



Highway 50 splitting Beit Safafa and Sharafat

## Factsheet:

### DISCONNECTION BY CONNECTION: Israeli roads connecting Israeli illegal settlements and disconnecting Palestinian communities

In the past twenty years, the Israeli authorities worked on building different networks of roads that surround the city of Jerusalem invoking that such networks will facilitate the traffic, while the main reasons are to connect settlements to Jerusalem, isolating East Jerusalem from its Palestinian fabric, and to cut off the Palestinian neighborhoods. This factsheet will shed light on the roads that connect Israeli settlers and disconnect the Palestinians.

Until 1948, Jerusalem used to have four main roads with the Old City in the center: Hebron Road (from South), Nablus Road (from North), Jericho Road (from East), and Jaffa (from West). Following the Nakba (the Palestinian catastrophe in 1948), both Jaffa and Hebron roads were severed due to the control of Israel over the Western side of Jerusalem. The Jaffa Road was blocked until 1967. At the same time, the part of Hebron Road between the Jaffa Gate (Hebron Gate) and Bethlehem City was detoured by going through the eastern villages of Jerusalem (Sur Baher and Jabal Mukaber). This detour was a narrow winding road that goes through inhabited areas. In mid-1960, the Jordanian government planned to construct an alternative segment of this part of the Road, which became known



as the American Road<sup>1</sup>. When Israel occupied the east side of Jerusalem, the southern segment of the American Road was ready to be paved while the northern segment was at its early construction stages. The Israeli Jerusalem municipality paved the southern part of the road and disregarded the other parts.

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## Disconnecting Palestinians: The roads' network that cuts off East Jerusalem

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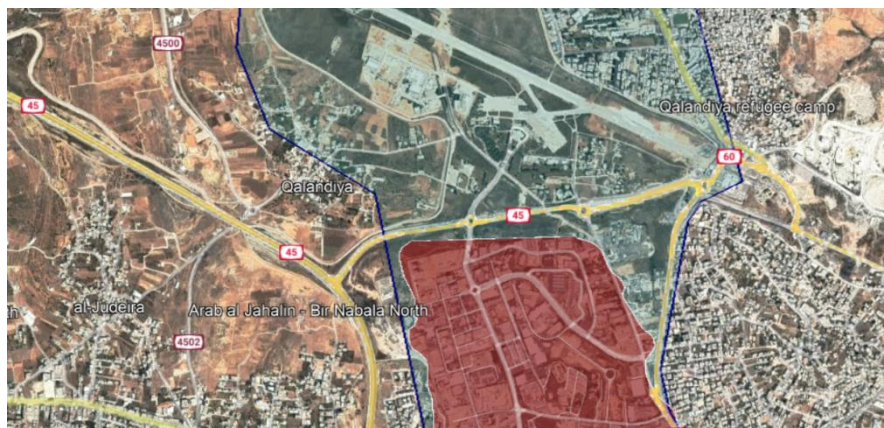
**Jerusalem road 20**, constructed in 2013, intends to provide a continuous route between Highway 50 (*Begin Road*) and Pisgat Ze'ev via Beit Hanina. It was built on the part of the main old Abdul Hamid Shoman Road that connected Beit Hanina village with Hizma. The newly constructed part is built on Beit Hanina lands with a length of 2.5 km. It starts from Netanyahu Interchange and ends at a junction with Highway 60. This Road is one example of the combined effect of the Israeli Separation Wall and the strategy of connecting Israeli settlements with the central Israeli cities' centers.



Road 20 (the yellow line) connecting Highway 60 with Highway 50, crossing Beit Hanina

**Jerusalem road 21** is constructed between 2013 and 2022 (*still constructing some parts*) to serve the northern settlements in East Jerusalem that are built or the ones that will be built in the future, such as Nof Shmuel. Its southern part starts at the interchange with Highway 1, between Ramat Shlomo settlement and Shu'afat. The Road crosses over Beit Hanina lands to reach its final destination at Atarot industrial settlement. Its length is 7.35 km, with two lanes in each direction. Since it is built on Shu'afat and Beit Hanina lands, the Jerusalem municipality appropriated 77 dunums of the Palestinians' land.

