

MURANG'A COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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MURANG'A MUNICIPALITY

MINUTES OF MURANG'A MUNICIPALITY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORUM HELD AT THE KENYA NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES (KNLS) ON 11TH AUGUST, 2023

Board Members Present

1. Dr. Winnie Mwangi – CECM Lands, Physical and Urban Development
2. Josephine Wanjiku – CO Lands, Physical Planning and Urban Development
3. Arch. Benson Githinji – Chairperson
4. Judith Maina – Vice-chairperson
5. Habel Karanja – Member
6. James Waweru – Member
7. Dr. B. N. Muia – Member
8. Beatrice Gicheha – Municipal Manager

Technical Officers Present

1. Peter M. Ngure
2. Stephen Mwangi – Ag. Director, Economic Planning
3. Jane Wangeci – Urban Planner
4. Justin K. Gatuita – County Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
5. Charles W. Wachira – Administrative Officer
6. Job Wachira – Works Officer
7. Walter Ojwang – Municipality Economist
8. Claire Njogu – Senior Economist
9. Gabriel Wachira – Senior Economist

Stakeholder Participants

Attached Annex

Agenda:

1. Preliminaries
2. Opening Remarks and Climate Setting
3. Forum Proceedings
4. Conclusion and Closing Remarks

MIN 1/KM/PF/11/08/2023: PRELIMINARIES

The Murang'a Municipality Public Participation Forum was held on July 7th, 2024, at the Kenya National Library Services Hall – Murang'a. The purpose of the forum was to engage the residents, stakeholders, and the general public in discussions regarding the Municipality's development priorities, challenges, and potential solutions. This forum is

part of the ongoing efforts to meet the constitutional and legal requirements for public involvement in governance, as outlined in the Constitution of Kenya (2010), the County Government Act, and other relevant legislation.

MIN 2/KM/PF/11/08/2023: Opening Remarks and Climate Setting

The meeting was officially opened with a prayer led by the Stephen Mwangi at 10.05 AM. Hon. James Gatuna, the CECM for Lands, Physical Planning, and Urban Development, delivered the opening remarks, providing an overview of the legal framework for public participation. He outlined the constitutional and legal requirements for public engagement as mandated by the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, and the County Government Act. He explained that these frameworks ensure that public participation is a vital part of governance, promoting transparency and accountability in the formulation, implementation, and review of development plans.

The CECM emphasized that public participation is essential for good governance and a cornerstone of democracy. The active involvement of residents in decision-making ensures that development plans reflect the needs and priorities of the community.

The Municipality Board Chairperson, Robert Kimani Ndung'u, welcomed the participants and thanked them for attending. He informed the participants that the Murang'a Municipality Board had been fully established, and as a result, residents would soon begin to enjoy the benefits of being part of a municipality. He highlighted the following key benefits:

- Increased services and projects, such as the tarmacking of urban roads and streets.
- Stakeholders, such as the Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA), would be able to fund and implement projects within the municipality.
- The presence of the Board enables residents to prioritize projects to be funded and implemented through the quarterly forums.
- Better service infrastructure, as the Urban Areas and Cities Act mandates the provision of specific services by municipalities.

The Municipal Board Chairperson emphasized that the purpose of the meeting was to provide a platform for the public to voice their concerns and contribute to the ongoing development efforts of Murang'a Municipality. He urged all participants to engage constructively and share their views on key issues affecting the municipality. He also introduced the Board members and the technical officers present. The heads of various committees briefly outlined the mandates of their respective committees and committed to working closely with the residents to ensure the municipality's planned prosperity.

MIN 4/KM/PF/11/08/2023: FORUM PROCEEDINGS

After the opening remarks, the Board Chairperson introduced the main agenda of the day. He invited participants to raise issues related to the municipality's development and, where possible, propose solutions. They were also encouraged to share their concerns, suggestions, and feedback.

Key Issues Raised:

1. Infrastructure Development:

- **Road Upgrading in Murang'a Town:** Several participants raised concerns about the poor condition of roads in Murang'a, Maragua, and Mukuyu. They called for the upgrading of these roads.

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- **Domestic Water Supply:** Complaints were raised about the high-water bills, with some residents complaining that water supply was not regular. The residents called for a lasting solution to improve the water supply system and to reduce the cost of water.
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- **Sewerage Systems:** Concerns were raised about the inadequate sewerage system in the municipality with some residential houses lacking the services, particularly in the outskirts of the town. Residents highlighted the health risks posed by the poor state of the sewer systems.

2. Unemployment and Underemployment:

- **High Unemployment Rates:** Unemployment, especially among youth, remains a significant challenge in the municipality. Many young people struggle to find formal employment, and those with jobs often face underemployment, receiving low wages or fearing job insecurity.
- **Dependence on Informal Sector:** A large proportion of urban residents depend on the informal sector (such as hawking, small-scale retail, and casual labor), which offers limited financial security. Although the rates and charges for permits may be reasonable, they remain too high for many residents.

3. Unplanned Development:

- **Lack of Regulation:** There were concerns about unregulated developments within the municipality, leading to sprawling and the potential emergence of slums in the future if not addressed. The absence of coherent and strategic urban planning had resulted in chaotic development, inadequate public services, and unsustainable growth patterns.

4. Crime and Security Issues:

- **Reported Crimes:** Reports of rising crime, including petty theft, muggings, and robberies, were highlighted. The lack of adequate infrastructure, such as streetlights, and growing socio-economic inequality contribute to the prevalence of crime.

5. Environmental Degradation and Climate Change:

- **Pollution:** Air quality is a significant issue in many urban areas due to emissions from vehicles, factories, and poor waste management. In some towns, poor garbage collection practices contribute to the accumulation of waste in streets and waterways.
- **Flooding and Waste Management:** Poor drainage systems and inadequate waste disposal mechanisms often lead to flooding, especially during the rainy season. In informal settlements, where infrastructure is particularly lacking, the consequences of flooding can be severe, with health risks such as cholera outbreaks.
- **Water Scarcity:** Despite some towns being close to major water bodies, urban areas often experience water shortages due to poor management, rapid population growth, and the impacts of climate change.

6. Governance and Corruption:

- **Corruption Concerns:** Some participants raised concerns about potential corruption in the implementation of development projects. Issues included poor-quality projects and instances where projects were never completed.

7. Municipality Status and Services:

- **Lack of Open Spaces:** The residents pointed out that the green spaces within the Municipality were inadequate and the ones existing lack regular maintenance. Some residents expressed the view that, despite being the largest town in Murang'a, it lacked the service infrastructure to truly be perceived as a municipality. Participants called for increased provision of infrastructure services to enhance the town's status.

MIN 5/KM/PF/11/08/2023: CONCLUSION AND CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairperson, Arch. Benson Githinji observed that their time as a Municipality Board was nearing its end. He informed the residents that systems are in place to ensure that the transition would be smooth. He thanked all participants for their valuable contributions during the forum. He assured them that all concerns raised would be carefully reviewed and addressed by the relevant departments. He emphasized the importance of continued public participation in shaping the municipality's development agenda and invited residents to remain actively engaged in future forums.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM, with a prayer led by Peter Kariuki.

Report Prepared by:

Peter M. Ngure – Municipal Administrator

MURANG'A MUNICIPALITY

Report Confirmed by :

Beatrice Gicheha – Municipal Manager

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