

3.5 BEIT SAFAFA

Jerusalem South - Beit Safafa Zone

SURVEY OF PALESTINIAN NEIGHBORHOODS IN EAST JERUSALEM

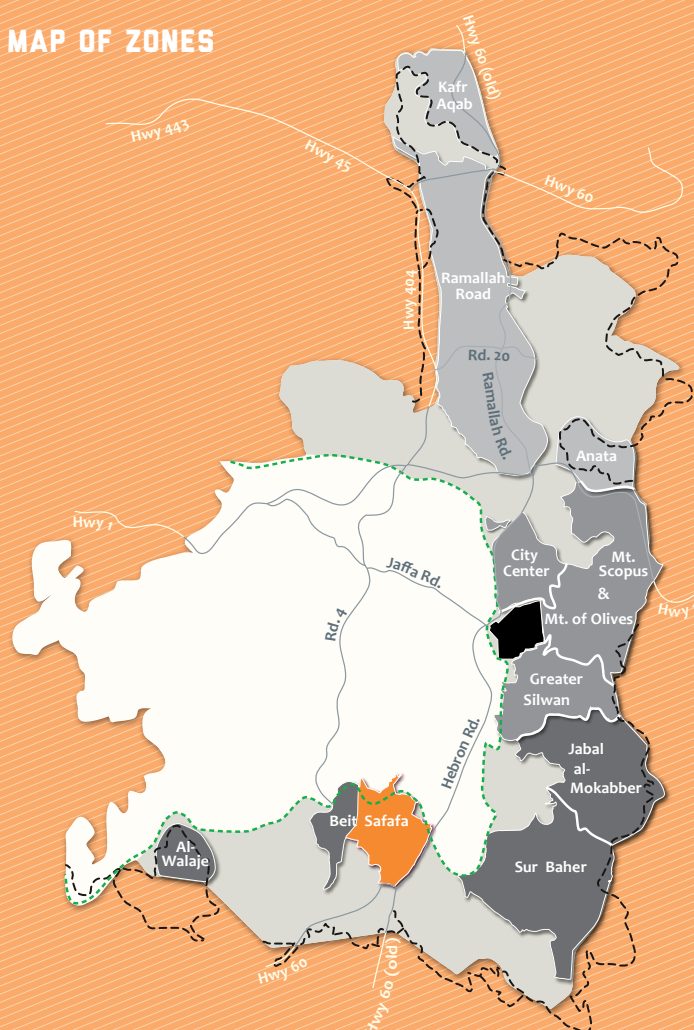
ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Located in southern Jerusalem, Beit Safafa, along with the adjacent Sharafat neighborhood, is not contiguous with the other Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem. Beit Safafa borders on the Israeli neighborhoods of Pat and Gonenim (in West Jerusalem) to the north, Hebron Road to the east, Dov Yosef Road ("the road up to Gilo") to the west, and the post-1967 Israeli neighborhood of Gilo to the southwest. Before being included within Jerusalem's current municipal borders, Beit Safafa was an independent agricultural village located to the southwest of Jerusalem, along the Refaim Valley. At the end of the 1948 war, the Green Line was drawn through the northern part of Beit Safafa, splitting the village into two. The northern (smaller) section became part of the State of Israel and its residents were granted Israeli citizenship, while the southern section of the village came under Jordanian rule. After the 1967 war, the village was reunited, this time under Israeli control, and the residents of the southern part of the village received permanent residency status. Today, along the route of the fence

that once divided the village, is the street known as Ihud Ha-Kfar (Hebrew for "Unification of the Village"). While the neighborhood's population is comprised of both citizens and non-citizens of Israel, people do not necessarily choose to live along 48/67 lines.

Beit Safafa retains its rural character to this day, with relatively low buildings and agricultural plots between the houses. However, the neighborhood has seen population growth since the 1980s due to inward migration. Much like the north-Jerusalem neighborhoods of Beit Hanina and Shuafat, Beit Safafa is a neighborhood of choice for Palestinian-Israelis settling in Jerusalem, with more than half of them living in Beit Safafa. With Israel's ongoing construction of the Separation Barrier, many Jerusalemite Palestinians have moved to neighborhoods on the Israeli side of the barrier, Beit Safafa among them. Beit Safafa's proximity to the more adequate infrastructures and services of the neighboring Jewish-Israeli neighborhoods and to the industrial and commercial zone of Talpiyot, increases its desirability in comparison to other Palestinian neighborhoods.

