



**RUSAPE MASTER PLAN DRAFT REPORT OF STUDY
AND WRITTEN STATEMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



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Introduction

The Rusape Master Plan has been prepared in terms of in terms of Part IV of the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act [Chapter 29:12 of 1996] (RTCP Act),) as read together with the Master and Local Plan Regulations of the same Act [RGN No. 248 of 1977].

This Master Plan Documents consist of the Executive Summary, Report of Study, Written Statement and Planning Proposals Map. The documents are supported with detailed information annexures and relevant subject matter maps.

The Report of Study presents the findings of the Study of the Planning Area carried out in terms of Section 13 of the RTCP Act which stipulates that “A local planning authority shall—

- a) before preparing any master plan or local plan, undertake a study of the planning area and, to the extent it considers necessary, of any neighbouring area, examining such matters as it considers may be likely to affect the development or redevelopment of the area or the planning of its development or redevelopment; and
- b) before altering or replacing any master plan or local plan, undertake, if it thinks fit, a fresh study of the planning area or any part thereof or of a neighbouring area, examining the matters referred to in paragraph (a); and
- c) keep under review all matters examined in terms of paragraph (a) or (b). (2) When examining or reviewing in terms of subsection (1) any matters relating to a neighbouring area, the local planning authority shall consult with any regional planning council, local planning authority or local authority which has jurisdiction in that area concerning those matters.”

The Rusape Master Plan Written Statement is divided into three parts as follows;

- Part I:** A Summary of the Report of Study Findings.
- Part II:** Goals, Objectives, and Development Options.
- Part III:** Planning policies and proposals. This is accompanied by a Planning Proposals Map.

Background Problem Identification

The existing Rusape Master Plan was prepared in 1996 and has been in use for twenty-eight (28) years. The baseline information used in the preparation of the Master Plan then has significantly changed. The Land Reform Programme, Fiscal and Monetary Policies, Population Growth and Technological Advancement among other factors have changed rendering the existing Rusape Master Plan inadequate to guide Development.

The existing Master Plan boundary was confined to the Rusape Town Boundary. During the plan period many developments have been approved in proximity to the Rusape Town bounds but are under the jurisdiction of Makoni Rural District Council. These developments have a direct impact on infrastructure requirements and service delivery. Since the RTCP Act gives powers to Local Authorities to include proposals in relation to any neighbouring area, there is a need for a new Rusape Master Plan that caters to the hinterland to foster harmonious and coordinated development between Rusape Town Council and Makoni Rural District Council.

Given the gap between the existing Master Plan and the obtaining socio-economic environment, International Development Agendas and National Development Policies, Rusape Town Council in 2016 initiated a review of the 1996 Rusape Master Plan. Production of the Draft Report of the Study and the Draft Written Statement was completed, however, the process stalled before concluding the requisite approval processes. Following the President's Call to Action in November 2023, Rusape Town Council resumed work to finalize its Master Plan.

In addition, several International, Regional and National Development Policies need to be considered in the development of Local Areas. The key Policies are:

The 2018 Agenda for Sustainable Development – This Agenda by all United Nations Member States created the 17 World Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the aim of peace, prosperity and tackling climate change. While all Goals are equally important, the notable Goals for Rusape Master Plan are SDG 3, Good Health and Wellbeing; SDG 4, Quality Education; SDG 5, Gender Equality; SDG 6, Clean Water and Sanitation; SDG 7, Affordable and Clean Energy; SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG 9, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; SDG 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities and SDG 13, Climate Action. These sustainable Development Goals have fed into the current National Development Policies and need to be incorporated into the Master Plan.

Vision 2030 - This vision emphasises creating self-sufficient economies, optimum land utilization, and infrastructure development. It also envisages modern, efficient, reliable, and well-developed infrastructure that will drive economic transformation in the Master Plan area.

Zimbabwe National Human Settlements Policy (ZNHSP) [2020] – This Policy aims at achieving Vision 2030 through enhancing climate resilience by adoption and adaptation of resilient building technologies and inclination towards green energy; eradicating spatial inequalities through social inclusion as one of the key pillars in ensuring that no one is left behind in all housing and social amenities policies, programmes and projects; managing land as a finite resource through striking a balance between agriculture and human settlements development, densification of development shall through the construction of walk-up flats and vertical space utilisation and urban regeneration programmes.

The National Tourism Master Plan [2016 – 2035] - This Plan encourages the development of an inclusive, robust and vibrant Tourism Economy. The development strategy is spatially transcribed in a structure based on strictly interrelated elements of gateways and corridors via the national transport system which is strategically earmarked for in-country circulation of tourists through coordinated Tourism Development Zones (TDZ).

