



# **HIGHWAY TO ANNEXATION**

**Israeli Road and Transportation Infrastructure  
Development in the West Bank**

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**December 2020**

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## INTRODUCTION

While the threat of *de jure* Israeli annexation of West Bank territory has lessened, *de facto* annexation is accelerating at a rapid and alarming pace. The Israeli political Right has [stated that it hopes to grow the population to 1,000,000 settlers](#).<sup>1</sup> Even if such a number is not reached, the significant road and transportation development projects that the Israeli government has advanced in the past five years make it plausible that the current settler population could double in the coming decades.

Settlement expansion cannot take place without the parallel development of road, water, and electricity infrastructure. Because of this, when tracking settlement expansion, it is important to track not only the number of new housing units, which is the most common benchmark used today, but also the development of settlement infrastructure.

The last major wave of transportation infrastructure development in the West Bank occurred following the Oslo Accords in the second half of the 1990s. Since then, the settler population has almost tripled. Yet infrastructure growth has not tripled correspondingly, such that today's road and transportation infrastructure in the West Bank is at its limits and no longer suffices to serve the population, posing a significant obstacle to further settlement expansion. In order to continue to advance the Israeli settlement enterprise, massive infrastructure development and growth is necessary.

There are currently dozens of new road construction projects underway or in planning in the West Bank. This construction work, which is part of the vision described in [a new Israeli master plan](#) for road and transportation development in the West Bank for the year 2045, points to continued and intensified *de facto* annexation.

Following the formation of a coalition government in Israel in April 2020, the terms of which allowed for annexation of West Bank territory as early as July 1, 2020, attention was rightfully drawn towards the looming threat of *de jure* annexation. Due to the terms of the recent normalization agreements between Israel and both the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, as well as the election of US President-Elect Joe Biden, the threat of *de jure* annexation has lessened. However, Israel's West Bank infrastructure development work demonstrates that its longstanding policy of *de facto* annexation is accelerating at an unprecedented and devastating pace.

This report details the ways in which road and transportation infrastructure projects further entrench Israel's deepening hold on the occupied territories through continued suburbanization of Israeli settlements and the fragmentation of Palestinian territory, which together contribute to further cementing the reality of one state with unequal rights. All those invested in an equitable and peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should see these projects as a clear declaration of Israel's intent to further advance annexation, and the international community must intervene to halt such moves.

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1. When settler leaders speak of 1,000,000 settlers in the West Bank, they do not include settlers in East Jerusalem but rather those in the "Judea and Samaria" district.

# THE HISTORY OF THE SETTLEMENT ENTERPRISE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

From the earliest days of the occupation, the Israeli government realized that building modern highways, which would connect settlements to urban centers within Israel proper, were crucial for settlement expansion, and dozens of new roads were built in the West Bank in the 1970s and 1980s. In the words of a mid-1980s Israeli settlement planning document, “The road is the factor that motivates settlement in areas where settlement is important, and its advancement will lead to development and demand.”<sup>2</sup>

**“THE ROAD IS THE FACTOR THAT MOTIVATES SETTLEMENT IN AREAS WHERE SETTLEMENT IS IMPORTANT, AND ITS ADVANCEMENT WILL LEAD TO DEVELOPMENT AND DEMAND.”**

— MASTER PLAN FOR SETTLEMENT OF SAMARIA AND JUDEA, 1983

In particular, the Israeli government invested in building lateral roads across the West Bank to serve Israeli settlements. Palestinian development in the West Bank generally runs north-south, following the natural topography of the mountainous region. Because of this, Israel invested significantly in building settlements and roads along east-west routes, which both connect settlements to Israel proper and fragment Palestinian

territory. As a 1997 Israeli planning document for the West Bank explains, it “bears emphasizing the necessity of the [lateral] corridors for the continued existence of Israeli settlements. It is by means of these corridors that connection is possible between settlement zones and population centers, employment, and the main services of the State of Israel... The lateral corridors will also contribute to helping prevent uncontrolled Arab building that is liable to cause the coastal plain to be cut off from the Jordan Valley and the fragmenting of Israeli settlement zones in Judea and Samaria.”<sup>3</sup> Given that about 60% of employed settlers commute daily into Israel proper for work,<sup>4</sup> suburbanization and easy access to major urban employment centers, which has been enabled in large part by the construction of lateral roads, has been crucial to increasing the settler population, and the Israeli government rightly saw the strategic import of these roads.<sup>5</sup>

The process of suburbanization was particularly effective around Jerusalem, where the construction of roads provided easy access to the city from settlements to its north, east, and south and helped turn these areas into massive settlement blocs.

In building roads in the West Bank, the Israeli government was guided by the desire to ensure that settler traffic would bypass Palestinian cities and towns. The bypass roads that were built allowed settlers to travel on well-built and properly maintained infrastructure without the feeling of being in foreign territory. Israeli desire to avoid driving through Palestinian population centers was enhanced during the periods of the First and Second Intifadas, when settlers driving through Palestinian communities could face violence. Bypass roads have continued to be useful during less violent times as well, as they allow settlers to commute more quickly and directly to urban centers in Israel proper.

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2. Ministry of Agriculture and Settlement Division of the World Zionist Organization, Master Plan For Settlement of Samaria and Judea, Plan for Development of the Area for 1983-1986 (Jerusalem: Spring, 1983), p. 27. Quote taken from B’Tselem’s report: [“Forbidden Roads: Israel’s Discriminatory Road Regime in the West Bank.”](#)

3. “Settlement Super Zones in Judea and Samaria,” Planning and Strategy Division of the World Zionist Organization, 1997.

4. This number comes from data from the Israeli Bureau of Statistics.

5. Some roads in the West Bank were built in order to connect urban centers within Israel proper yet run through the West Bank. The primary goal of these roads is not to aid settlement suburbanization, yet, due to the ways in which these roads integrate the West Bank and Israeli highway systems, they advance *de facto* annexation of the territory they cut across. The most notable examples of this type of road are Highway 443 and Highway 90. However, because no major construction is planned or underway on these roads, this document does not discuss them at greater length.



Construction to double the width of the Bethlehem Bypass Road (Highway 60 / the Tunnels Road)

Following the signing of the Oslo Accords in the mid-1990s, Palestinian urban centers were designated as Area A and were transferred to the management of the Palestinian Authority. Because of this, Israel invested even more heavily in the building of bypass roads in order to ensure that Israelis would be able to remain in Area C (territory under the direct control of the Israeli military) while driving through the West Bank. Thus, by the late 1990s, bypass roads had been completed to circumvent every main Palestinian city in the West Bank.

This massive wave of construction, and particularly the construction of bypass roads, in the 1990s enabled rapid suburbanization of the settlements and aided the growth of the settler population in the West Bank from about 116,000 in 1995 to about 440,000 today.<sup>6</sup> [In the words of Yossi Dagan](#), the head of the settler Samaria Regional Council, "Once some roads don't go through [Palestinian] villages, you can see that in those places there is a big difference... in the number of residents who come to live in the area."

**“ONCE SOME ROADS DON’T GO THROUGH [PALESTINIAN] VILLAGES, YOU CAN SEE THAT IN THOSE PLACES THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE... IN THE NUMBER OF RESIDENTS WHO COME TO LIVE IN THE AREA.”**

— YOSHI DAGAN

than shared roads, is the preferable model, because while shared roads are “cheaper and better for traffic,” they are “only suitable for peacetime,” while separate roads “provide a better solution for the issue of segregation” and can be used “even in tense times.”<sup>7</sup>

The effect of road construction, and especially the construction of bypass roads, on settlement growth can be clearly seen through [the case of the Za’atara Bypass Road / Highway 398](#) (also known as the Lieberman Road), which connects the settlements of southeast Gush Etzion to the settlement of Har Homa in East Jerusalem.

6. These numbers do not include East Jerusalem. When including East Jerusalem, the settler population in the West Bank grew from 225,000 settlers in 1995 to 670,000 today.

7. “Settlement Super Zones in Judea and Samaria,” 1997

Highway 398 was opened to traffic in 2007, and, in the eight years that followed, the number of settlers living in settlements that were serviced by the road increased by 90%, hundreds of new housing units were built, and thousands more were planned. The effects of Highway 398 clearly demonstrate the influence that road infrastructure has on settlement growth, and similar settlement expansion should be expected along the routes of other new and/or renovated West Bank roads.

## SETTLER LEADERS' CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

Settlers have long raised concerns about insufficient infrastructure and overcrowded roads in the West Bank, and, recognizing the importance of these issues for increasing the settler population, settlement leadership has made infrastructure development a priority, especially in the last five years.<sup>8</sup> Between May 2016 and November 2018, the Subcommittee on Civil and Security Affairs in Judea and Samaria, a subcommittee of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, invested significantly in monitoring and advancing infrastructure development, holding ten separate hearings on West Bank road development during this time.<sup>9</sup>

As part of the pressure exerted by settler leadership, the heads of settlement regional councils participated in a hunger strike outside of the Prime Minister's house in 2017, which ended with the [promise of a budget of 200,000,000 NIS](#) immediately and an additional 600,000,000 NIS for the following year for increased settlement infrastructure, including bypass roads, cellular service, lighting, and more.

**"THIS PLAN CONNECTS THE SETTLEMENTS TO THE REST OF THE COUNTRY AND BRINGS ABOUT DE FACTO SOVEREIGNTY. IT'S TIME TO TURN IT INTO REALITY ON THE GROUND."**

— DAVID ELHAYANI

The following years saw continued investment in planning for West Bank roads and transportation, which focused in particular on improving the integration of the West Bank and Israeli highway systems. This, in turn, meant that Israeli officials began to move towards unified planning for Israeli and West Bank roads, rather than separate processes. This move has helped aid what former Minister of Transportation Bezalel Smotrich termed "[sovereignty through transportation](#)" in the 2019 infrastructure work plan for the settlements that he published. In [Smotrich's words](#), "whoever wants to bring a million settlers to Judea and Samaria needs to build a network of transportation infrastructure, roads, and public transportation."<sup>10</sup>

These trends have continued with current Minister of Transportation Miri Regev, who recently released the West Bank Road and Transportation Master Plan for 2045, a work plan intended to guide the Ministry's work in the coming decades. The plan, which presents Israel's vision for transportation infrastructure in the West Bank, details significant infrastructure expansion. [In the words of David Elhayani](#), the head of the settler Yesha Council, "It is exciting to see, after 53 years of settlement, the master plan for transportation in Judea, Samaria and the Jordan Valley... This plan connects the settlements to the rest of the country and brings about *de facto* sovereignty. It's time to turn it into reality on the ground."

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8. [Records from 2014](#) attest to a meeting between settler leadership and Prime Minister Netanyahu about significant infrastructure projects.