MAP OF ZONES



FACTS

Population 10,500
Area 2,091 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 BEIT SAFafa

Housing Shortage

The neighborhood plans grant limited building rights in the designated residential areas. Detail plans have provided some improvement, but these apply to only a small area of the neighborhood and do not provide a solution to the housing shortage. In addition, Beit Safafa does not have land reserves for future development, with the exception of the area known as at-Tabaleyah, which was expropriated and is in advanced stages of planning for Israeli-Jewish use (see: Givat Ha-Matos). Beit Safafa is surrounded on all sides, either by Israeli neighborhoods (in both West Jerusalem and East Jerusalem) and by main roads that not only limit the possibility of expansion but were built on private lands expropriated from the neighborhood's residents. The lack of land reserves for expansion increases the need for higher-density building rights within the neighborhood, notwithstanding the detriment to its rural character.

Roads

Two central systems of roads exist in Beit Safafa. The first is the system of main arteries surrounding and running through the area of the village. These arteries connect different points in the city and are built on lands expropriated from village residents, despite

the fact that they serve primarily non-residents of the neighborhood. This system of main roads isolates the neighborhood and turns it into a series of islands caught between huge transportation arteries. Moreover, the Jerusalem Municipality is currently working to complete another major highway (Road 4 South; see inset). The neighborhoods' internal system of roads, used by the residents, is underdeveloped and badly maintained, often posing a danger for the residents.

Givat Ha-Matos

Givat Ha-Matos, known by Beit Safafans as at-Tabaleyah (The Drummers' Hill), is located in southeast Beit Safafa and is the neighborhood's last remaining land reserve. According to the residents of the neighborhood, the area includes lands that were purchased by Beit Safafa residents from the Jordanian government in the 1960s. Since this purchase was never formalized in the Land Registry (a typical problem in all of East Jerusalem) the distant hill was declared state land after 1967. The land is mostly vacant today, though it was used in the 1990s to house Jewish new immigrants in caravans, some of which are still inhabited. While the area is essential for any reasonable future development in Beit Safafa, it is in advanced stages of planning for Jewish-Israeli settlement. There are four plans in the works, including vast areas of both privately and publicly owned land. They are all

at different phases of authorization, except for one which was rejected after public review. The main plan, which has already been approved, covers a previously unplanned area of 160 dunam and adjacent areas, designating more than 200 dunam for high-density housing (with the kind of building rights that are only seen in West Jerusalem and in Israeli neighborhoods in East Jerusalem). The new settlement project will thus provide a huge cache of apartments (and will be a real estate boon for the state) creating a very apparent physical contrast to rural Beit Safafa, where building rights and possibilities for expansion will remain comparably unimproved. Parcelization of the main plan, the last step needed before requesting building permits, was approved after being fast-tracked, as part of Israel's punitive measures against the Palestinian Authority for turning to the UN for partial recognition.

The Train-Track Park and Road 34

Along the old train tracks, which run through Beit Safafa as well as other neighborhoods of the city, the so-called Train-Track Park is nearly completed (2013). This is a linear park that includes play areas for children, sitting areas, a bicycle path, and a pedestrian path. The park is divided into sections of varying widths, and, following a decision to implement Road 34, the part of the park in Beit Safafa will be much narrower than the other sections. Road 34 will run along the edge of Beit Safafa, eastward alongside the train tracks to the Talpiyot Industrial Zone, eating away at the open feeling of the park. One Beit Safafa home and its olive grove are slated for demolition in the paving of the road, unless the route is changed. Originally, the route of the road was to go all the way through to Oranim Junction, running through the West-Jerusalem neighborhoods of Gonenim and Makor Haim. A community organization known as the Action Committee for the Train Tracks Park has succeeded in receiving assurances that this part of the road will not be implemented, though this decision is not statutorily binding.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure and municipal services in Beit Safafa are inadequate. While the neighborhood has sewerage and water lines in almost all of its

areas, it has no drainage lines. Likewise, street lighting in the neighborhood is insufficient, an example of this being Ihud Ha-Kfar Street, which, despite being the historic neighborhood's main street, has no street lights.

The Jerusalem 2000 Outline Plan

The as-yet unapproved Jerusalem Outline Plan ostensibly proposes significant expansion prospects for the eastern side of Beit Safafa. In fact, however, the unbuilt area of the expansion is contained within the plans for the Givat Ha-Matos neighborhood, which is designated for Jewish-Israeli settlement and use (see: Givat Ha-Matos). In addition, the Jerusalem 2000 Outline Plan features a neighborhood park for Beit Safafa, to be built on private agricultural land, following its expropriation. On the other hand, some of the areas designated in the outline plan as open spaces, have in fact been allocated and approved for Road 4, effectively severing the contiguity of the open areas of the heart of the neighborhood (see inset). Likewise, the plan designates the village core as a preservation site, which will entail a whole other set of limitations on development and renewal in Beit Safafa.