**Highway 45** connects Highway 50 (Jerusalem) with Route 443 (to Modi'in). Its length is 4.7 km, running east-southeast for 3.3 km starting from Giv'at Ze'ev Junction with Route 443 to Atarot Junction with Highway 50. Then it takes a 90-degree turn (*east-northeast*) for about 1.4 km to end at Qalandia (*Atarot*) Airport. Its last section, 0.6 km, runs adjacent to the Qalandia checkpoint. This Road is intended to eventually connect with Highway 60 at the road segment between Ar-Ram and Jaba'. This will entail using grade separation at the Qalandia Checkpoint area, which will involve **the construction of tunnels**



A google map that shows Highway 45 connecting Road 60 in the northern part of Jerusalem, nearby Qalandia Airport.

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<sup>1</sup> The construction of this road was supposed to be funded by the Government of the United States, and for this reason it was widely known as "The American Road".

**and bridges.** In addition, it will facilitate the movement of Israelis across the Palestinian inhabited area toward the East of the West Bank and keep the Palestinians suffocating in the traffic congestion in the same area.

It is worth mentioning that the extension of Road 45 to Road 60 will allow connecting the settlements in northeast Ramallah with the center of Jerusalem. This extension will strategically convert these small settlements into a settlement bloc similar to Gush Etzion and Ma'ale Adumim blocs, and will enhance the Israeli colonial development in this area, entrenching the colonial settlement enterprise in Area "C".

**Highway 50** is officially called Begin Boulevard. This road starts from Tantur Ecumenical Institute at the Rosmarin Junction, heading to a south-north path, stretching over 16.2 km. It goes through many Palestinian neighborhoods: Starting from Sharafat and Beit Safafa (*splitting it into two parts with a limited number of access points*) in south, passing over Shu'fat lands, Beit Hanina and Bir Nabala. The Road's final destination ends at Atarot Junction with Highway 45.

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## Connecting Settlers: The roads' network that isolates East Jerusalem

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### I- Eastern Ring Road

The Eastern Ring Road is planned to bypass East Jerusalem from the East and connect the settlements in the southern West Bank with the center and north of the West Bank. The well-known part of this road is Route 4370, while the other part is known as **"the American Road"**.

- A. **Route 4370** is part of the Eastern Ring Road with a 4.5 km length that was opened in 2019. It starts at 'Anata village junction with road 437 northeast of Jerusalem<sup>2</sup>, while its final destination is Route 1 at the French Hill. It serves the Binyamin Region settlements (*between east Ramallah and southwest Khan al-Ahmar community*) which surrounds Jerusalem from the East. The official name of this road within the Palestinian Authority is the "apartheid road"<sup>3</sup>, since it has two lanes that are separated and divided by an 8-meter-tall concrete wall topped with metal fencing.



*Part of Route 4370, which is divided in the middle by an eight-meter high wall*

One side is designated for Palestinian West Bankers, leading them to the A'zaim village junction (*Zeitim checkpoint*) connected to Highway 1, while the other side of the road is predominantly designated for the Israeli settlers. The road tracks given to West

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<sup>2</sup> Road 437 connects Mishor Adumim settlement industrial zone with Geva Binyamin settlement.

<sup>3</sup> The official name of the road within the Palestinian Authority is the "Apartheid Road", while Israeli Ministry of Transportation named it 4370

Banker Palestinians are two sealed vehicle lanes to drive around Jerusalem, with no possibility for entering the city.

At the same time, the tracks designated for Israelis and Jerusalemites can travel through and into Jerusalem. This segregated Road provides the settlers from the east Ramallah area in the West Bank another point of access to Jerusalem and Highway 1.

