

1.2 SHUAFAT

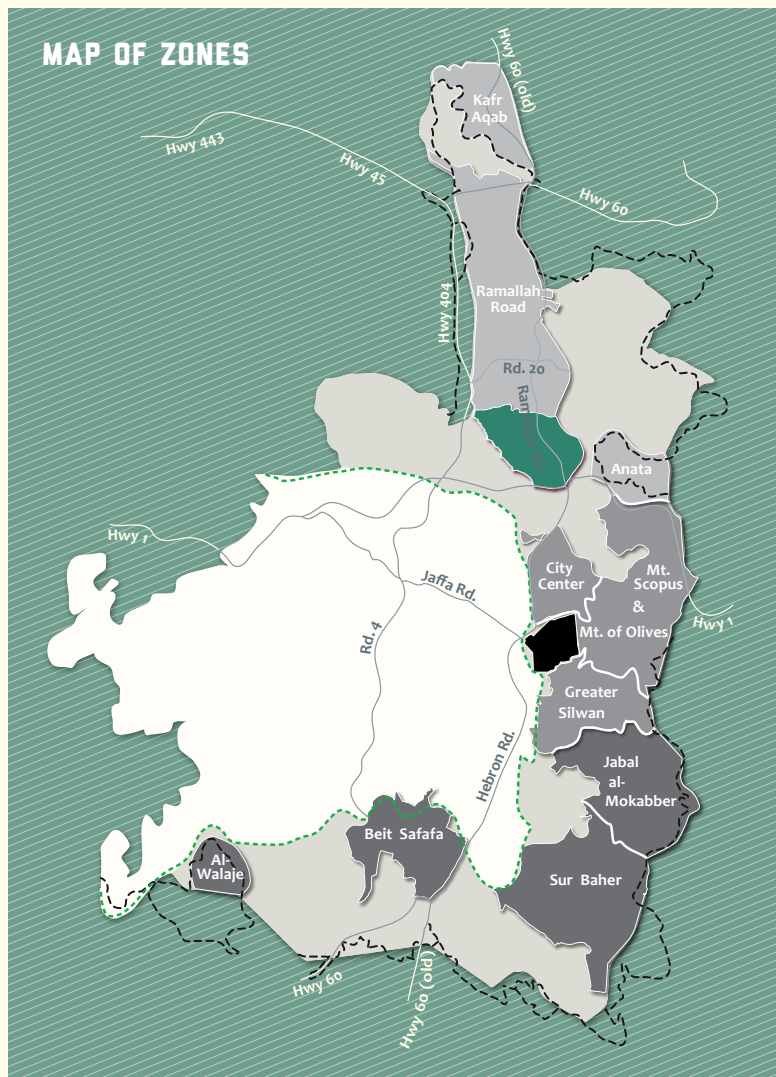
Jerusalem North - Ramallah Road Zone

SURVEY OF PALESTINIAN NEIGHBORHOODS IN EAST JERUSALEM

ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

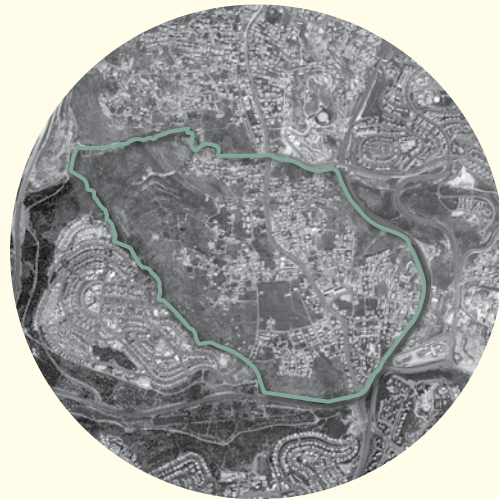
Shuafat is the southernmost Palestinian neighborhood along the Ramallah Road, connecting between northern Jerusalem and Ramallah. The neighborhood is bordered by the French Hill Junction to the south, Highway 60 to the east, the Palestinian neighborhood of Beit Hanina to the north, and the ultra-orthodox Jewish neighborhood of Ramat Shlomo (built on Shuafat land during the height of the Oslo period), to the west. East of the neighborhood, beyond Highway 60 and the Separation Barrier, is the Shuafat refugee camp, built on part of the original lands of the village. Originally, Shuafat lands extended to the edge of the adjacent villages: Beit Hanina, Anata, and Lifta. Refugees from Lifta (whose village center was entirely depopulated during the 1948 war and remained on the Israeli side), built homes on agricultural land abutting Shuafat, then under Jordanian control; today these homes are trapped within the post-1967 Israeli neighborhood of Givat Shapira (commonly known as French Hill). Today Shuafat lies on either side of the Ramallah Road, and the historical core of the village is located to the west of the road.

