**An-Najah National University**
**Faculty of Graduate Studies**

# Neighborhoods Strategic Planning: Directions for Future Development

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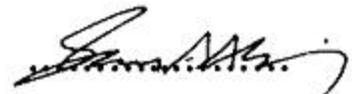
# DEDICATION

*Thanks to all those who supported me to achieve my work successfully.*

*I dedicate this humble work in particular to:*

*\*My beloved father and mother whose prayers and blessing spurred me to accomplish my work successfully.*

*\*My brother and sisters, may Allah bless them all.*

*\*My friends.*

*\*Everyone who helped and supported me.*

*\*To you all I dedicate my love and gratitude and the outcome of my work.*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*First of all, Praise and thanks to Allah who granted me the power to finish this work, and for all the great blessings and virtues that he bestowed on me and helped me to complete this work and continues to bestow on me.*

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*I am grateful to my lovely family.*

*Finally, thanks to Amaar Group which provided me with valuable information.*

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## الإقرار

أنا الموقعة أدناه مقدمة الرسالة التي تحمل العنوان:

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# Neighborhoods Strategic Planning: Directions for Future Development

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## Declaration

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**اسم الطالبة:**     **Student's name:**

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**التاريخ:**     **Date:**

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# List of Abbriviations

| BIM | Building Information Management System |
|------|----------------------------------------|
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology |
| JDECO | Jerusalem District Electricity Company |
| MOLG | Ministry of Local Government |
| MOT | Ministry of Transport |
| OLCC | Oak Lodge Community Council |
| PIF | Palestine Investment Fund |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats |
| SDIP | Strategic Development and Investment Planning |
| USA | United States of America |
| UAE | United Arab Emirates |
| WWTP | Wastewater Treatment Plant |

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# Abstract

This study aims to prepare an overall framework for neighborhood strategic planning. This study derives its significance from the importance of neighborhoods and the concept of strategic planning, and the lack of previous studies on strategic plans on neighborhood level in Palestine.

This research benefited from the international experiences by studying and analyzing the strategic planning processes for some neighborhoods in different countries and attempts to apply the general principles of the process to the case study of Al-Reehan Neighborhood after careful adaptation. Strategic analysis of the current conditions of the pilot case was made first, considering SWOT analysis approach. This aimed to identify the positive aspects (strengths and opportunities) and negative aspects (weaknesses and threats) facing the neighborhood through conducting brainstorming sessions with the residents. This analysis was made in order to formulate neighborhood's vision, mission, and strategic goals that focus on the residents priorities. The strategic framework also included suggested strategies and actions to achieve desired goals.

Based on the experience gained in the preparation of the neighborhood strategic planning for Al-Reehan Neighborhood with the

participation of the residents of the neighborhood, the study derived the general guidelines for the preparation of the neighborhood strategic planning in Palestine, including the steps, the procedures, as well as the tools.

The outcome of the strategic planning process for neighborhoods imply determining priorities and the main elements of any strategic plan, and include the vision, mission, goals, strategies, and actions, in addition to the preparation for implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and updating processes.

The output of this study would be of great importance to the related official institutions in order to adopt and to build on. It can be the basis for the required development on the neighborhood level in Palestine. Neighborhood's residents and other stakeholders should be engaged in the strategic planning process. Further studies should be done on spatial planning on all levels; national, regional, urban, as well as the neighborhoods level to choose the most appropriate locations considering the identified relevant issues.

# Chapter One

# Introduction

# Chapter One
# Introduction

## 1.1 General Background

Neighborhoods provide the foundation for a city's identity and stability. Across any country, changes in transportation, socio-economic development, and housing options have impacts at the neighborhood level. The changing characteristics of neighborhoods stimulate the future demand and the expectations of the development of the city (AMT, 2010).

The built environment in neighborhoods should be controlled. "The built environment" means buildings (houses, apartments, stores, offices, public buildings like schools, even industries, and so on), streetscapes (including sidewalks, landscaped strips, on-street parking, traffic and bicycle lanes, etc.), parks and playgrounds (Department of Planning and Zoning, 1998).

Neighborhood strategic planning is a new approach through which communities decide the future of the places where they live and work. This approach helps them to play a greater role in finding creative and imaginative ways to overcome the pressures that development can create and achieving their aspirations for the provision of local services and amenities. It could also help to ensure that development is in line with local needs, provides greater public amenity, and gives more certainty to developers (AMT, 2010).

Neighborhood strategic planning involves strategies that could evolve over time, and action plans which would, in general, benefit neighborhood residents, property owners, and the community at large. Neighborhood strategic planning can involve citizens and other stakeholders in a collaborative process to address relevant issues and establish future goals, objectives, and strategies (Carney, 2011).

Neighborhood strategic planning is essential for supporting economic growth, improving people's quality of life, and protecting the natural environment. It gives local people more ownership of the plans and policies that affect their local area. The intention is to empower local people to take a proactive role in shaping the future of the areas in which they live.

Neighborhood communities can produce their own plans, usually assisted by advisors in fields such as housing, public safety, and economic development. It is especially helpful for neighborhoods to be assisted by those who understand how neighborhood strategic planning can mobilize public involvement, leverage resources from local government and businesses, and establish community development guidelines (Planning and Zoning Department, 1998).

Strategic planning discusses issues that are affecting the community at large at different levels; national, regional, urban, and local levels. Strategic planning at the national level provides a framework for development and management at the other levels. Strategic planning for neighborhood must align and integrate with local planning frameworks.