9. Alongside exerting pressure to advance particular infrastructure projects, settler leadership also pushed for a longer-term vision for West Bank infrastructure, which would take into consideration their desired population growth. This pressure led to work on a master plan for West Bank transportation, which was underway by 2017, [according to Subcommittee protocols](#).

10. See also [this video address](#) by Bezalel Smotrich.

# ANALYSIS OF CURRENT ROAD AND TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN THE WEST BANK

Because it is not yet known how much of the West Bank Road and Transportation Master Plan for 2045 will be implemented, the section that follows focuses in particular on infrastructure projects that are probable in their implementation and are either already in construction or in different stages of planning. These are projects that have been prioritized by government bodies and/or settler leadership, as can be seen in Israeli planning documents and protocols from the Civil Administration's Subcommittee on Road Development and the Knesset's Subcommittee on Civil and Security Affairs in Judea and Samaria. That being said, some projects listed here are less likely to be implemented than others due to a variety of factors, including topography, budgetary constraints, and more.

In particular, this section focuses on the strategic rationale behind general trends in West Bank transportation development and the impact these trends could have, or are already having, on the reality on the ground. (A fuller list of projects currently in planning or under construction, as well as maps of the projects described, can be found in Annex A.)

## LATERAL ROADS AND THE FRAGMENTATION OF THE WEST BANK

As discussed above, Palestinian development and roads generally run north-south. Therefore, significant Israeli infrastructure is designed to run east-west, fragmenting Palestinian territory and suburbanizing these settlements by connecting them to roads in Israel proper. A significant portion of the projects currently in planning or underway in the West Bank are the construction or expansion of these lateral roads, including Highway 55 (which runs from Israel proper to the settlement of Kedumim), Highway 5 /505 (which runs from Israel proper to the Jordan Valley through the settlement of Ariel, fragmenting the central West Bank from the northern West Bank), Highway 456 (which creates a settler corridor between the Palestinian cities of Ramallah and Salfit), and Highway 367 (which creates a settler corridor in western Gush Etzion).

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JERUSALEM METROPOLIS

The majority of settlers live in the "greater Jerusalem" area, which stretches from the settlement of Givat Ze'ev in the north to the settlement of Maale Adumim in the east to the settlements of Gush Etzion in the south. Because of their proximity to Jerusalem and the attendant access to employment and other services, these settlements have become suburbs of the city. A significant number of the projects currently underway or in planning in the West Bank are in this area around Jerusalem. By expanding and renovating roads connecting the surrounding settlements to the city, the trend of expanding "greater Jerusalem" will continue, and settlements in the area will continue to grow.

South of Jerusalem, work is in progress to double the width of Highway 60 (known as "the Tunnels Road"), which is the southern entrance to Jerusalem from the West Bank and which will thus double the entrance capacity to Jerusalem from that direction. In parallel, there is construction work underway on additional roads in the area, including widening the road connecting Beitar Illit (the second largest settlement in the West Bank) to Tzur Hadassah (a town in Israel proper), which will help accommodate the extensive planned development in the Gush Etzion settlements.

To the east of Jerusalem, work has already begun on the southern part of the Eastern Ring Road, which is most famous for its recently-opened northern section, dubbed "[the Apartheid Road](#)" because it separates Palestinian and Israeli traffic with a wall in between the lanes. This addition will extend the road from the area near the settlement of Maale Adumim to the area near the settlement of Har Homa and will allow settlers to enter south Jerusalem without needing to pass through the traffic of downtown Jerusalem.

Other infrastructure projects are also being built to facilitate the easy entry of settlers east of Jerusalem into the city. This includes the Asher Weiner Underpass in the Talpiot neighborhood in Jerusalem, which is under construction and which will connect the Eastern Ring Road to southern Jerusalem. In addition, an underpass at the French Hill Junction is currently being built, and an overpass at the entrance to the settlement of Ramat Shlomo was recently completed. Together, these projects will allow settlers from Maale Adumim to enter Jerusalem (and connect to Highway 1 to Tel Aviv) without encountering a single traffic light.

To the north of Jerusalem, there are plans to build a new section of Highway 45, which will allow settlers to enter Jerusalem directly via the planned Qalandia Checkpoint Underpass, work on which is expected to begin in the coming months. This underpass will connect this section of Highway 45 to Highway 443 and allow settlers to avoid traffic around the Hizma Checkpoint and traffic congestion around Jerusalem. In addition, the construction of the new Highway 935 (still in the initial stages of planning) will connect the Talmonim settlement bloc west of Ramallah to Highway 443 (and thus to Jerusalem).

In addition to road construction, there are plans to expand the Jerusalem light rail to provide access to additional settlements in East Jerusalem, including Gilo, Ramot, and Neve Yaakov. Further, public transportation lanes and "park and ride" parking lots are being built in and around Jerusalem to connect settlements outside of the city to the Jerusalem light rail network.

This infrastructure work in and around Jerusalem is intended to facilitate massive settlement expansion in the coming years, including plans for about 56,000 new housing units in the "greater Jerusalem" area, over 6,000 of which are within the city itself.<sup>11</sup>

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11. These numbers are based on information from protocols from the Knesset Subcommittee on Civil and Security Affairs in Judea and Samaria, the Civil Administration's Planning Committees, and the Jerusalem Planning and Building Committee, as well as plans published by the Gush Etzion Regional Council and the Maale Adumim Municipality.



The "park and ride" lot under construction in the settlement of Ramot



The "park and ride" lot under construction in the settlement of the French Hill

## ISRAEL'S VISION FOR THE MAALE ADUMIM SETTLEMENT BLOC

There are currently plans underway for massive settlement expansion in the Maale Adumim area, which is a strategically important area to Israel because it breaks up the territorial contiguity between Palestinian centers in the northern and southern West Bank and effectively cuts the West Bank in half. An October 2018 [agreement signed between the Maale Adumim Municipality and the Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing](#) proposes the building of about 19,000 new housing units in Maale Adumim (including E1), which would bring the settlement's population to about 100,000 individuals. In order to facilitate this growth, significant infrastructure work is planned or in process in the area, as noted above in the discussion on infrastructure development east of Jerusalem.

Planning is also in progress for a new "fabric of life road" (Israeli terminology for roads designed for Palestinians and intended to divert them away from roads used by settlers) west of the settlement of Maale Adumim. This road would connect the Palestinian villages of al-Azariya and a-Zaim, where the road would then connect to the northern section of the Eastern Ring Road (the "Apartheid Road"). Because of the effect it would have in blocking any Palestinian traffic from reaching the E1 and Maale Adumim areas, this road has been termed by former Minister of Defense Naftali Bennett as "[the Sovereignty Road](#)." An additional fabric of life road is planned to divert Palestinian traffic originating in the Jericho area and traveling to the southern West Bank away from the Maale Adumim and E1 areas.

Diverting Palestinian traffic from the area, a process facilitated by the "Apartheid Road" and the two fabric of life roads described above, helps actualize Israel's ultimate vision for the settlement of Maale Adumim, which entails closing off the area to Palestinian traffic by moving the checkpoint on Highway 1 from a-Zaim to a point near the Good Samaritan Museum east of the settlement of Kfar Adumim and the Palestinian village of Khan al-Ahmar.<sup>12</sup> Doing so would mean that Maale Adumim and the area around it would have a status similar to that of the Seam Zone (the West Bank areas between Israel's pre-1967 borders and the Separation Barrier), in that it will be within the West Bank but on the "Israeli side" of the Separation Barrier, so Palestinians would need to obtain permits to enter the area. This would allow settlers from Maale Adumim and its surrounding settlements to enter Jerusalem without going through a checkpoint.

The Israeli desire to be able to close off the Maale Adumim area to Palestinian traffic underlies the government's attempts to expel Palestinian Bedouin communities in the area, including the village of Khan al-Ahmar. It is important to note that even if not all of the Palestinian communities are expelled from the area (but access is restricted to Palestinians who live outside the area), those remaining in the area will still face severe challenges, specifically relating to the permit regime, and will be under even heavier pressure to relocate.<sup>13</sup>

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12. In order to fully realize this plan, an additional checkpoint north of Maale Adumim would need to be built in order to ensure that Palestinians cannot enter the area of the settlement from the Palestinian villages of Hizma or Anata.

13. The situation in such a case would be similar to that in Nabi Samuel, which is enclosed by the Separation Barrier and Israeli settlements northwest of Jerusalem. More information on the situation in Nabi Samuel can be found [here](#).

## ULTRA-ORTHODOX SETTLERS

In the 1990s, settler leaders, seeking to grow the settler population and knowing that most Israeli citizens are not willing to leave Israel's urban population centers for the West Bank, took advantage of a severe shortage of affordable ultra-Orthodox housing and urged the ultra-Orthodox community to move to settlements beyond the Green Line. The government supported this initiative, as it solved both the problems of growing the settler population and of finding housing for the ultra-Orthodox community; however, it is important to note that these ultra-Orthodox settlers crossed the Green Line for socioeconomic, rather than ideological, reasons.<sup>14</sup> Thus, although the move of the ultra-Orthodox population to the West Bank began in earnest only in the mid-1990s, they now number about 40% of the total settler population in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem). Further, the ultra-Orthodox community accounts for over 50% of the settler population's growth since the Oslo Accords, demonstrating their importance to the continued growth of the settlement enterprise.

Notably, most ultra-Orthodox settlers live fairly close to the Green Line. The two biggest settlements in the West Bank, Beitar Illit and Modiin Illit, are both ultra-Orthodox and together account for about 20% of the total settler population and about half of ultra-Orthodox settlers. Settlements are attractive to ultra-Orthodox populations if they are essentially suburbs of major ultra-Orthodox centers in Israel proper. Thus, Beitar Illit's proximity to Jerusalem and Modiin Illit's proximity to both Bnei Brak and Jerusalem have contributed significantly to these settlements' growth, and Israel has continued to advance road and transportation projects, described in the annex below, to further increase the populations in both of these large settlements.

Simultaneously, settler leaders have noted that attempts to bring ultra-Orthodox communities to settlements deeper in the West Bank, such as Immanuel, have proven unsuccessful and that the large ultra-Orthodox settlements of Beitar Illit and Modiin Illit do little to change facts on the ground or the map of the West Bank because their proximity to the Green Line makes for easy land swaps in possible future negotiations towards a two-state solution. With this in mind, Israeli plans have aimed to advance roads to aid the growth of a series of ultra-Orthodox settlements in more strategic locations deeper in the West Bank. These include, most notably, Tel Tzion to the east of Ramallah and Agan HaAyalot to the southwest of Ramallah, which together are intended to bring tens of thousands of settlers to the area surrounding Ramallah. Settler leaders are also now advocating for the construction of Highway 935, a new road to connect the Talmonim settlement bloc west of Ramallah to Highway 443 and thus also grow the ultra-Orthodox settlement of Nahliel in that area. The move to grow the ultra-Orthodox settler population can also be seen in the plans for thousands of new housing units in the ultra-Orthodox settlement of Maale Amos in southeastern Gush Etzion.

