

3.3 UMM LAYSOON

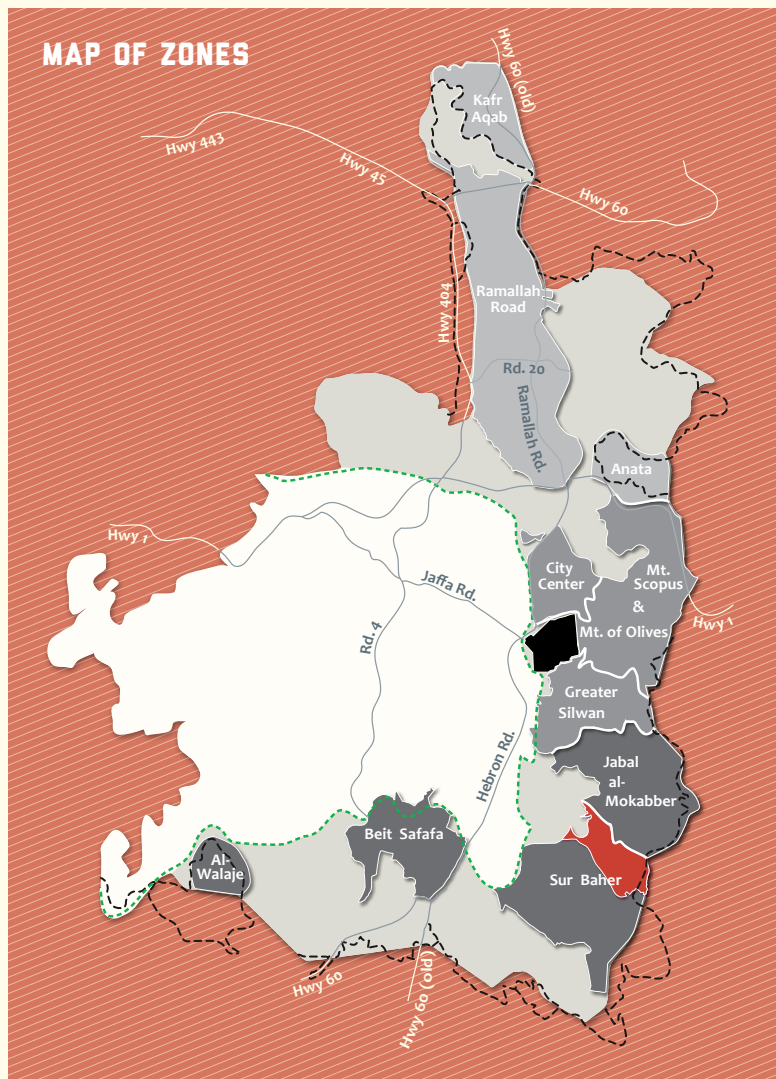
ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Umm Laysoon is a small neighborhood located in southeast Jerusalem, bordering on the post-1967 Israeli neighborhood of East Talpiyot to the west, the municipal boundary of Jerusalem to the east, and two valleys of Wadi ad-Darajeh (Darga Valley) to the north and south. The northern valley, known by the residents as Wadi aj-Joz, separates Umm Laysoon from the neighboring village of as-Sawahrah, while the southern valley, known as Wadi al-Humus, separates it from Sur Baher. Agricultural activity takes place in both valleys: Wadi al-Humus is cultivated by the residents of Sur Baher, while Wadi aj-Joz, along with an adjacent large plain, is cultivated by the residents of Umm Laysoon. The neighborhood is comprised of two sub-neighborhoods; one sits on an individual hill southeast of East Talpiyot and the second, smaller, one – known as Abedieh – sits between the hill and the Israeli neighborhood.

Umm Laysoon is located on lands originally belonging to the village of Sur Baher, and indeed, Sur Baher residents still own lands in the village, though most of the residents of Umm Laysoon originate from the

Abedieh Bedouin tribe. Several families from the tribe, who formerly used the lands of Umm Laysoon for seasonal agriculture, purchased lands in the early 1900s and settled there. The Abedieh of Umm Laysoon remain in constant contact with the rest of the tribe, living outside of Jerusalem, and even continue to bury their dead in the tribal cemetery, located in the West Bank. However, the Separation Barrier, which was built more or less along the municipal border, has impaired the connection between members of the tribe living on either side, and made it difficult to carry out traditional burial practices.

