and early 2000 brought a demand for land and office space especially because the high demand had brought a scarcity in the Central Business District and it also translated to exorbitant prices of this much needed service.¹¹

¹¹ Omwenga Mairura (2008) Urban Growth and Sprawl –Case Study of Nairobi, Kenya, World Urban Forum 4 03-09 November 2008, Nanjing China



An old Bungalow in Upper Hill Nairobi (Source Field Survey 2012)

A broad overview of Upper Hill now reveals its resplendence with neat organized rows of high rise buildings which have come up recently and which belong to blue chip local and multinational companies. It has become a favorite location for multi-nationals, regional and local companies such as Standard Chartered Bank, Equity Bank, the World Bank, the Coca-cola, Commercial Bank of Africa and the Pricewater Coopers who find the population of East Africa at more than 200 million sufficient for their operations whose threshold is a population of 140 million. This trend has led to the increase in the demand of office space and residential spaces. These dynamics and others have seen Upperhill rapidly transform into a prime office location in Nairobi. Modern apartments and residential maisonettes confined in gated communities have also taken place. Although a lot of business companies have relocated to the area, the main challenge remains that as a recent commercial hub, whose growth took place largely in the past two decades the available services may not be commensurate with the growth that has been taking place in Upperhill.



Panoramic view of Upper Hill Nairobi (Source: Field Survey 2012)

8.2 Planning in Upper Hill

As a neighborhood in Nairobi, Upperhill came up as a result of a strategic development plan/master plan contained in the 1948 Nairobi Master Plan and the Second and last strategic plan which was the 1973 Nairobi Metropolitan Growth Strategy. The area also falls within the jurisdiction of development plans of the city which are short term and adhoc and which are neither integrated nor coordinated. This therefore means that Upperhill was catered for in the 1948 Nairobi Master Plan for the small colonial city at that time and the 1973 Nairobi Metropolitan Growth Strategy which covered the city of Nairobi as well as its environs. The plan addressed population issues, economic activities, land use, transportation, housing, revenue and expenditure patterns of the city.

Nevertheless this Plan that was prepared by the City Council of Nairobi per se was not effectively implemented and in addition the policy measures were not enforced. This Plan remains the broad plan for planning in the City of Nairobi as well as Upperhill and other areas therein. Omwenga (2008) observes that this Plan document is however not valid under the current and existing physical planning legislation which is the Physical Planning Act (Cap

286) of 1996.

Precisely speaking however, Upperhill was provided for in the Hill Area Zoning Plan of 1992 which is a plan that covered the Upperhill and Community Areas which exist just outside the Nairobi's Central Business District. This policy document focused on decongesting the CBD and it proposed the transferring of new office space to Upperhill which as has earlier been stated was formerly a low density high income residential neighborhood. Once again as with the 1973 Nairobi Metropolitan Growth Strategy the implementation of this policy document has been decried as very poor and in addition the expansion of roads and support infrastructure has not been incorporated in this plan.

The guide to Nairobi City Development Ordinances and Zones provides that Upperhill is divided into six blocks: Block 1 has offices; blocks 2 as well as 3 have offices. Block 4 has residential whereas Block 5 has institutional where the Kenyatta National Hospital is. Block 6 has mixed developments comprising of institutional; hotels and also offices. From the field study report these zoning regulations are not being observed on the ground resulting to haphazard developments. Upper Hill is found in Development Zone 1E of the development Ordinances and Zones where the ground coverage for offices is given as 60% whereas the plot ratio ranges from between 250% and 300%. The Ground Coverage for residential is 35% whereas the plot ratio is 150%. The types of developments that are allowed in the Upper Hill area are given as commercial/offices/residential whereas the minimum plot area is provided as 0.05 Hectares. On the policy issues pertaining to Upperhill it is stated as a secondary/extended commercial area. There were no indications that this zoning provision was being implemented on the ground as there was no defined development plan.

8.3 Analysis of Service Provision in Upper Hill

8.3.1 Transportation

Upperhill area has a wide network of roads both within the area and outside the area i.e. the roads that are essentially used to access it. The roads are narrow and due to increased development within the area there is constant traffic on these roads and heavy traffic jams during rush hours. The consequence is that the previously existing roads are becoming worn out as a result of the increased traffic attracted by the increased commercial users. The pedestrian walk ways are largely undeveloped, poorly maintained or nonexistent exposing pedestrian to dangers of motor vehicle accidents. Although there is an effort by the Kenya Roads Board to upgrade the roads, the efforts were noted to be inadequate and of poor quality.



Public transportation means and roads in Upper Hill (Source: Field Survey 2012)

Public transport is available in the area within reach of users as public transportation is available throughout. However, the expansion of the roads must be in tandem with the developments taking place in Upperhill. There is need for road infrastructure expansion in Upperhill to cater for the new use. However this will be difficult unless the government acquires land for expansion compulsorily as most of the roads are narrow residential roads.