## DEVELOPMENT AND SUBURBANIZATION OF SETTLEMENTS DEEPER INTO THE WEST BANK

The suburbanization of settlements – through ensuring that settlers can easily commute to Israel proper for employment and obtaining other services – has long been a backbone of the settlement enterprise and has helped aid the tremendous growth in the settler population. This process of suburbanization has been particularly successful around Jerusalem (in settlements such as Maale Adumim, Givat Ze'ev, and those in north Gush Etzion) and along the Green Line adjacent to the Israeli coastal plain (in settlements such as Modiin

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14. Historically, the majority of the ultra-Orthodox community is not Zionist. Unlike the National Religious movement, the ultra-Orthodox community has traditionally expressed objection to settlements, though this objection faded in the 1990s due to political changes around the Oslo Accords, as well as the growing housing needs of the community.

Illit, Alfei Menashe, and Ariel<sup>15</sup>). Current projects underway or in planning aspire to suburbanize settlements that are much deeper in the West Bank. This includes doubling the width of Highway 5 from the settlement of Ariel to the Jordan Valley, which provides all settlements in the center of the West Bank greater access to Tel Aviv. The widening of Highway 60 from Jerusalem to Kiryat Arba in the south, which includes the building of the Beit Ummar Bypass Road (currently under construction), similarly aids the suburbanization of the settlement of Kiryat Arba and the settlement in Hebron by providing easier access to Jerusalem. In addition, the construction of the Huwara Bypass Road (also currently under construction) will aid the development of Nablus-area settlements, which are on track to largely encircle the Palestinian city deep in the West Bank.

**PRIORITIZATION OF THE SETTLER POPULATION IN THE WEST BANK AND THE ENTRENCHMENT OF SEGREGATION**

The ultimate vision of the road and transportation projects currently planned and underway in the West Bank involve entrenching the segregation between Israeli settlers and Palestinians. These infrastructure projects, of course, do not provide for “separate but equal” development but are rather guided primarily by the interests of the settler population and come at the expense of Palestinian development.



“The Apartheid Road,” where a wall separates Israeli and Palestinian traffic

15. Despite being located deeper in the West Bank than the other settlements mentioned, Ariel successfully suburbanized because of its proximity to Highway 5.

The construction of bypass roads, and the subsequent elimination of Palestinian traffic from areas that the Israeli government seeks to develop (such as the settlement of Maale Adumim), points to Israel's strong preference for segregated infrastructure. Examining the trends and impact of road development in the West Bank further makes clear that such construction fully prioritizes settler interests. When building roads for Palestinian traffic, Israeli authorities only consider how to connect different Palestinian villages and cities without limiting settler traffic or development; however, road quality, difficult topography, future development, and other similar considerations are not treated as important factors. This is in contrast to settler infrastructure development, for which the building of wide, modern highways is a top priority.

## **ADDITIONAL IMPACT ON PALESTINIAN COMMUNITIES**

The road and transportation infrastructure work that is currently underway and in planning will have a severe impact on Palestinian communities in the West Bank. In addition to the consequences described in the sections above, Israeli road construction in the West Bank serves as a means of blocking Palestinian urban growth. Because Palestinian cities and towns cannot expand beyond the Israeli roads that surround them, new Israeli roads, especially bypass roads, act as a buffer between Palestinian communities and the land that surrounds them, enclosing these communities and limiting their growth and expansion. Further, by cutting across and fragmenting Palestinian territory, Israeli roads in the West Bank prevent Palestinians from accessing their agricultural lands and from traveling directly between villages or from villages to urban centers.

The construction of roads puts further constraints on Palestinian development due to Israeli Military Order 1/96, which prevents construction within 75-120 meters of Israeli roads (the exact number of meters is determined by the type of road). This limitation further hinders planning and development in Palestinian communities, the stakes of which are high: the prohibition on building too close to a highway is one of the legal rationales Israeli authorities use in denying the village of Khan al-Ahmar approval for any master plan (and thus one of the reasons why the village faces demolitions and expulsion).

Additionally, significant private Palestinian land has been requisitioned or expropriated for the building of roads, and trees, fields, and agricultural structures have been destroyed or demolished for road construction.



Destruction of Palestinian land to enable construction of Highway 60

## CONCLUSION

While Israeli authorities justify many of the projects described in this document by claiming that they serve both the settler and the Palestinian populations in the West Bank, it is important to note that these roads are designed with Israeli, not Palestinian, interests in mind. Many of the roads that are technically open to Palestinian traffic are not intended to lead to locations that are useful to Palestinians.<sup>16</sup> Instead, these roads are primarily designed to connect settlements to Israel proper (and thus employment and other services) via lateral roads, rather than to connect Palestinian communities to one another. Further, roads intended to connect Israeli settlements to Jerusalem (many of which are currently under construction) do not serve West Bank Palestinians outside of Jerusalem, as they are not allowed to enter Jerusalem without a permit.<sup>17</sup> In addition, an [extensive system of checkpoints and roadblocks](#) allows Israel to control access to bypass roads and the main West Bank highways, and it can restrict Palestinian access when it so chooses.

This prejudice against Palestinian development is even starker when one considers that, according to [an official Israeli projection](#), the expected Palestinian population in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) in 2040 is 4,600,000 individuals. Even if the vision of settler leaders to arrive at 1,000,000 settlers is realized by 2040, the Palestinian population would still be four times the size of the settler one. Despite this discrepancy, priority is still given to settler infrastructure development.

West Bank road and transportation development creates facts on the ground that constitute a significant entrenchment of the *de facto* annexation already taking place in the West Bank and will enable massive settlement growth in the years to come. By strengthening Israel's hold on West Bank territory, aiding settlement growth, and fragmenting Palestinian land, this infrastructure growth poses a significant barrier to ending the occupation and achieving an equitable and peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

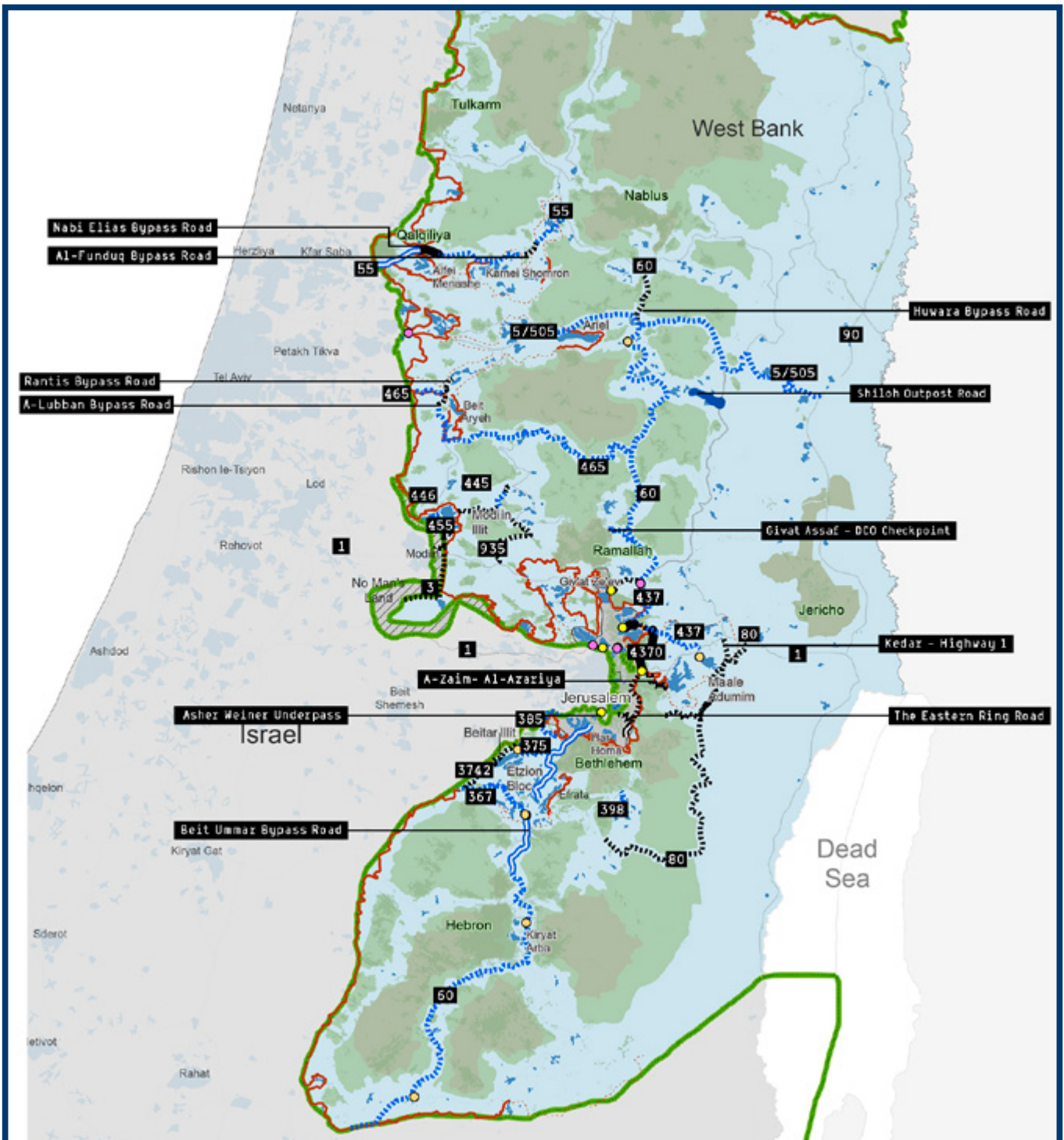
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16. Although Israeli authorities might claim that building roads to serve Palestinians is under the purview of the Palestinian Authority, in reality, the Palestinian Authority only has planning and building authority in Areas A and B, and proper highways that would serve Palestinian development would necessarily need to run through Area C, where the PA has no authority. Judging from the projects that Israel has chosen to advance, it is clear that the government not only does not advance projects that would aid Palestinian traffic but rather advances ones that fragment Palestinian territory and further entrench the isolation of Palestinian cities and towns in Areas A and B.