Shuafat developed over the last century as a wealthy suburb between Jerusalem and Ramallah. After 1967, when the neighborhood came within the municipal border of Jerusalem, Shuafat continued to develop as an upper-middle-class urban neighborhood. Along with Beit Hanina, it became an attractive housing destination for Palestinians, citizens of Israel and Jerusalemites alike, in particular due to its urban character, relatively low residential density, and available land for construction. Until the beginning of the 1990s it was primarily Palestinian citizens of Israel who moved to Shuafat, however with the outbreak of the second intifada and the construction of the Separation Barrier, the neighborhood began to see substantial migration from Palestinian suburbs of Jerusalem that were cut off from the city by the Barrier. The urban center along the Ramallah Road began to grow. High demand led to skyrocketing housing prices and growing density, and today, many Palestinians have to seek housing solutions elsewhere. Nonetheless, demand for housing in Shuafat remains high, especially among the better off.



FACTS

Population 27,000
Area 2,208 dunam



MAP LEGEND

East Jerusalem	Old City
Expropriated Land	Green Line
Northern Zones	Separation Barrier
Central Zones	Roads
Southern Zones	West Jerusalem

MAIN PROBLEMS IN SHUAFAT

The Jerusalem 2000 Outline Plan

The new outline plan for Jerusalem, which awaits deposition, allocates an area of 130 dunam, west of the village core, for the expansion of Shuafat, on lands currently zoned as open scenic areas. The area is mostly vacant, and partly cultivated. One resident, who owns about a third of the area, has independently initiated a plan on his part of the land. However, since the Jerusalem 2000 Outline Plan stipulates that detailed planning is contingent on comprehensive planning for the entire expansion area, this plan is unlikely to be approved. The case demonstrates the difficulties residents encounter when trying to advance overall planning, even for substantive parcels of land. Meanwhile the Jerusalem Municipality has taken no steps to publicly initiate a comprehensive plan for this area. Thus, although the expansion is essential for the neighborhood's development, it is not likely to be realized in the near future.

In addition, some 440 dunam have been allotted for the expansion of Ramat Shlomo. The bulk of this expansion is a 330 dunam strip abutting the existing Ultra-Orthodox neighborhood from the southwest. This area is included in a publicly funded detail plan initiated by the housing ministry, which was fast-tracked towards final approval and implementation, as part of the Israeli government's decision to

penalize the Palestinian Authority for seeking recognition at the UN by expanding Israeli construction in East Jerusalem.

Most of the remainder of the expansion for Ramat Shlomo is located to the north, on land that is not contiguous with the built-up area of Ramat Shlomo. Rather, it protrudes deep into Shuafat's land reserves, essentially laying the groundwork for a new Israeli settlement on Shuafat land. As evidence of these intentions, Shuafat's expansion area was reduced to the current 130 dunam and the new settlement was drawn to connect with the entire Ramat Shlomo expansion.

Unrealistic Densification Policy

At the time of the validation of the neighborhood plan for Shuafat, in 1998, the Local Planning and Building Committee already recognized that the building densities it provided would need to be enlarged, in order to meet the distinctively urban character of the neighborhood. As a result, some densification was implemented through re-parcelization plans and sporadic detail plans, though without an overarching policy. Such a policy was finally formulated in the Jerusalem 2000 Outline Plan (see elaboration), which stipulated that densification would occur via the construction of six to eight storeys with building ratios of 200% to 320%. And yet, the Jerusalem Municipality recanted, claiming that such an intense densification would result in a severe lack of public facilities

and open spaces. This estimate is based on unrealistic implementation predictions and does not account for the many available open public areas in Shuafat that are still awaiting development.