The Devolution and Decentralization Policy [2020] - The Devolution and Decentralization Policy (2020), enshrined in the Zimbabwean Constitution states that wherever appropriate, Governmental powers and responsibilities must be devolved to Provincial, Metropolitan Councils and Local Authorities that are competent to carry out those responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

Zimbabwe National Industrial Development Policy [2024-2030] – This seeks to modernise, industrialise and promote investment, with the ultimate goal of attaining broad-based economic empowerment, inclusive economic growth and employment creation.

Methodology

Work started with an Inception Workshop at Rusape Town Council Offices with key stakeholders for brainstorming and visioning. This was followed by research and study of the planning area which

resulted in the production of a Draft Report of the Study. The Draft Written Statement was prepared and circulated to stakeholders for input before Public Deposit. The process stalled.

In 2023, following the Presidential Call to Action, the Master Plan preparation process resumed starting with the Report of Study Validation process.

The Data collected was stored, indexed and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), Microsoft Excel Software, and GIS Software. This was followed by quantitative and qualitative interpretation resulting in the revised Draft Report of Study and Written Statement. These were presented at a Stakeholder's Workshop held at Crocodile Motel in Rusape on the 24th of May 2024 (See Annexure 1 of the Report of Study – Stakeholder Workshop Attendance Register). The findings of the Study are summarised as follows;

Report of Study

The Rusape Master Plan Report of Study covers the following issues:

- a) Definition of the Planning Boundary, International, Regional and National Context
- b) Detailed National policies and Legal frameworks affecting Development Planning in the Area;
- c) The Study Methodology Employed;
- d) Physical features, Land Coverage and Land use and Land Ownership;
- e) Population Issues;
- f) Socio-cultural and economic activities (Housing; Education, Health, Sports and Recreation);
- g) Economic infrastructure (Traffic & Transportation, Sewer, Water, Sanitation and Energy);
- h) Environmental issues;
- i) Administration and Finance

Rusape Master Plan Boundary and Context

The Master Plan Area located 130km South-east of Zimbabwe's capital, Harare covers an area measuring 34.17 km² in extent starting at Crofton Farm in the North to the confluence of Rusape, Macheke and Nyamapembere Rivers in the South. This area comprises Rusape Town and commercial farms, resettlement areas and communal land. The Master Plan Area is located along the Beira Corridor comprising the Harare–Mutare National Road and railway network.

Physical characteristics and land coverage

Generally, the area experiences a tropical climate with dry cool winters and hot wet summers. These climatic conditions are conducive to agriculture. Dolerite and Gabrros rock deposits dominate in the Master Plan Area and have a mineral deposit potential to yield Nickel, Copper, Titanium and Black Granite;

There are five (5) main vegetation types in the area; Miombo Woodland with *Brachystegia glaucescens*, Miombo woodland with *Brachystegia spiciformis*, Wooded grasslands, Cultivated Areas and Eucalyptus Plantations.

Of the total 34.17 km² of land, 16.6 km² (48.58%) of the total area in the Master Plan boundary comprises resettlement and communal areas. Commercial farms cover 11.9 km² (34.9%) of the total planning area. Rusape Town covers only 16.52% of the Area and of this portion, 1.95 km² of the area downstream of Rusape River is undeveloped.

Rusape River, Dam and Mt Tikwiri are the main scenic attractions in the Master plan area;

Population

The Zimbabwe 2022 Population and Housing Census Report put the population for the Rusape Master Plan area at 37,906. The average household size is 3.6. Of the total population, 42.9% is in the child population group and 20.6% in the youth group (15 to 24 years of age). The population is predominantly female with 53.59% against 46.61% males.

The Master Plan Area's population is expected to increase to 46 245 by 2032 and 56 420 by 2042 which is the expected Plan Period for the Rusape Master Plan. With an average household size of 3.6, accommodation for 5785 families is needed during this plan period.

Socio-Cultural and Economic activities

The housing waiting list is currently at 6,971. There is a shortage of educational facilities as evidenced by overcrowding and mushrooming of unlicensed schools. There are no tertiary education facilities and the public health facilities are oversubscribed.

Commercial activities within the planning area are largely concentrated in Rusape Town Centre. The retail industry is a major contributor to the economic base of the planning area. The existing industrial infrastructure (Large industrial buildings and rail infrastructure) is not performing to full capacity as evidenced by vacant industrial lots and dilapidated local railway infrastructure.