17. Further, even if Palestinians have entry permits, they are not allowed to enter Israel from these roads.

# ANNEX A

## WEST BANK ROAD AND TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN PLANNING OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION



## MAIN WEST BANK LATERAL CORRIDORS

### 1. Trans-Samaria Highway (Highway 5 / Highway 505)

There are plans to double the width of Highway 5 / 505 from two lanes to four lanes from the settlement of Ariel until Highway 90, which runs through the Jordan Valley, thus directly connecting the Jordan Valley to Tel Aviv.<sup>18</sup>

— Status: Planning is in progress

#### Public Transportation Lane from Shaar Shomron Interchange to Tel Aviv

A new public transportation lane is planned to help connect settlements along Highway 5 to Tel Aviv. This lane begins at a “park and ride” lot, which was completed in 2013, at the Shaar Shomron Interchange. This means that settlers will be able to park near public transportation that runs to Tel Aviv and travel into the city via the new public transportation lane.

— Status: Planning is in progress



### 2. Highway 55

There are plans to double the width of Highway 55 from two lanes to four lanes from the Jit Junction (east of the settlement of Kedumim) to Highway 444 inside Israel proper. With the building of this highway, significant settlement growth is expected in Ginot Shomron, Karnei Shomron, Maale Shomron, Shavei Shomron, Tzofim, and Alfei Menashe. To the best of public knowledge, over 1,600 housing units are set to be built in these settlements, which are now in different stages of planning. This road will also aid future expansion in the settlement of Kedumim and other settlements around Nablus.

— Status: Planning is in progress

18. The portion of the highway from the Green Line until the settlement of Ariel has already been doubled in width from two lanes to four lanes. Further, in 2018, Israeli officials stated that a feasibility study had been completed regarding the possibility of connecting the settlement of Ariel to the Tel Aviv area via light rail. The study concluded that there was no economic justification for doing so. However, in crafting its settlement policies, the Israeli government has consistently demonstrated that economic considerations are not necessarily dominant, and strategic and ideological factors are given significant weight as well. Therefore, although a light rail line to Ariel seems unlikely in the near future, it cannot be fully dismissed as a possibility.

### **Nabi Elias Bypass Road**

As part of the widening of Highway 55, a new section of the road was built to allow settlers to bypass the Palestinian village of Nabi Elias.

— Status: Work completed and road opened in January 2018

### **Al-Funduq Bypass Road**

An additional component of the widening of Highway 55 includes plans to build a new section of the highway south of the Palestinian village of Al-Funduq in order to allow settlers to bypass the village.

— Status: Planning is in progress



### **3. Highway 465 — Highway 60 to Rantis Checkpoint**

There are plans to double the width of Highway 465 from two lanes to four lanes from the point at which it intersects Highway 60 until the Rantis Checkpoint. This will help aid settlement growth for all of the settlements running east-west to the north of Ramallah (from the settlements of Beit Aryeh-Ofarim in the west to the settlements of Ateret and Halamish in the center of the West Bank).

— Status: Planning is in progress; awaits government approval in order to be deposited for public review for objections<sup>19</sup>

### **A-Lubban al-Gharbi and Rantis Bypass Roads**

There are plans to build a new bypass road around the Palestinian village of a-Lubban al-Gharbi from a point near the Israeli settlements of Beit Aryeh-Ofarim to the Rantis Checkpoint. In addition, given expected population growth in the settlements of Pedu'el and Leshem, a new road will be built in order to avoid the steepness and curves of Nahal Shiloh, creating a new straighter road that will allow for increased and faster traffic.

— Status: Planning is in progress for both roads

19. Annex B lists the stages of the road approval and construction process in more detail.



## "GREATER JERUSALEM" AREA – SOUTH

### 4. Road 60 from the Settlement of Gilo to the Settlement of Kiryat Arba

#### Widening Road 60 from the Settlement of Gilo to the Gush Etzion Junction

Widening this road, from two lanes to four, will double the entrance capacity of settlers to Jerusalem from the south and will increase traffic capacity in the Gush Etzion settlement bloc. This follows the construction between 2013 and 2015 of the southern part of Begin Road, which connects Malcha (the then-southernmost part of Begin Road) to the Gilo Junction on Road 60, [cutting through the Palestinian village of Beit Safafa](#).<sup>20</sup> The current work to double the lanes of the highway will further enable the growth of these settlements, including in [the E2 area \(a-Nahla\)](#), which was added to the jurisdiction of the Efrat settlement. This site is where, towards the end of his term, former Minister of Defense Naftali Bennett advanced planning for an [additional 7,000 housing units](#). This road will also serve settlement growth in Beitar Illit.

— Status: Work is in progress

#### Beit Ummar Bypass Road

Construction is underway on a road running from the Gush Etzion Junction to the settlement of Carmei Tzur, which will replace a section of the old Highway 60 and will allow settlers to bypass the Palestinian town of Beit Ummar and the al-Aroub refugee camp.

— Status: Work is in progress

20. The purpose of Begin Road is to connect settlements north of Jerusalem to settlements south of Jerusalem. The initial section was completed in 1998, and the project in its entirety was completed in 2017 with the connection of Malcha to the Gilo Junction, which thus connected Highway 443 and Highway 60.

### **Widening Highway 60 from the Gush Etzion Junction to the Settlement of Kiryat Arba**

In addition to work that is already underway to widen Highway 60 until the Gush Etzion Junction and the changes in Highway 60 through the building of the Beit Ummar Bypass Road, there are additional plans to double the width of the rest of the highway (from two lanes to four) from south of the Beit Ummar Bypass Road to the settlement of Kiryat Arba.<sup>21</sup> This will aid the suburbanization of the settlements of Kiryat Arba and Carmei Tzur and help increase their populations.

— Status: Planning is in progress

### **“Park and Ride” Lot and Public Transportation Terminal at the Gush Etzion Junction**

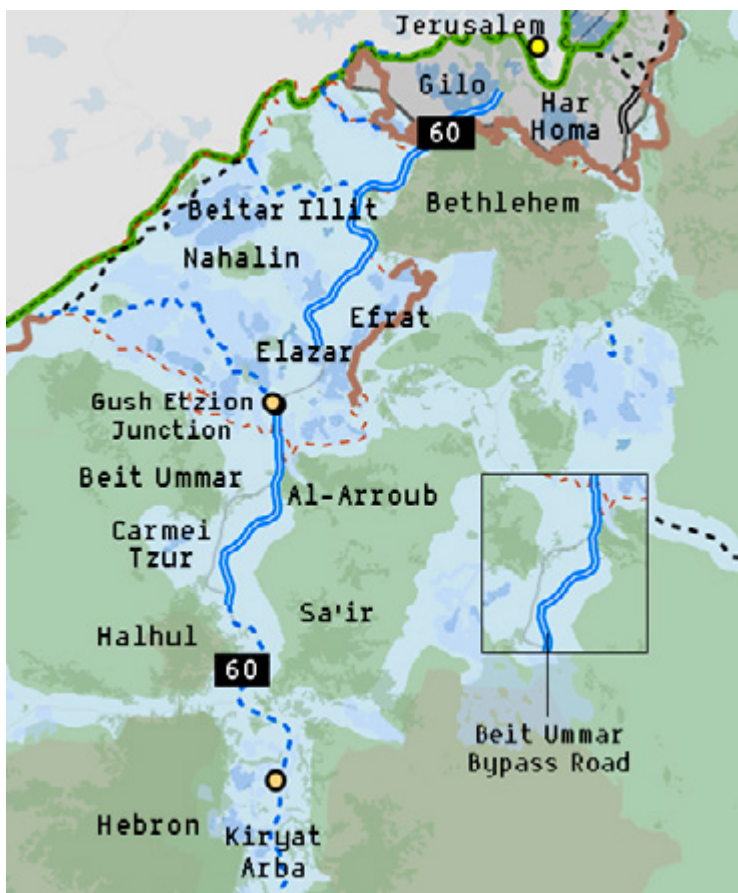
There are plans to build a “park and ride” lot next to a new public transportation terminal at the Gush Etzion Junction to serve the settlers in the area.

— Status: Planning has been completed; awaiting a budget to begin work

### **Public Transportation Terminal in the Settlement of Kiryat Arba**

There are plans to build a new public transportation terminal in the settlement of Kiryat Arba to serve the settlers in the area.

— Status: Planning has been completed; awaiting a budget to begin work

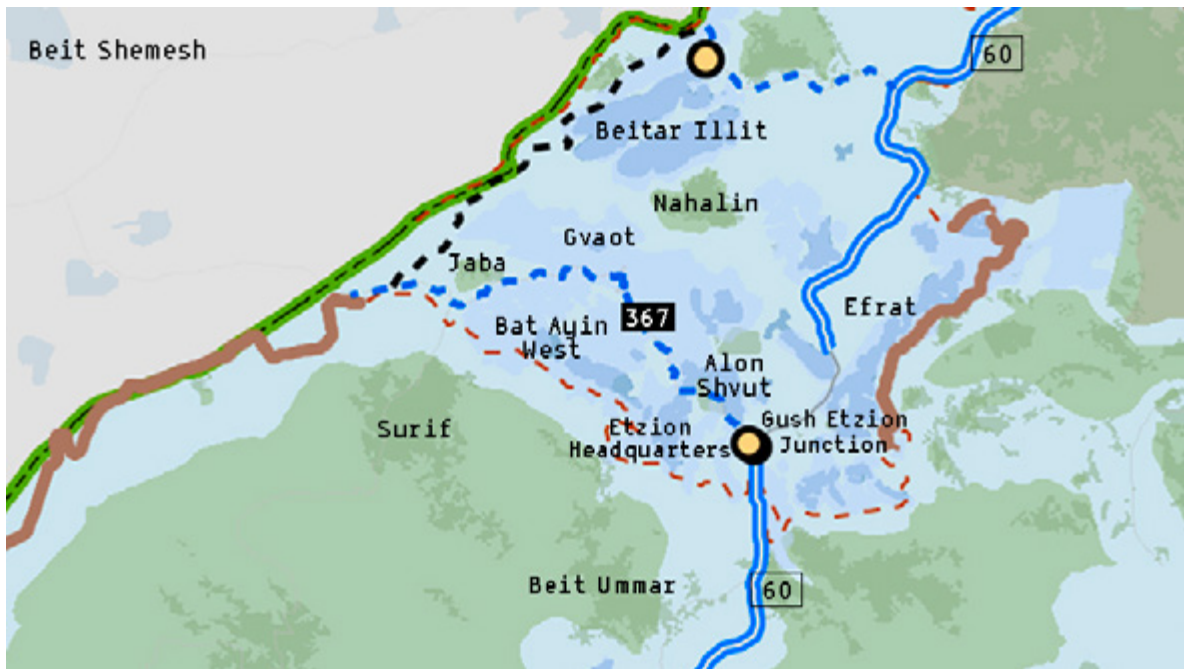


21. In the portion of the road from Gilo until the Tunnels Checkpoint, there will be five lanes. The traffic direction of the fifth lane will change according to rush hour and the needs of settler commuters (meaning that it will be in the direction of Jerusalem in the morning and in the direction of the Gush Etzion settlements in the evening).