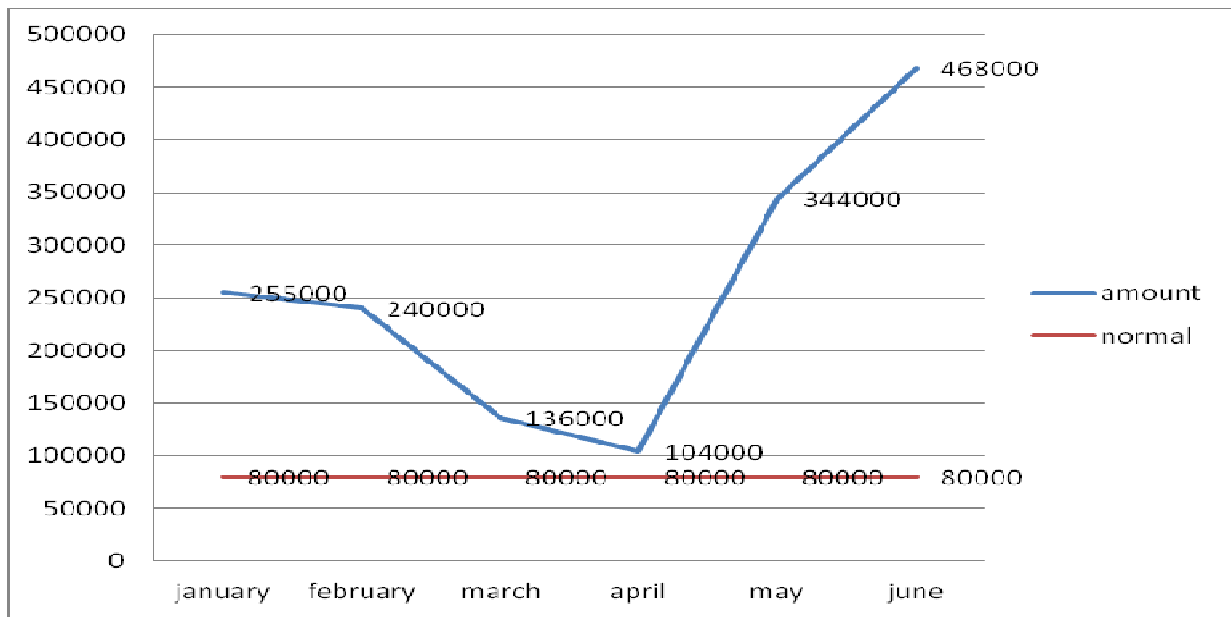
8.3.2 Parking

The introduction of office block developments in the area has brought high demand for parking spaces which is not adequately provided for. Public parking lots and taxi parking bays were not provided for in the strategic plans prepared for the area. This has meant that at present there is significant shortage of this service in this area. The bays provided within the highrise buildings and other private parking bays are not adequate leading to illegal parking on the roads further complicating vehicle movement.

8.3.3 Water supply, sanitation Services

Water supply in Upper Hill area is by the City Council of Nairobi mains water supply line. There is unreliable supply of water in the Upper Hill area which may be attributed to the pressure being exerted on the water supply of Nairobi by the growing population and also due to the developments that are coming up in the area. Private water suppliers also known as bowsers are complimenting the supply of fresh water to premises in the area. The private provision of water has led to higher business costs that have put into question the economic sustainability of the businesses. The graph below shows cost mains water supply vis a vis cost of buying water from private water sources in a period of six months from one of the commercial buildings in the area.

Graph 1: Mains Water versus and Privately Supplied Monthly water costs



Source: Author, 2012

Surface water drainage in Upperhill is by open storm water drainages that are found besides roads such as the 15 metre Mara Road off Hospital Road.

The mains sewer of City Council of Nairobi is utilized in Upperhill for sanitation services and its reliability is satisfactory with rare experiences of problems such as overflowing and leakage from broken mains and bad smells. There have been no efforts to expand these services despite the increase in population due to the changes of user applications.

8.3.4 Waste management

The wastes produced from the Upperhill neighborhood are handled and managed by private contractors who collect the wastes and transport them to the sites where they are sorted and recycled.