Agriculture is the main contributor to the economic base. The area is one of the six tobacco markets outside of the Capital, Harare. The other five are Karoi, Mvurwi, Chinhoyi, Bindura and Marondera. The linkages between the agricultural activity in the farms and the agro-processing industrial infrastructure in the Master Plan area contribute to employment and income generation. Aside from the tobacco companies, one of the biggest employers is Delta Beverages which relies on agricultural produce for production.

Economic Infrastructure

There is a reticulated water infrastructure shortage in the area. Communal and Resettlement areas continue to rely on wells and open water sources. In the urban areas, water demand is 8.16 Ml/d. The current water supply is at 6.4Ml/d, meaning that there is a shortage of 1.76Ml/d. The current water infrastructure is inadequate. There area has only two water treatment plants, the Town Waterworks and the Jack Needham Waterworks.

There is inadequate reticulated sewer infrastructure, as a result, some high-density stands in Tsanzaguru, Mabvazuva and Magamba rely on septic tanks. Communal areas and resettlement areas rely on Blair toilets and pit latrines.

There is a good National Road and Railway network passing through the area. Local roads, including suburban, communal, resettlement and farm roads are predominantly earth roads. The local rail infrastructure has fallen into disrepair over time. The power supply and infrastructure are inadequate leading to frequent power cuts and continued use of firewood as the main source of energy in the rural, resettlement and communal areas. There are no independent power producers (IPPs) in the Rusape Master Plan Area.

Environmental issues

The flood risk factor of the Rusape River and Dam to the southern portion of the Master Plan area planning area is very low. However, no disaster evacuation and relief measures are in place in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

Summary of the Written Statement**Land Use and Sustainability**

The Topographic and Drainage features in the Master Plan Area are reliant on the Rusape River and Dam which are the main sources of water. To ensure that this river is protected and that Rusape continues to have adequate water supply, it is proposed to expand the urban area by siting majority of developable land to the south of Rusape Dam in Tsanzaguru and Chiduku Communal Land.

In order to preserve prime agricultural land, the master plan has created an Agro-residential zone bounding the Northern Commercial Farms. This zone also serves as a greenbelt to contain urban sprawl and to encourage optimum land utilization.

Housing Provision

Housing for 5785 families is needed during the plan period. In addition to a current housing backlog of 6971, the total housing demand for the plan period is 12 576 Stands (380 Hectares). This land has been set aside in the North of the Master Plan Area on Sabelle Rande, Gamma and Ripplemead Farms for Low-Density Residential Development; and Southward on Muhonde, Rockingstone and Chiduku Communal Lands for Medium and High-Density Industrial Developments.

Industrial Development

Land for industrial developments has been proposed along the national transportation routes, taking advantage of the developed road and railway infrastructure. In addition, to encourage agro-processing in communal areas, 10 Hectares of land in Tsanzaguru Area has also been set aside for industrial development.

Commercial Development

The Master Plan has sought to decentralise retail from the centre and to the peripheries by establishing retail hubs along all major routes and in all proposed residential zones in the Master Plan Area. This is further supported by the proposal to expand the Rusape Town Centre southward along Harare-Mutare Road.

Social Amenities

Education - Twenty-five (25) additional primary schools and seven (7) secondary schools will be required during the plan period. New land has been allocated for three tertiary training centres.

Health and Recreation – Rusape General Hospital is to be upgraded into a regional hospital. Two polyclinics and six satellite clinics (totalling 19 hectares) are to be provided using detailed Local Development Plans. Space has been set aside for one multi-discipline stadium along Mutare Road.

Traffic and Transportation

A National Road by-pass north of the current town Centre is proposed to open up more areas for commercial development. Current land in Rusape Town Centre which is affected by the 70m National Road reserve will be freed for further development.

New primary and secondary distributor roads between existing and proposed zones are proposed for enhanced interconnectivity between the current Rusape Town and the Chiduku Communal Area. An aerodrome is proposed at Rockingstone Farm which is also the identified emergency disaster evacuation zone for the Master Plan Area.

Economic Infrastructure

In addition to upgrading the existing works, two (2) additional sewer treatment plants and two (2) raw water treatment plants are proposed. The sewer treatment plants are proposed to the South on Muhonde and Chiduku lands in order to minimize pumping costs and to avoid contaminating water sources while the water plants are located to the north to maximise gravity flow. A solar plant has been proposed to support the national power grid on Lesapi Falls Farm.