## 5. Highway 367 — Gush Etzion Junction to Jaba

There are plans to widen Highway 367 from two lanes to four from the Gush Etzion Junction on Highway 60 westwards to the Green Line and the Jaba Checkpoint, aiding traffic from the Gush Etzion settlements into Israel proper. The highway holds particular importance given plans for the construction of 12,200 new housing units in the surrounding settlements of Gvaot and [Bat Ayin West](#), as well as on the site of Etzion regional brigade headquarters (where there are plans to relocate the headquarters and assign the land to settlements).

— Status: Planning is in progress



## 6. Highway 375 — Highway 60 to Tzur Hadassa (Hussan Bypass)

There are plans to widen Highway 375 between Highway 60 and Tzur Hadassah from two lanes to four. This highway serves as the central road connecting the settlement of Beitar Illit (where there are plans to add over 2,000 new housing units) to Jerusalem. The road also serves as an additional entrance into south Jerusalem for Tzur Hadassah (a community in Israel proper), where there are [plans to double](#) the number of housing units. In order to make use of this entrance, the road requires residents of Tzur Hadassah to travel via the West Bank to enter Jerusalem.

— Status: Planning for implementation was completed in November 2019

### Public Transportation Terminal in the Settlement of Beitar Illit

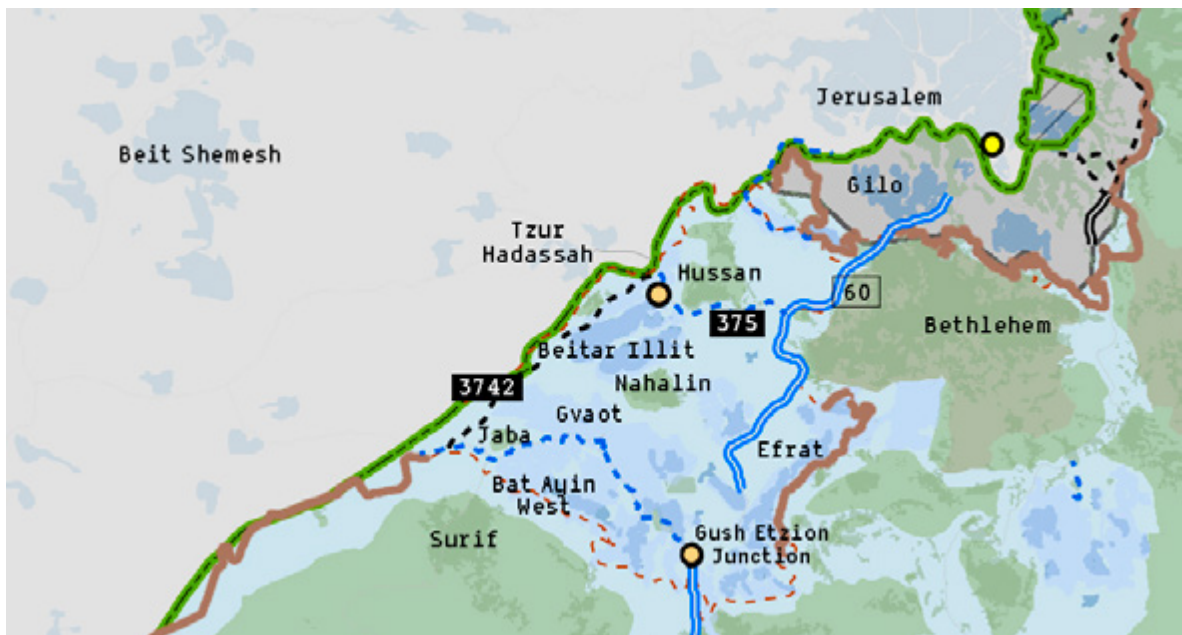
There are plans to build a new public transportation terminal in the settlement of Beitar Illit.

— Status: Planning is in progress

## 7. Highway 3742 — the Settlement of Gvaot to the Settlement of Beitar Illit

There are plans to build a new two-lane highway, which will connect Road 367 next to the settlement of Gvaot to the settlement of Beitar Illit. The road will also serve residents of the planned expansion of Tzur Hadassah when traveling south to the Gush Etzion Junction and Hebron. The road will also allow travel northwards for residents of the thousands of new housing units being planned in the settlement of Gvaot. The construction of this road will cut off the Palestinian village of Nahalin from the southwest and will continue to suffocate the Palestinian village of Wadi Fukin.

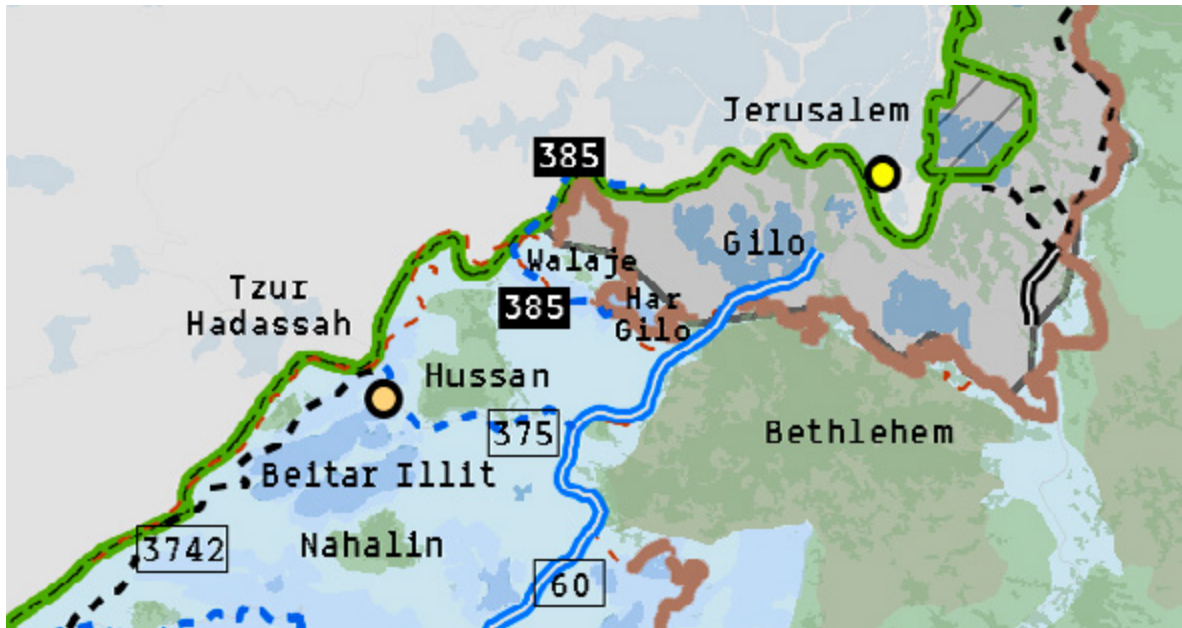
— Status: Planning is in progress; approved by the Civil Administration’s Subcommittee on Road Development to be deposited for public review for objections in November 2020



## 8. Highway 385 (Walaje Bypass Road)

In the 1990s, military confiscation orders were used to take over land belonging to the Palestinian village of Walaje in order to construct the Walaje Bypass Road, which was completed soon after and allows settlers to circumvent the village in order to enter directly into Jerusalem. There are now [plans to add about 1,000 new housing units in the nearby settlement of Har Gilo](#) (which are also planned to be built on land belonging to Walaje), and which will mean that Walaje will be fully enclosed by the Separation Barrier and the settlement. In order to enable these plans in Har Gilo, a process is in place for the Walaje Bypass Road to receive statutory status, rather than the security status it had under military confiscation orders.

— Status: Planning is in progress; deposited for public review for objections in October 2020



### 9. "Park and Ride" Lot in the Settlement of Gilo

There are plans to build a 1,000-space "park and ride" parking lot in the settlement of Gilo in order to serve settlers entering Jerusalem from the Gush Etzion settlement bloc or other settlements south of Jerusalem.

— Status: Planning is in progress

## "GREATER JERUSALEM" AREA – EAST

### 10. The Eastern Ring Road

#### Highway 4370: The Northern Part of the Eastern Ring Road

This section of the Eastern Ring Road connects the area near the Palestinian village of Anata to the area near the settlement of Maale Adumim. Because the road has one side for Israeli drivers and one side for Palestinian drivers, with a wall separating the lanes, it has been termed "[the Apartheid Road](#)."

— Status: Status: Work completed a decade ago; opened to traffic in January 2019

#### The American Road: The Southern Part of the Eastern Ring Road

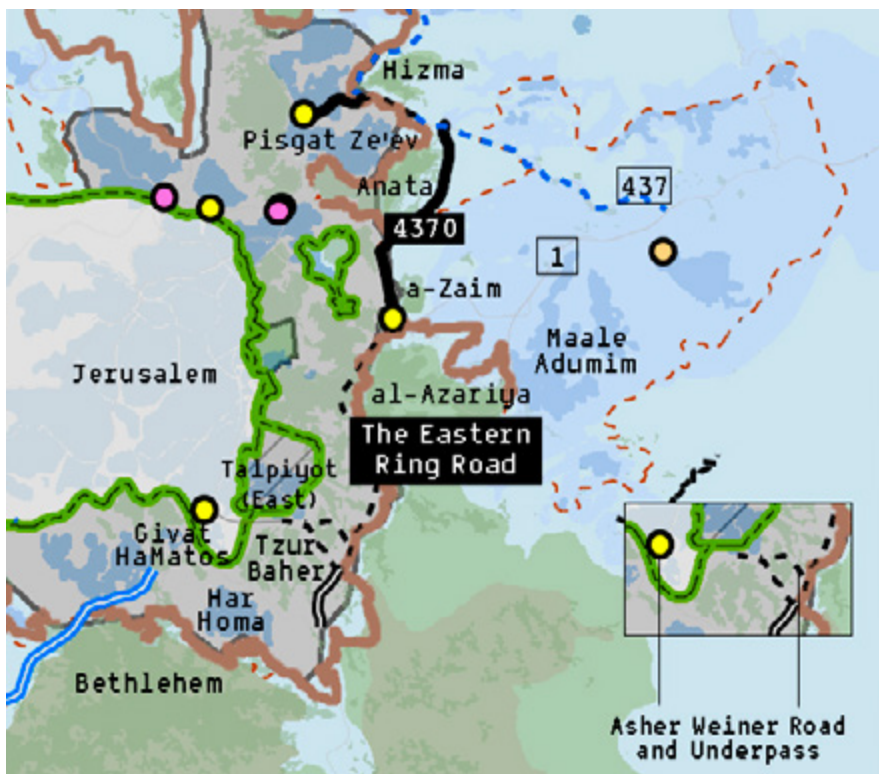
This southern part of the Eastern Ring Road is intended to run from the area of the Har Homa settlement to the area of the Maale Adumim settlement and would allow for travel from the southern settlements of the West Bank to north of Jerusalem without having to enter congested Jerusalem traffic. This would allow settlers from the Maale Adumim area to travel south (whether to settlements in the south or to the southern entrance of Jerusalem) without encountering the traffic of Jerusalem's city center.