In line with the municipality's revised policy, since 2009 existing buildings are usually permitted small additions of up to two storeys, allowing a maximum of six storeys with 160-180% building ratios. Some further enlargement is possible on large plots and along the Ramallah Road. Since most of the residential areas are zoned for 2-3 storeys, this policy makes it virtually impossible to legalize an existing building of more than 5 storeys, and even that requires the submission of a detail plan – a long, expensive, and uncertain process. Moreover, the municipality's policy uses increased building ratios (250%-320%) to encourage replacing existing buildings with new construction, particularly on large plots. This increase is conditioned, however, on the allocation of areas – whether vacant or built-up – for public use. In many cases the landowners are also required to develop the public area at their own expense. Most residents prefer expanding existing buildings, even if this means receiving fewer building rights, rather than partaking in such “allocation deals.” Thus, in effect only a small amount of the building potential proposed in the current policy is realized.

Road 21

The neighborhood plan includes an additional main traffic artery known as Road 21, for which Shuafat land was expropriated. This route is planned to run through Shuafat and Beit Hanina, parallel and to the west of Ramallah Road, connecting the neighborhoods to the Atarot Industrial Zone. In Shuafat, the road is planned to connect to a new access road for Ramat Shlomo (and its completion is prerequisite for that neighborhood's expansion; see: The Jerusalem 2000 Outline Plan). The road is currently being implemented, and the residents fear that construction will only go as far as the junction with Road 20, recently completed in Beit Hanina (for the purpose of connecting the Israeli neighborhood of Pisgat Zeev with the Jerusalem-Modi'in Road, leading to the coastal plain). Whether built partially or entirely, the road could bring benefits for the residents of

Shuafat, in part because more intensive construction would be enabled along it.

Difficulties Obtaining Building Permits

Land-ownership registration in Shuafat is considered “in progress.” This fact encumbers the process of submission of detail plans and building-permit requests, which are contingent on proof of land-ownership. Furthermore, the neighborhood plan for Shuafat has designated various areas in which re-parcelization plans must be approved before any building permits can be issued. This process is extremely lengthy, and not always done in consultation with the landowners. As a result, the situation on the ground is not always reflected in the plans, once approved, and further adjustments are required. Likewise, in recently approved plans, the re-parcelization has no proprietary implications, because the Jerusalem Municipality legal advisor has deemed it impossible to implement proprietary re-parcelization on land for which registration is “in progress.” These bureaucratic obstacles hinder the implementation of approved plans, including the attainment of building permits and the regularization of existing construction. In order to remove some of the difficulties, a provisional permits committee was established in the Beit Hanina-Shuafat Community Center as a pilot program of the Jerusalem Municipality. The committee examines the initial feasibility of the requests, focusing on verification of the land ownership of residents who are interested in submitting requests for formalization of existing construction and/or new construction.



Construction of Road 21 (photo Bimkom)



East of Ramallah Road (photo Bimkom)

AS-SAHEL, THE UNDEVELOPED PLAIN

South of the village core, west of the Ramallah Road, and east of the open scenic areas that are designated for the expansion of the neighborhood, is a large, mostly vacant, plain of about 90 dunam. The area, known as as-Sahel (“the plain,” in Arabic), is a valuable and desirable land reserve, especially considering that flat, vacant, land is a rarity in Jerusalem in general and East Jerusalem in particular. Today, only a number of dirt roads and about six houses exist here. According to the neighborhood plan, the area is zoned mostly as residential, with sections designated for open areas or public buildings. Development of the area is pending the approval of its re-parcelization plan, which is being advanced by the Jerusalem Municipality. The objection of one of the landowners in the area, to the land-swap arrangements proposed in the plan, has frozen the planning process and led to the declaration of the rest of the re-parcelization plans as “parcelization for planning purposes only.” In areas adjacent to as-Sahel, additional re-parcelization plans have not yet been approved, also in the wake of objections by residents. As a result, the parcelization plans for as-Sahel and its immediate vicinity have been sent back to the drawing board. Until these are approved, the process of obtaining building permits and effectively developing these areas remains frozen, as it has been since the approval of the neighborhood plan a decade and a half ago. In summation, at the time of writing (2013), development of as-Sahel continues to be delayed.