ROAD 4 SOUTH

Today, the most troubling issue for the residents of Beit Safafa is the construction of Road 4 South through the heart of the neighborhood, from northwest to southeast, splitting the neighborhood and severely damaging the fabric of life of its residents. This stretch of highway is in effect the missing link in Road 4 (commonly known as Begin Road), completing the north-south route for bypassing the city and enabling residents of settlements to the north and south of Jerusalem (along Highways 443 and 60, respectively) quick access through and beyond the city. Preparations for implementation of the highway entailed the expropriation of large amounts of private land from the residents of the neighborhood, and the highway is yet another layer in the network of roads running through the village while primarily serving residents of other neighborhoods. Alongside the damage to the village as a whole, the highway will also harm specific populations, among them students, the elderly, and the disabled, for whom access to daily services will be greatly impeded. Based on the building permits, issued in August 2012, the highway is being dug like a canal, with only a very small section (180 meters) being covered. After construction began, residents launched a public campaign and petitioned the court, arguing that the construction of the highway is illegal due to the fact that the authorities skipped over the detailed planning stage (including deposition for public review), which is prerequisite for receiving permits. In their petition, the residents requested that a significantly larger segment of the highway be covered so as to salvage the contiguity of the neighborhood and the connections between residents on either side of the transportation artery. After the petition was rejected, an appeal was filed to the Supreme Court. In June 2013, the court ordered that the state provide real solutions within a month, allotting an additional month for the residents to respond to those proposed solutions. The outcome remains to be seen.



The Soccer Field (photo Bimkom)



Construction of Road 4 South (photo Bimkom)

APPROVED PLANS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Part of Outline Plan # 2317 for Beit Safa and Sharafat	1,643.0 dunam
Outline Plan # 3488 for the al-Jam'iyyah sub-neighborhood	234.0 dunam
Part of Local Outline Plan # 62 for West Jerusalem	23.0 dunam
Plan # 1760 for the high school	15.0 dunam
Part of Plan # 5834a for the main section of Givat Ha-Matos	160.0 dunam
Total planned area	2,075.0 dunam
Unplanned area	16.0 dunam
Total area of neighborhood	2,091.0 dunam

In addition, three more outline plans (3801, 3802, 3855), were approved as changes to the neighborhood outline plan (# 2317), and some 28 detail plans were also approved, with no added area for the neighborhood.

ZONING STRUCTURE ACCORDING TO APPROVED PLANS ▪ DESIGNATION VS. USE

Designation	Plans		Land Use
	dunam	%	
Residential*	968	46	There is a discrepancy between the low-density, rural-type building rights and the needs and aspirations of the residents, some of whom prefer to retain the rural character of Beit Safafa and others who want to see it developed as an urban neighborhood. Demographic patterns have dramatically increased the demand for apartments, resulting in many detail plans that have de facto created a densifying residential fabric.
Open Spaces	347	17	The agricultural valley in the center of the neighborhood is designated as open scenic area. Road 4 South is planned to run through the neighborhood (see inset), leaving the southern part of the strip as a buffer zone between the neighborhood and the adjacent Israeli neighborhood of Gilo, to the south. Another large open area, designated as open public area, is located along Hebron Road, in the eastern part of Givat Ha-Matos. The neighborhood plans also allocate some 17 small plots as open public areas, only three of which have been developed - two as a playground, and one as a soccer field. The largest plot is used for agriculture. The development of the rest of the areas is unlikely, as the narrow plots look more like leftover spaces and serve functionally as passageways and the like.
Roads	496	24	Large areas of the neighborhood have been allocated for the development of roads. However, instead of improving and upgrading the system of neighborhood roads, which in its current condition poses a danger to the residents on a daily basis, the Jerusalem Municipality has begun working on the implementation of another major urban transportation artery which is not aimed at improving the quality of life of the residents (see inset).
Public Buildings	85	4	The neighborhood plans contain 15 plots designated for public buildings (10 dunam of which are allocated on Givat Ha-Matos). Only six of these plots have actually been developed. Unlike most Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem, Beit Safafa actually has a municipal high school. Within the area of the neighborhood is also a Jewish Yeshiva, which is housed in a structure that served as a hospital before 1948.
Givat Ha-Matos	160	7	The central area of Givat Ha-Matos was not included in the outline plan of the neighborhood and is not designated for use by the neighborhood's residents. An Israeli settlement project is planned on the site.
Other	35	2	Includes unplanned areas.
Total	2,091	100	

* The most common residential zoning type in Beit Safafa allows a 50% building ratio, with sparse construction of up to two storeys. Exceptions to this are the village core, where building ratios reach 80%, and Plan # 3855 in which a 90% building ratio is permitted, with four storeys.