— Status: Status: Work on the section from the area of the Har Homa settlement to Sheikh Said Junction is in progress; work on the section from the Sheikh Said Junction to the area of the Maale Adumim settlement is in planning

## 11. Asher Weiner Road and Underpass

This road will connect the Eastern Ring Road to southern Jerusalem, allowing settler traffic from southeast Gush Etzion to bypass the busy area near the settlement of Har Homa and the Tunnels Checkpoint (where congestion is expected to increase due to the plans for massive settlement expansion in Givat HaMatos, Har Homa, and Gush Etzion). This will further facilitate settlement expansion in southeast Gush Etzion, including [3,750 housing units in Maale Amos](#). The road will also serve settlers traveling from the area of the Maale Adumim settlement to southern Jerusalem by allowing them to avoid the congestion of the French Hill Junction.

— Status: Building is in progress



## 12. French Hill Underpass

A new underpass is being built under the [French Hill Junction](#) to allow traffic from the settlement of Maale Adumim to avoid congestion when entering Jerusalem. Together with the Ramat Shlomo Overpass, described below, this project will allow settlers from the settlement of Maale Adumim to travel straight to Begin Road, a central corridor in Jerusalem, without encountering the congestion caused by local roads and traffic lights.

— Status: Building is in progress

### “Park and Ride” Lot in the French Hill Settlement

Construction is currently underway to build a 1,000-space parking lot directly next to the light rail station in the French Hill settlement, allowing settlers to drive to the northern edge of Jerusalem without encountering traffic congestion, park their cars, and then take public transit into the Jerusalem city center.

— Status: Building is in progress

### 13. Ramat Shlomo Overpass

An overpass was built at the entrance to the settlement of Ramat Shlomo in order to reduce traffic congestion and allow easier access for settlers from the area to Begin Road in Jerusalem and the French Hill Junction. In addition, a new road, Road 22, is being built to connect the Ramat Shlomo Overpass to the ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods in West Jerusalem. This construction will aid the planned building of hundreds of new housing units in Ramat Shlomo.

— Status: Work completed and opened to traffic in 2020

### 14. "Park and Ride" Lot and Public Transportation Terminal in the Settlement of Ramot

Construction is currently underway to build an approximately 2,275-space parking lot and public transportation terminal where Highway 1 meets Begin Road in order to serve settlers from Ramot and Maale Adumim (as well as individuals from areas inside Israel proper) entering Jerusalem from the north and east.

— Status: Building is in progress



### 15. A-Zaim — Al-Azariya Fabric of Life Road (Bennett's "Sovereignty Road")

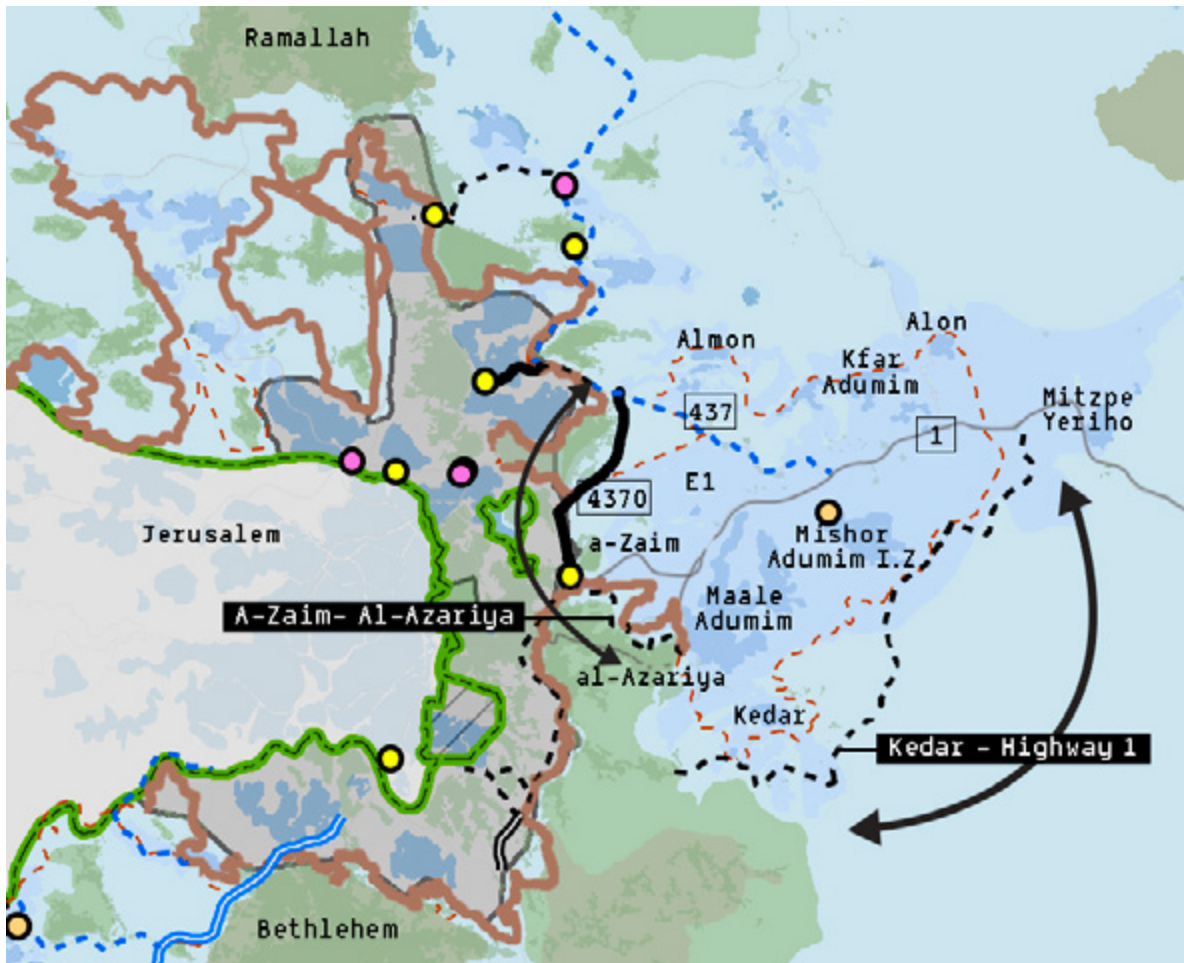
This road, a new "fabric of life" road (meaning a road designed to connect Palestinian population centers in order to keep Palestinians off of roads designed for settler use) west of the settlement of Maale Adumim, is intended to connect the Palestinian villages of al-Azariya and a-Zaim, where the road will then connect to the Apartheid Road, thus diverting Palestinian traffic from E1. Because this road will help close off the Maale Adumim area to Palestinians, former Minister of Defense Naftali Bennett has termed it "the sovereignty road," referencing the role of this road in advancing possible annexation of the area while allowing Israel to continue to claim that it allows Palestinian transportation contiguity.

— Status: Declared intention to proceed, requisition orders since 2007

### 16. Kedar — Highway 1 Fabric of Life Road

This road is a fabric of life road which is intended to divert Palestinian traffic eastwards and away from the areas around the settlements of Maale Adumim and Kedar (areas where Israel aspires to implement the permit regime). This means that Palestinians entering the West Bank at the Allenby Crossing and those traveling from the Jericho area to reach the southern West Bank will not drive through the area of the Maale Adumim settlement, thus aiding the objective of keeping Palestinian traffic out of the E1 area.

— Status: Planning is in progress



### 17. "Park and Ride" Lot in the Settlement of Har Homa

There are plans to build a 600-space "park and ride" lot in the settlement of Har Homa in order to serve settlers entering Jerusalem from settlements southeast of the city.

— Status: Planning is in progress

### **18. Highway 45**

There are plans to build a new section of Highway 45 from Highway 60 near the settlement of Kochav Yaakov until the planned underpass beneath the Qalandia Checkpoint (described below). This road will allow settler traffic from the north of Jerusalem (from settlements such as Beit El, Ofra, Eli, Shiloh, and others) to bypass the Hizma Checkpoint, avoiding traffic near the Palestinian village of Jaba and entering Jerusalem directly to North Begin Road.<sup>22</sup> The road will also allow for a faster route from the settlements in the north of Jerusalem and the Maale Adumim settlement area to Tel Aviv and the center of the country via Highway 443.

— Status: Deposited for public review for objections, October 2020

### **19. Qalandia Underpass**

A major road in the advanced stages of planning will connect the Ramallah Bypass Road and the new section of Highway 45 to Highway 443. A section of this road is an underpass beneath the Qalandia Checkpoint, which will mean that settlers will no longer have to go through the Hizma Checkpoint and through Jerusalem in order to access Highway 443 (and thus the Modiin-Tel Aviv area).

— Status: Deposited for public review for objections, October 2020

### **20. Adam Interchange**

An interchange was completed in 2019 at the junction between the Palestinian village of Jaba and the settlement of Adam. This junction receives significant traffic, both from Palestinians traveling between the north and south West Bank and from settlers driving on the Ramallah Bypass Road. The new interchange directs Palestinian traffic towards Ramallah, while allowing settler traffic to continue uninterrupted towards settlements north of Jerusalem.

— Status: Completed in 2019

### **21. Highway 437: Highway 1 (Near the Settlement Industrial Zone in Mishor Adumim) — Settlement of Adam**

There are plans to widen the road connecting the area near the settlement industrial zone in Mishor Adumim to the settlement of Adam to four lanes. The section of the road from the Hizma Checkpoint to the settlement of Adam will have an additional two public transportation lanes. Further, a new section of the road will be built to bypass the small part of the Palestinian village of Hizma that it currently runs through, thus necessitating adjusting the route of the Separation Barrier.

— Status: the section of the road from the settlement of Adam to the Hizma Checkpoint was deposited for public review for objections in 2020; planning is in progress for the section of the road from near the settlement industrial zone in Mishor Adumim until the Hizma Checkpoint

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22. A new checkpoint will also need to be built on this road in order to prevent Palestinian traffic from entering Jerusalem via this route.

## 22. Public Transportation Lane and Interchange in the Settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev

A new public transportation lane, which begins at the Hizma Checkpoint and runs until Moshe Dayan Road in Jerusalem, was completed in 2020. In addition, in 2021, work will begin to build an interchange where the public transportation lane ends, which will allow settler traffic coming from the east to avoid the traffic lights associated with the light rail on Moshe Dayan Road. This will make it easier for settler buses to enter Jerusalem without encountering the city's traffic congestion.