As-Sahel Plain (photo Bimkom)



Village Center (photo Bimkom)

APPROVED PLANS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Detailed Outline Plan # 3456a for Shuafat	2,034.0 dunam
Part of Local Outline Plan # 3000b for Shuafat and Beit Hanina	10.0 dunam
Part of Detailed Outline Plan # 3235 for the Shuafat-Ramot Road	22.0 dunam
Part of Local Outline Plan # 1541a for French Hill	8.0 dunam
Small-scale detail plans (8621, 7688, 12699)	6.0 dunam
Part of Detailed Outline Plan # 8000 for the Light Rail	65.0 dunam
Total planned area	2,145.0 dunam
Unplanned area	63.0 dunam
Total area of neighborhood	2,208.0 dunam

Fifteen plans for re-parcelization have already been drawn up and approved, most east of the Ramallah Road. Six additional re-parcelization plans are being delayed due to objections by residents, and one plan was rejected for similar reasons. Likewise, almost 50 small-scale detail plans have been drawn up on an overall area of about 55 dunam.

ZONING STRUCTURE ACCORDING TO APPROVED PLANS ▪ DESIGNATION VS. USE

Designation	Plans		Land Use
	dunam	%	
Residential*	760	34.5	Residential zoning overall corresponds with actual residential areas. In the eastern part of the neighborhood and in the open scenic areas along Highway 60, practically no land zoned as residential remains vacant. Meanwhile, in parts of the western side of the neighborhood, construction in the residential zones remains sparse. South of the village core is the large, valuable land reserve of as-Sahel (see inset).
Combined Residential and Commercial**	107	5	The residential areas along the Ramallah Road allow for commerce and services on the lower levels, intended to create a stretch of contiguous storefronts, such as created by the new Julani Project. However, this potential is only partially realized, especially considering that Shuafat, along with Beit Hanina, should function as a secondary commercial center for East Jerusalem.
Open Spaces	786	35.5	The built-up area of the neighborhood is abutted to the east and to the west by large open scenic areas. These lands are mostly owned and cultivated by residents of Shuafat. Most of the area is located in the western part of the neighborhood, creating a buffer zone between Shuafat and Ramat Shlomo. On the eastern edge of the neighborhood some of the areas zoned as open scenic areas are built-up, while the remaining areas are of little scenic value. Some 40 small plots, zoned as public open space, are dispersed throughout the neighborhood, occasionally abutting areas designated for public buildings. A few larger areas are located along the main road to Ramat Shlomo, and are not accessible for use by the residents. The neighborhood does not have a single developed playground or park, and many of the opens spaces serve as roads or parking lots.
Roads	397	18	Ramallah Road is the neighborhood's central traffic artery, and the Light Rail also runs along it. Within the neighborhood, the road system is relatively well-developed; however there are inconsistencies between the actual roads and those that appear in the neighborhood plan. The existing roads are not well maintained, to the detriment of infrastructures and services. There are even fewer streets on the western side of Ramallah Road, and these are narrower and more segmented, sometimes turning into dirt roads. The paving of Road 21 should change this situation to some extent (see: Road 21).
Public Buildings and Institutions	91	4	The neighborhood contains 28 plots for public buildings and institutions. Most are designated for schools and kindergartens, and some for clinics. The vast majority of the plots have not been developed; these function de facto for agriculture, parking, and roads. Only two of the plots contain operational public facilities (schools). In two additional plots (zoned for kindergartens and for a school), development is slated to begin soon. Residential buildings exist on a number of the plots, although these are within the area of the re-parcelization plans currently being drawn up, which are meant to provide solutions to the problem.
Other	67	3	Includes a cemetery and unplanned areas, primarily around the French Hill Junction. The latter constitute an integral part of the neighborhood and are partially built up.
Total	2,208	100	

* On about 90% of the residential areas of the neighborhood, building rights are comprised of a 50-75% building ratio, with two to three storeys. On about 10% of the residential areas, scattered randomly throughout the neighborhood, construction of four storeys is permitted, with a 120% building ratio.

** In these areas, building rights are comprised of a 100-150% building ratio, with four to five storeys. In order to create a contiguous commercial façade, front and side building lines were permitted to reach the border of the plot.