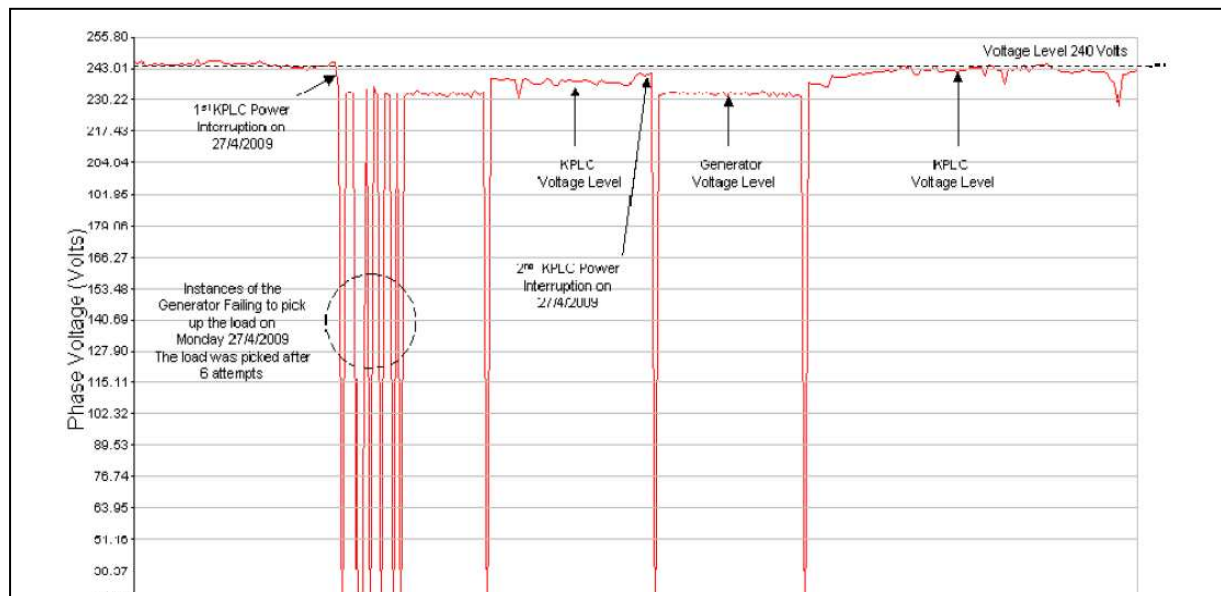
8.3.5 Energy

The Kenya Power and Lighting Company Limited serve the Upperhill area and consumers rate its supply as unreliable. This is one area in which service delivery has really been hampered in the area is power supply even though the energy demand for the area is high. This has led to Upperhill experiencing periodic blackouts. The main reason for this is discreet power rationing by the service provider, Kenya Power and Lighting Company due to erratic rains in the country as power generation is dependent on hydroelectric power. This has

prompted developers to provide generators to complement electricity supply in the area leading to higher cost of doing business that have put into question the economic sustainability of the businesses.

The graph below depicts 11 power outages in one of the buildings in upper hill area within an 8 hour period in one day.

Graph 2: Power outages in Upper Hill



Source: Author, 2012

8.3.6 Information Communication Technology

In terms of telecommunications there exist fixed telephone land line systems as well as the mobile phones which operate efficiently and ensure good communication. The various data services providers have laid down data cables and optic fiber within the area, examples include Kenya Data Network, Telkom Kenya and Safaricom Limited.

8.3.7 Security

There is a residents association, Upper Hill Developers Association that among other issues addresses security concerns in the area. The residents work in close association with the police to ensure safety of the neighborhood through community policing initiatives. In addition there exist several embassies in the area. The advantage is that these embassies are strictly guarded and this complements the security initiatives of the residents association of Upper Hill.

8.3.8 Disaster Risk Management

This aspect is mainly handled by the City Council of Nairobi especially as it concerns the approval of construction building plans. There have been increasing cases of collapsing buildings in the city of Nairobi and the City Council of Nairobi has been the institution involved in investigating these cases and formulating measures to handle such disasters. The area has no public assembly points in case of disaster. It does not have independent fire services and relies on the main fire station of the City Council.

8.3.9 Other Services

Among other services provided for in Upperhill area are hospitals e.g. the national referral hospital, Kenyatta National Hospital, is located within this region, e schools and religious facilities. The area is not served by any open spaces for relaxation. The available empty plots are private lands that are rarely maintained with some developing unapproved and haphazard eateries.

9. Conclusion

From the above analysis, we find that although the Upper Hill area of Nairobi presents an attractive growth area for the Central Business District, there are no concrete development plans from most of the service providers and where they exist, they are poorly documented, uncoordinated with other agencies and poorly implemented. For example, the Nairobi Metropolitan Strategy of 1973 which is the last plan that was done for Nairobi elapsed in the year 2000. The Kenya Roads Board has roads maintenance and upgrading plans but these are poorly executed in terms of quality and efficiency and the zoning plan for the area is not being implemented on the ground. This kind of development approach is not sustainable.

10. Recommendations

This paper recommends that orderly development in Upper Hill be ensured through the development of a master plan that lays out the goals, objectives and strategies for the region followed by an effective and efficient implementation and monitoring process.

This will ensure provision of basic facilities and public utilities and amenities in Upper Hill are upgraded with the government funding of projects in Upper Hill to ensure that the existing infrastructure promotes private investment and business support.

Participatory planning by all service providers, developers, residents and other interested parties should be integrated into the overall planning of Upper Hill to ensure a comprehensive, relevant and enduring plan and guarantee environmental sustainability.

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