— Status: Public transportation lane has been completed; planning for implementation of the interchange has been completed, and construction is expected to begin soon

## 23. "Park and Ride" Lot and Public Transportation Terminal in the Settlement Industrial Zone in Shaar Binyamin

There are plans to build a "park and ride" lot and public transportation terminal in the settlement industrial zone in Shaar Binyamin. This means that settlers traveling from settlements north of Jerusalem into the city can drive to the parking lot outside of Jerusalem, park their cars, and then board a bus to the center of Jerusalem, traveling into the city in the public transportation lane that runs between the settlement of Adam to the Hizma Checkpoint, continuing via the public transportation lane from the Hizma Checkpoint to Moshe Dayan Road in Jerusalem, and further avoiding traffic due to the interchange in the settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev.

— Status: Construction is in progress



**24. Highway 935: Settlement of Dolev – Highway 443**

A new road, Highway 935, is being planned which will connect the settlement of Dolev and its surrounding settlements to Highway 443. Because 443 is a major highway connecting Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, easier access to that road rapidly aids the suburbanization of this bloc of settlements. This is especially true for Nahliel, an ultra-Orthodox settlement north of Dolev, because, as discussed above, ultra-Orthodox settlements flourish when they function as suburbs of ultra-Orthodox centers, and Highway 935 will provide the settlement of Dolev with easier access to Jerusalem. This new road thus paves the way for a significant boon to the settler population in the area. As Adi Mintz, the former Director General of the Yesha Council and a current board member, stated about Highway 935 [during a hearing](#) of the Knesset Subcommittee on Civil and Security Affairs in Judea and Samaria on February 4, 2018, "Although today there are only 10,000 residents in the area of western Binyamin, the potential of the area is for about 100,000. That means that there is land potential; there is potential to establish an ultra-Orthodox town in Nahliel, and in the towns of Dolev and Talmonim, with the potential for very significant development. All of that has been stopped because of the problem of transportation." Although settler leaders are putting significant pressure on government officials to advance this road, it is less likely to be built than others listed in this document because of the challenging topography in the area and the fact that Highway 445, described below, serves some of the functions that Highway 935 would serve but is located in a less challenging terrain.

— Status: Planning is in progress



### 25. Light Rail Lines

#### **Red Line**

There are plans to extend the red line of the Jerusalem light rail, which currently terminates in the settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev, to the settlement of Neve Yaakov. This is in conjunction with plans to expand Neve Yaakov into the West Bank and add an additional 1,400 housing units as part of a plan for the western part of the settlement of Adam, which is adjacent to Neve Yaakov.

— Status: Construction is in progress

#### **Green Line**

The new green line of the light rail will connect the settlement of Gilo in south Jerusalem to the Hebrew University and Mount Scopus.

— Status: Construction is in progress

#### **Blue Line**

The new blue line will connect the settlement of Gilo in south Jerusalem to the settlement of Ramot in north Jerusalem.

— Status: Construction permit has been approved, and construction is expected to begin in 2021

### 26. Connecting Settlements Surrounding Jerusalem to the Jerusalem Light Rail

A feasibility study is currently underway examining the possibility of connecting the settlements of Maale Adumim, Givat Ze'ev, Shaar Binyamin, and those in the Gush Etzion bloc to Jerusalem via the expansion of the light rail system. The same possibility is being explored for the community of Tzur Hadassah (which is inside Israel proper), also allowing settlers from Beitar Illit, to which Tzur Hadassah is adjacent, to travel to Jerusalem via the Tzur Hadassah light rail.

— Status: Preliminary feasibility study is in progress

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23. The map below comes from a [presentation](#) by former Minister of Transportation Yisrael Katz.



## MODIIN ILLIT

### **27. Highway 446: Shilat Junction — Settlement of Modiin Illit**

The current entrance and exit to Modiin Illit, the largest Israeli settlement with a population of over 75,000 and where there are plans for [4,500 new housing units](#), is located in the west of the settlement and connects to Highway 446. There are plans to widen the width of Highway 446 from two lanes to six lanes (two of which will be public transportation lanes) from the settlement until Shilat Junction. Highway 446 meets Highway 443 at this junction, meaning that doubling Highway 446 also speeds up travel from Modiin Illit to both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

— Status: Planning is in progress

### **28. Road 455: Eastern Entrance to the Settlement of Modiin Illit**

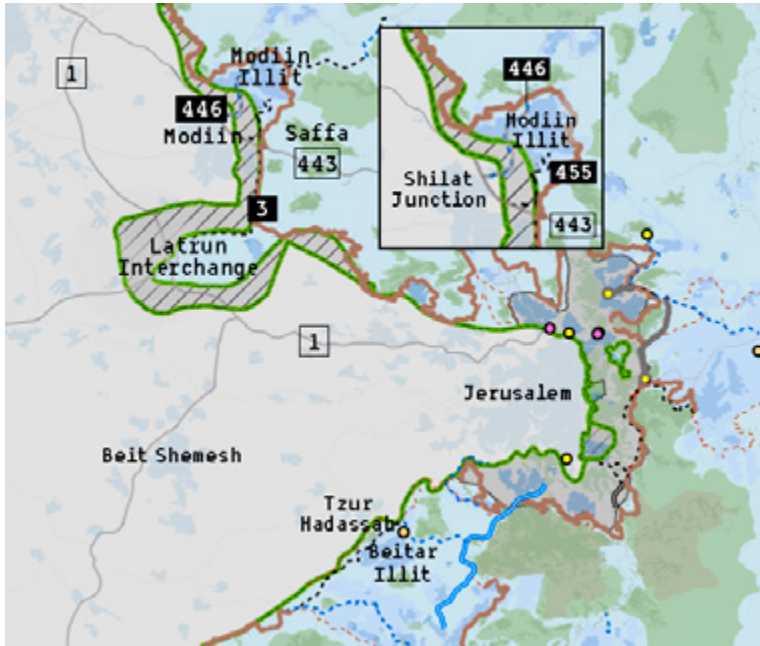
There are plans to build a new road, Road 455, which will form a new entrance and exit to the settlement of Modiin Illit, on its eastern side. The road from this exit will circumvent Kfar Rut along the length of the Separation Barrier and will connect directly to Highway 443. This will thus reduce traffic congestion from the main exit from Modiin Illit and from Highway 446 and will connect directly to Highway 3 towards Latrun and Beit Shemesh, another ultra-Orthodox center.

— Status: Planning is in progress

### **29. Highway 3: Highway 443 — Latrun Interchange**

There are plans to build a new road connecting Highway 443 to Highway 1 at Latrun Interchange (partially using the already built road of the old Highway 3). By providing access to Highway 1, this new road will connect the settlement of Modiin Illit to the ultra-Orthodox center of Beit Shemesh (a community inside of Israel proper), where significant further expansion is planned. Together with the planned development of Highway 39 within Israel proper that will connect Beit Shemesh and Tzur Hadassah (adjacent to the settlement of Beitar Illit), these roads will form an “ultra-Orthodox corridor” from the settlement of Modiin Illit to the settlement of Beitar Illit via Beit Shemesh.

— Status: Planning is in progress



## LOCAL ROADS

### 30. Highway 445: Talmonim Settlement Bloc — Settlement of Modiin Illit

This new road, Highway 445, will serve as a western exit of the Talmonim settlement bloc and will connect these settlements to Highway 446 and Highway 443 via the settlement of Modiin Illit. This road will help increase the settler population in the Talmonim bloc by providing easier access to Tel Aviv, as well as easier access to the ultra-Orthodox centers of Bnei Brak and the settlement of Modiin Illit for ultra-Orthodox settlers in Nahliel. Nahliel will also be served by Highway 935, discussed above, which will connect the settlement to Jerusalem, meaning that settlers in Nahliel will have direct roads to the main ultra-Orthodox centers in the country, significantly aiding the settlement's growth.

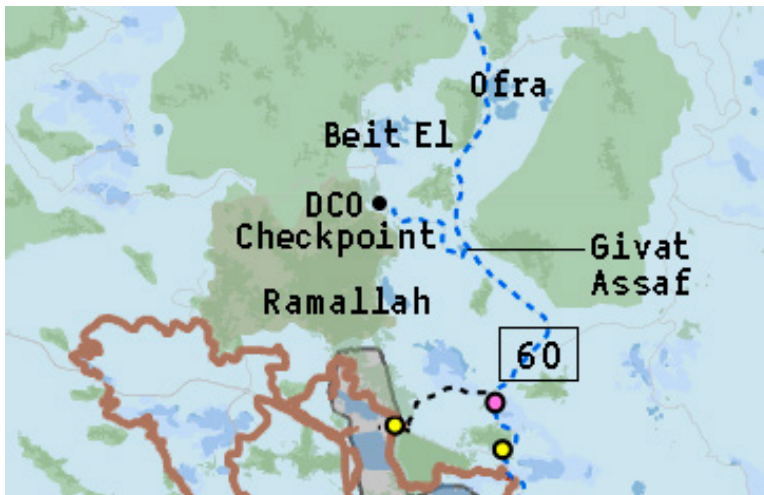
— Status: Settlers have already illegally begun construction on the exit and the road connecting it to the nearby Highway 463; planning is now in progress for the entire road, which is expected to include retroactive legalization of the section that has already been built



### 31. Givat Assaf Junction — Settlement of Beit El

There are plans to widen, from two lanes to four, the road that connects Givat Assaf Junction on Highway 60 to the settlement of Beit El and the DCO Checkpoint at the entrance to Ramallah. This will aid traffic from Beit El and the DCO Checkpoint onto Highway 60.

— Status: Planning is in progress



### 32. Entrance to the Settlements of Nokdim and Kfar Eldad

There are plans to renovate the road at the entrance to the settlements of Nokdim and Kfar Eldad by bypassing the Palestinian village of al-Fureids, through which the current road passes. The road work will also include widening the road to increase the number of lanes. The construction of this road will serve the current [advanced plans for 600 new housing units in the settlement of Kfar Eldad and the master plan for 3,500 housing units in the settlement of Nokdim](#), which the Gush Etzion Regional Council is currently advancing.

— Status: Planning has been completed



### 33. Huwara Bypass Road

[This road will run from the Tapuah Junction to the Yitzhar Junction](#) and will help to increase the population of settlements deep in the West Bank around the Palestinian city of Nablus. In October 2020 alone, plans for 775 housing units (constituting a planned growth of about 50%) were advanced for the settlements Yitzhar, Itamar, Elon Moreh, and Har Bracha, all of which will be aided by the building of the new bypass road.

