

AGA KHAN WALK REVITALIZATION PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

THESIS TOPIC

Designing for lively and walkable streets in Nairobi

For a street to be **lively and walkable**, it must be **safe, comfortable, interesting and useful**.

Nairobi, like many other cities, has invested heavily in car-centric development, building highways and expanding road networks. Little attention to the safety of other road users has led to high crash rates and dangerous streets. Promoting combinations of more public transit, cycling and walking is helping some cities not only become safer but reducing congestion, obesity, pollution and climate change.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2017, Nairobi passed the Non-Motorized Transport Policy for Nairobi. The new policy puts the city on the path toward more inclusive design. The policy calls walking the dominant mode of transport in the city and aims to build a framework and set of interventions to prioritize pedestrians. These include developing a new street design manual with complete streets principles, mandating at least 20 percent of the transport budget go toward supporting non-motorized modes, stronger regulations on developers to provide foot pathways, traffic-calming measures, and rules to discourage the blocking of non-motorized networks, like sidewalks and cycling paths.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Nairobi's historic focus on roads stands in contrast to how people actually get around the city; just 12 percent of households own a private vehicle and most people use public transit. While there is much to be done to make Nairobi a safer, more pleasant place to get around, the Non-Motorized Transport Policy is an important first step. The walking population in Nairobi makes more than seventy percent of the entire population. Unfortunately, the streets of Nairobi have not been designed to accommodate the growing pedestrians population. This has led to overcrowding, insecurity, accidents, fatigue and deaths.

AGA KHAN WALK SITE WEAKNESSES

1. Inaccessible green spaces attracting homeless families especially at night hence making it unsafe at night.
2. Minimal interaction between the existing buildings and the street
3. Lack of street activity for all age groups.
4. Street exposure to the harsh western sun.
5. Lack of strong connection with the neighbouring streets.
6. Poor connection to Kimathi Street.
7. Lack of adequate sitting spaces
8. Poor waste management leading to odour in the site

SITE STRENGTHS

1. Exposed positive views into the site.
2. Presence of indigenous trees in the green spaces.
3. Hiking activity during the weekends.
4. Green spaces that make the street interesting.
5. Pedestrians only street hence safe for pedestrians.



CLIENTS: Nairobi County Government

Under the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018-2022, the county proposes to reclaim, protect and revitalize public spaces to increase the number of people accessing public spaces and improve on their safety.

Targeted streets:

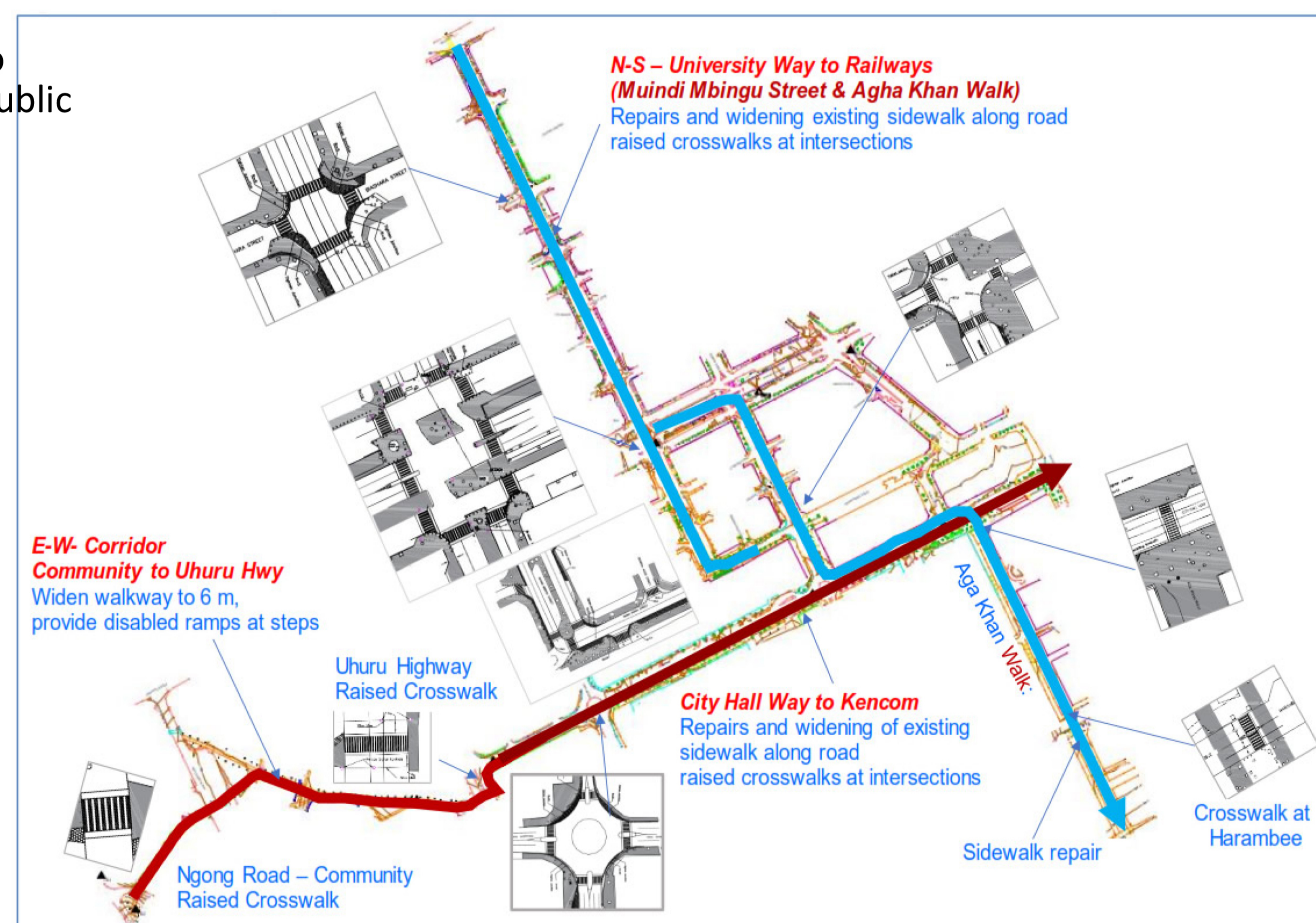
1. Muindi Mbingu Street- Ongoing project
2. Uhuru Highway- Ongoing
3. City Hall Way- Ongoing
4. Aga Khan Walk- Yet to start
5. Luthuli Avenue- Completed

Budget: 5B for 5 years

Implementing agency: NCCG (UDD/P SM)



NAIROBI CITY COUNTY



PROJECT OBJECTIVES/ DESIGN SOLUTIONS

1. To introduce activities for all age groups into the site through designing a development in the street.
2. Introduce night-life in the street.
3. Shade the street from the western sun.
4. Enhance interactions between the street and the surrounding buildings.
5. Open up Hilton Arcade to enhance the connection with Kimathi Street.
6. To take advantage of the positive views in and out of the site.
7. Decongest other streets in Nairobi

JUSTIFICATION OF SITE

1. Aga Khan Walk is the only fully pedestrianized street in Nairobi C.B.D.
2. It was also one of my case studies for my thesis and was able to identify its shortcomings and possible design interventions.
3. It has been identified as one of the streets in Nairobi that the county intends to revitalize.

JUSTIFICATION OF PROJECT

1. Street activity needs to be introduced along the street
2. Building activities need to expand all the way to the street
3. Street needs to be shaded from the western sun



PROJECT BRIEF DEVELOPMENT

The spaces introduced were based on the spaces recommended in my thesis on the walk, activities in the surrounding buildings and the case studies. Activities that will extend into the street from the buildings will include dining spaces and Maasai Market. To complement skirting, recreational spaces will be introduced in the surrounding area for all age groups.

| SPACE | CAPACITY | AREA | NEW/ EXTENDED INTO ST. | SPACE LOCATION | PURPOSE OF THE SPACE |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 5 Restaurants/ Bars | 70- 100 seater | 240M sq | Extended into the street | Sector 1 | Enhance interactions |
| Maasai Market | 60 traders | 300M sq | Extended into the street | Sector 1 | Bring in more activity |
| Second Hand Cloth Store | 70 traders | 300M sq | New activity | Sector 1 | Decongest streets |
| Children's Play Area | 100 children | 190 M sq | New activity | Sector 2 | Activities for all groups |
| Bowling Alley | 60 users | 100M sq | New activity | Sector 2 | Activities for all groups |
| Rock Climbing Area | 60 users | 100 M sq | New activity | Sector 2 | Compliment skirting |
| House of Leather | | 300 M sq | Extended into the street | Sector 3 | Bring in more activity |