**B. The American Road** which is divided into three segments:

1. The **American Road South** is 2.4 km long that starts from the Umm Tuba and Har Homa settlement area in the South stretching toward Sur Baher and Jabal Mukaber. This segment of the Road was opened to traffic in mid-2021. It is connected with the road that serves the settlements in the southeastern part of Bethlehem.
2. The **American Road Center** is divided into two sub-segments. The temporary Road and the alternative Road. The temporary road part is opened with a length of 3.3 km. It crosses through Jabal Mukaber along an old, narrow road that was widened and upgraded. The alternative road part is planned to bypass Jabal Mukaber, and it is called Sur Baher Bypass. It is planned to be 3.4 km, composed of bridges, tunnels, and interchanges.
3. The **American Road North** is a planned to be a 3 km stretch, of which 1.6 km is a tunnel segment under the Palestinian villages and two bridges. This part is in the bidding stage. At the same time, the Israeli Army issued an expropriation order for the Palestinian's land beyond the Jerusalem municipality borders. Also, 55 dunums of At-Tur neighborhood have been confiscated in East Jerusalem to pave this part of the American Road. This part planned to connect with Ma'ale Adumim bloc.

The constructing the American Road resulted in the demolition of tens of Palestinians' houses, and more will be demolished. In addition, dozens of dunums of Palestinian lands were confiscated.

## **II- Keidar Road**

Keidar Road is the latest "unopened" discriminative road. This Road has been used since 2003 exclusively by the settlers of the Keidar settlement. Its length is 4 km, and most of it is built on lands expropriated from Palestinians. It is designed to bypass the traffic congestion of Route 417 at Al-Eizariya (*Bethany*) town by connecting traffic from Keidar settlement (*located near the Container military checkpoint*) with route 417 at Ma'ale Adumim/Al-Eizariya Junction. When the Israeli authorities decided to open this traffic lane to the use of Palestinians who come through the Container military checkpoint, the Keidar settlers protested the decision, which led to the reclose of the lane by a roadblock.

**Settlers' violation is another example of exercising exclusive rights enjoyed by less than 2,000 settlers who use this road.** Their behavior affects the life of Palestinian commuters

from Hebron and Bethlehem governorates who are stuck daily in the traffic congestion at Al-Eizariya.

### III- The “Fabric of Life” Road

The “Fabric of Life” Road is an Israeli expression that refers to a road network that consists of different parts designed for Palestinians and intended to reroute them away from Ma’ale Adumim settlements bloc. One part is planned to connect the Palestinian villages of A’zaim with Al-Eizariya. This part will block Palestinian traffic from reaching the E1 and Adumim bloc. It is worth mentioning that it comprises a tunnel beneath the Separation Wall that surrounds Jerusalem. Another part will connect Palestinian commuters from Jericho area and those come from Jordan to the southern West Bank.

Israel uses different expressions to name this road starting from “**Fabric of Life Road**” trying to promote their plans to connect the Palestinian communities in the South and North of the West Bank, while some Israel officials call it the “**Sovereignty Road**”.

In conclusion, as Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967, the Israeli authorities did not build any road to serve Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Any road built, aimed to serve Israeli settlements communities. These roads, which seemingly serves Palestinians, intend to move them away from the area to expand different settlements, such as Ma’ale Adumim settlement in E1, and to divert Palestinians away from the roads used by settlers in and around.

However, the primary goal is to entrench control over East Jerusalem and E1 area in order to annex it to Jerusalem, which **will practically render any two-state solution technically inapplicable**.

#### Roads in East Jerusalem:

Road Number	Name	Start	End	Length (km)		
				All	West Bank	Green line
1	Yigael Yadin Boulevard	Motza Interchange	Adumim Interchange	11.2	7.9	3.3
20	Shomaan Street	Beit Hanina	Pisgat Ze’ev	2.5	2.5	
21		Shuafat/Ramat Shlomo	Atarot/Qalandia	7.35	7.35	
45		Giv’at Ze’ev/Ofer Prison	Atarot/Qalandia	4.7	4.7	
50	Begin Boulevard	Gilo/Beit Safafa	Atarot	16.2	8.1	8.1
60		al-Khader Junction	Atarot/Qalandia	20.9	14.2	6.7
417		Lifta	Keidar	16	13.3	2.8
436		Sanhedria Cemetery	Beitunia	13.2	10.4	2.8
4370	“Apartheid Road”	Anata Junction	Mount Scopus	4.5	4.5	
	Keidar Road	Ma’ale Adumim/Al-Eizariya Junction	Keidar	4	4	