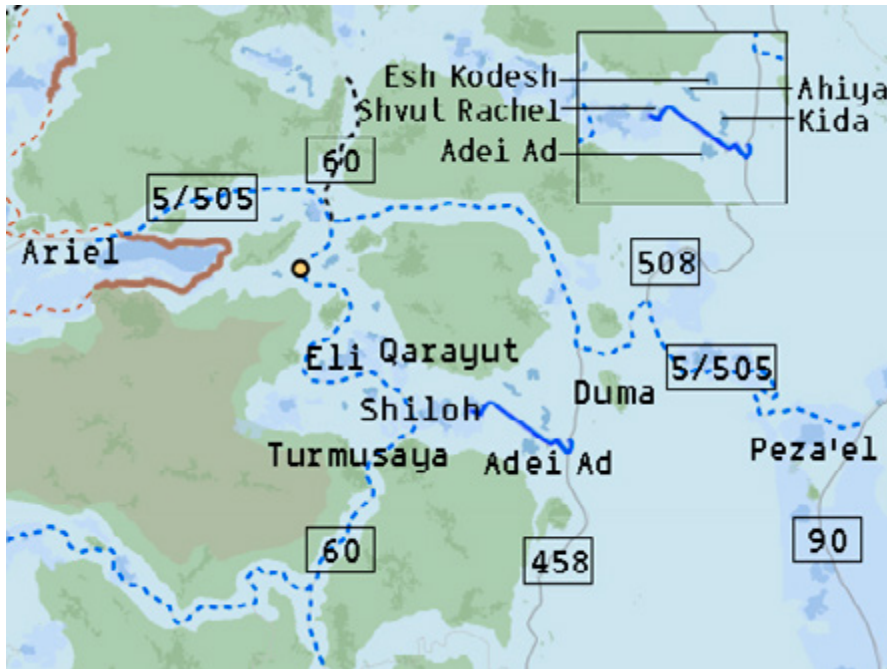
— Status: A tender has been published



#### 34. Shiloh Outpost Road: Outpost of Shvut Rachel — the Alon Road

This road runs from the settlement of Shiloh to the Alon Road and connects the surrounding outposts to each other. Significant renovations were done on this road, aiding the fragmentation of the West Bank in the area by connecting the Alon Road to Highway 60 near the settlement of Shiloh.

— Status: Work completed in 2020



### MAIN LONGITUDINAL CORRIDORS IN THE WEST BANK

#### 35. Highway 60 — Meitar to Tapuah Junction

Highway 60 is the main north-south corridor in the West Bank, which connects most Palestinian cities, including Jenin, Nablus, and Ramallah, and is essential for Palestinian movement in the West Bank. Highway 60 is also a central highway for Israeli settlers.

Because of the centrality of Highway 60 for Palestinian traffic, it will be necessary to widen the road in the coming decades in order to accommodate projected Palestinian demographic growth. Preliminary planning work on a holistic upgrade of Highway 60 is now in process. This includes doubling the width of the road from two lanes to four from the Meitar Checkpoint in the south of the West Bank to Tapuah Junction south of Nablus. However, despite the necessity of the highway for Palestinian traffic, the subsection of the highway that serves some of the biggest Israeli settlements, including those in the Gush Etzion bloc, has been prioritized, and construction on the section of the highway from Jerusalem to the settlement of Kiryat Arba has already commenced (and is described above in the section of the appendix on the Jerusalem area).

— Status: Preliminary planning is in progress for the section of the highway from the Meitar Checkpoint to the settlement of Kiryat Arba and from the settlement of Adam to the Tapuah Junction

### Public Transportation Terminal in the Settlement Industrial Zone of Meitarim

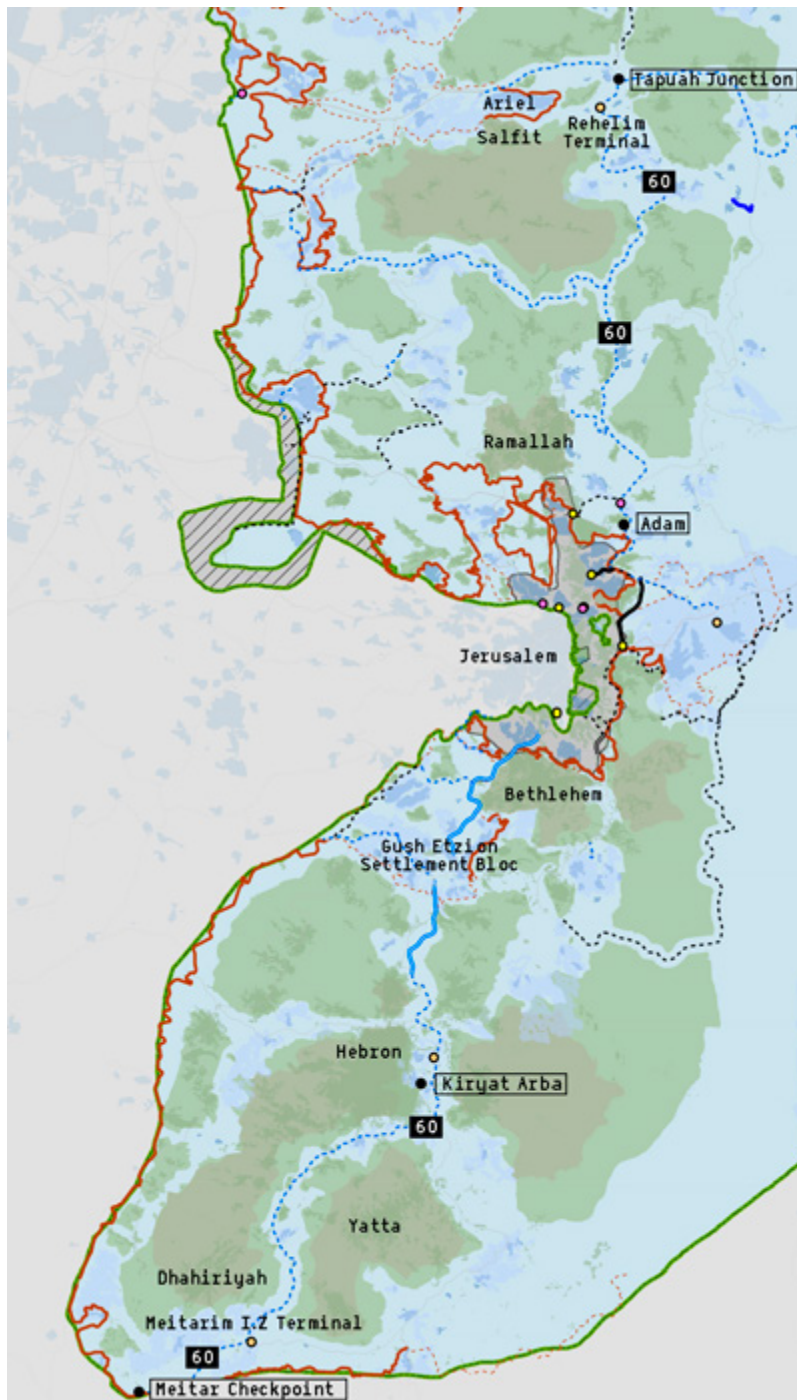
There is a new public transportation terminal in the settlement industrial zone of Meitarim, at the southern edge of the South Hebron Hills region, to serve the settler population in the area.

— Status: Construction has been completed

### Public Transportation Terminal in Rehelim

There is a new public transportation terminal in the settlement of Rehelim, near the intersection of Highway 60 and Highway 505, to serve the settler population in the area.

— Status: Planning is in progres



### 36. Highway 80

Highway 80, which has been planned since the early 1980s, is intended to form a southern extension of the Alon Road from the settlement of Kfar Adumim to the area near Arad (a town inside Israel proper). Current plans involve upgrading the Alon Road and extending it to a point parallel to the settlement of Maale Amos.

Settler leaders see particular value in the construction of Highway 80 and seek to develop it into an extensive longitudinal corridor, which would run east of the central mountain ridge and parallel to Highway 6 (the lateral corridor within Israel proper west of the central mountain ridge). Highway 80 thus serves as an alternate north-south route to Highway 6, which is especially relevant given the heavy traffic on Highway 6.

The lateral roads that run across the width of the West Bank interlock with Highway 6 and the planned Highway 80, which would (with the construction of Highway 80) create the shape of a grid or a ladder. The interconnection of these longitudinal roads with lateral roads will both significantly contribute to suburbanization of the settlements in those areas and will also fragment Palestinian land. Israel's vision for the grid-formation of roads in the West Bank is particularly relevant because it enables a fully integrated road system between Israel and the West Bank.

In addition, Highway 80 will act as a buffer enclosing the Jordan Valley, cutting it off from the central mountain ridge where the large Palestinian population centers are located. This highway would thus mark the border of where Israel could seek to annex the Jordan Valley, as described in Netanyahu's annexation pledge.

Although Highway 80 has been discussed in the Knesset's Subcommittee on Civil and Security Affairs in Judea and Samaria and is part of the 2045 master plan for roads in the West Bank that Transportation Minister Miri Regev recently released, the chance of Highway 80 being constructed in the short to medium-term is relatively low, as it is a tremendously expensive project that environmental groups would oppose because of the severe impact it would have on the Judean Desert. That being said, given the strategic importance which the State gives to Highway 80 and how central it is to Israel's vision for the area, it is possible that the road could be built.

— Status: Planning is in progress



## ANNEX B

# THE PROCESS OF APPROVING AND IMPLEMENTING ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN THE WEST BANK

### **Phase 1: Planning Approval**

Every road in the West Bank requires a statutory plan that is approved by the Higher Planning Council of the Civil Administration. The planning process is similar to that for building construction. These stages are:

1. Preparation of the plan (usually by the Ministry of Transportation)
2. Minister of Defense approval to discuss the plan
3. Higher Planning Council of the Civil Administration (the Roads Subcommittee)
  - a. Approval for deposit
  - b. Publication of deposit
  - c. Hearing of objections
  - d. Approval for validation
  - e. Publication of validation

Every step of the planning process should have approval from the Minister of Defense.

### **Phase 2: Planning for Implementation**

In order to begin construction of a given road, three main issues must be addressed:

**1. Allocation of budgets:** This can be done internally within the Ministry of Transportation without publication. Sometimes, especially for bigger projects, the government might decide to allocate specific budgets for the project.

**2. Preparation of detailed plans for implementation:** The Ministry of Transportation hires engineers (through tenders or from an approved list of engineers) to prepare the implementation plan (including details on the specific angles of the road, the types of materials required for paving, drainage, and more). These detailed plans are used by the contractors (chosen either through tenders or from an approved list of contractors).

**3. Expropriation:** The Head of the Civil Administration issues a confiscation order for the private lands that are detailed in the plan. Owners can apply for compensation.

**4. Construction Permit** The Higher Planning Council of the Civil Administration (the Roads Subcommittee) approves and issues a construction permit, confirming that the detailed implementation plan is in accordance with the statutory plan and meets environmental, safety, and other requirements.