When drawing up the neighborhood plans, the Jerusalem Municipality did not distinguish between members of the Abedieh Bedouin tribe and members of the as-Sawahrah Bedouin tribe. Accordingly, Umm Laysoon was included in the plan prepared for as-Sawahrah, and its residents were expected to rely on the public institutions (including the cemetery) of as-Sawahrah. However, the Abedieh continue to function as a separate group and, if anything, maintain contacts with Sur Baher to the southwest.



FACTS

Population 3,000
Area 1,225 dunam



MAP LEGEND

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

APPROVED PLANS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Part of Outline Plan # 2683a for as-Sawahrah	744.0 dunam
Part of Plan # 4585f for the Eastern Ring Road (pending approval)	413.0 dunam
Outline Plan # 7977 & 7977a for expansion of East Talpiyot	53.0 dunam
Detail Plan # 12876 for expansion of East Talpiyot	3.0 dunam
Part of Detail Plan # 1824a for part of East Talpiyot	3.0 dunam
Total planned area	1,216.0 dunam
Unplanned area	17.0 dunam
Total area of neighborhood	1,233.0 dunam

In addition, over the years, some 8 detail plans were approved, with no added area for the neighborhood.

ZONING STRUCTURE ACCORDING TO APPROVED PLANS ▪ DESIGNATION VS. USE

Designation	Plans		Land Use
	dunam	%	
Residential*	348	28	Limitations on residential construction are particularly severe. Building rights are low and detailed plans are a requirement for all plots of more than six dunam. Nonetheless, the building rights in the neighborhood have yet to be exhausted: on the one hand there are vacant areas that are zoned for residential construction, and on the other hand houses are built on areas where construction is not allowed. This discrepancy stems from the land-ownership structure, which is not reflected in the plans. The undeveloped areas in the village core belong to residents of Sur Baher who do not necessarily live there. Other residents of Umm Laysoon, who are in need of housing units and can build only on the lands that they purchased, have no choice but to build on their agricultural lands, even if they are not zoned as such.
Open Spaces	538	44	Large open scenic areas, serving primarily for agriculture, surround the neighborhood and separate it from its neighbors. In these areas all development is forbidden. The neighborhood plan does not include a single playground, park, or sports facility. A number of years ago, the municipality developed a sports field with a playground alongside it in the Abedieh sub-neighborhood. The sports field is located partially on land zoned for public structures and partially on land zoned for residential use. The playground is located entirely on land zoned as residential. Neither the sports field nor the playground are kept up by the municipality.
Roads	256	22	The municipality's zoning for roads in the neighborhood revolves around the needs of the Eastern Ring Road as a major artery. The planned roads are therefore designated for urban thru-traffic and are not aimed at improving the neighborhood's current road system, which has a good basic structure but is in poor physical condition and has no sidewalks (see: Roads). Segments of the planned roads diverge from the existing ones and are not implementable because they run over existing structures.
Public Buildings	12	0.5	The neighborhood plans include three plots that are zoned for public buildings: two for kindergartens and one for two schools. On one of the areas zoned for kindergartens, a sports field was built, and the second area stands empty. In 2009, two new buildings were inaugurated as schools, in accordance with the plan. Within the neighborhood, on plots not zoned for public buildings, some kindergartens and another school operate through a private organization.
Commercial	6	0.5	Only one area in the neighborhood is zoned for commercial use. The land is owned by a single family, and therefore they are the only ones who use it. The area is located in the Abedieh sub-neighborhood and is in close proximity to East Talpiyot. The neighborhood plan therefore stipulates that its use "will be suited to the zone's character as a seam-line area between Jewish and Arab populations." Operatively, the area is in a gated compound and access to it is limited.
Expansions of East Talpiyot	56	4	There are two expansions planned for East Talpiyot at the expense of Umm Laysoon. The larger one is located on state land near the entrance to Umm Laysoon (see inset) and the smaller one is being built on contested land within the Abedieh sub-neighborhood.
Other	17	1	Includes unplanned area.
Total	1,233	100	

* The residential zoning type in Umm Laysoon permits a 37.5% building ratio, with only two storeys, and no more than three residential units per dunam.