Some initial considerations in the neighborhood strategic planning include:

- Who is sponsoring the planning effort?

- Is funding available? Are there outside sources to assist in strategic planning?

- How will public participation be maximized?

- How will different governmental agencies be engaged?

- What committees will be formed?

- What is the strategic planning process?

- How will the plan be adopted and used?

Neighborhood strategic planning can unify diverse community development activities such as in education, housing, economic development, and public safety through conditions assessments, long term vision, mission, goals, and strategies and achieve healthy and livable neighborhoods by:

- Maximizing opportunities for all citizens to have meaningful involvement in the decisions that affect their neighborhood.

- Maximizing compatibility between residential and non-residential uses.

- Ensuring neighborhood safety and quality of life.

- Developing safe, pleasing and efficient transportation networks.

- Preserving, protecting and enhancing neighborhood aesthetics, identity, and natural and historic resources.

## 1.2 Research Problem

Neighborhoods have been established in Palestine adjacent to existing cities and towns to serve community development and expansion which needs to be studied in terms of its service and infrastructure future development needs. To achieve this, the preparation of a strategic plan with the involvement of neighborhood residents is required. Efforts have been made towards the development of strategic planning at different levels in Palestine but no strategic plans on the neighborhood level have been prepared.

## 1.3 Significance of the Study

This study derives its importance from the importance of neighborhoods and the subject of study approach considering strategic planning. The concept of strategic planning is of the most important management concepts that are well received and widespread in the recent years. This research studies strategic planning of the neighborhoods, and lays the foundation for the strategic planning in the neighborhoods level in Palestine.

The focus on neighborhood strategic planning is to recognize the importance of the neighborhoods and the need to strengthen and protect

these neighborhoods, and provide services and opportunities that promote the stability of these areas. More attention should be directed towards long term neighborhood strategic planning as it applies to services, provision of infrastructure networks and social well-being of the residents.

Neighborhood strategic planning adds another sub-level of planning to the city's planning program. However, neighborhood strategic planning differs from that related to the urban strategic planning level conducted by the city. In some ways, neighborhood strategic planning will be a refinement of the urban level of planning. It is also at this level of planning that neighborhood's residents can become intimately involved in the city's planning process and shape the future of their neighborhood and ultimately the community.

## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

This research aimed to prepare an overall framework for neighborhood strategic planning to guide future neighborhood's development that focuses on priority needs of the residents and would satisfy the communities' aspirations taking into account the limitations. In addition, it aimed to provide better living conditions for the neighborhoods, to engage residents in the development through active public participation, and to integrate neighborhood strategic planning with the overall planning system in Palestine.

**1.5 Methodology**

This study utilized descriptive/qualitative methodological approaches. It relied mainly on the following:

- Internet/desk research to review existing literature on the concept of strategic planning and to review studies and reports about neighborhood strategic planning.

- Analysis of reports and documents collected from relevant ministries and institutions such as PIF, Amaar Group, and MOLG.

- Several meetings conducted with a focus group of the neighborhood's residents for analysis a development of the strategic plan.

- Analytical procedures of positive and negative neighborhood issues considering SWOT analysis.

- Deductive approach to develop the general guidelines for strategic neighborhood planning.

**1.6 The case study**

To develop the strategic planning framework, the researcher had chosen one of the recently developed neighborhoods as the pilot case, which was Al-Reehan Neighborhood in Ramallah/Al Bireh suburbs in Palestine. It is a distinctive neighborhood model that is not linked with any special organization or institution, such as universities' employees, and

housing associations for engineers, teachers, or workers. It's for all people and planned to include all social and infrastructure services.

**1.7 Study output**

The output of this study was a general guidelines for developing a neighborhood strategic plan that is integrated with the needs of the future development of the neighborhood. The process of neighborhood strategic planning builds neighborhood spirit and will be advantageous to the neighborhood in a number of ways. An adopted strategy would:

- Describe what the neighborhood wants to accomplish.

- Provide guidance for future development decisions for the neighborhood.

- Give direction to the city regarding the services and capital needed for the neighborhood development.

- Provide a clear picture to residents, businesses, and developers of the development desired by the neighborhood.

**1.8 Contents of the Study**

In addition to this chapter, this study includes six other chapters:

- Chapter 2 explains and illustrates some related concepts and definitions. It also includes a brief about the importance of strategic planning, evolution of strategic planning, and clarifying national, regional, urban, and neighborhood strategic planning levels.

- Chapter 3 is devoted to the review of literature in the field and analysis of few case studies and current practices of strategic planning in Palestine.

- Chapter 4 presents the methodology and steps followed in this research.

- Chapter 5 shows the strategic analysis of the pilot case including the analysis of current situations, developing SWOT analysis, and determining priorities.

- Chapter 6 is devoted to the development of a strategic framework for the neighborhood and general guidelines. This framework includes vision, mission, goals, strategies, actions, and preparation for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes.

- Chapter 7 presents a summary of the main results and conclusions, and some suggested recommendations.

# Chapter Two

# Conceptual Framework

# Chapter Two
# Conceptual Framework

## 2.1 Strategic Planning

### 2.1.1 Strategy

*"In strategy it is important to see distant things as if they were close and to take a distanced view of close things" (Musashi, 2009).*

The term of Strategy is derived from the Greek word strategia, which means generalship. In the military, strategy is defined as the deployment of troops before the actually engaging of enemy (Nickols, 2012). In Game Theory, strategy refers to making plans for every situation that players will face. In management, it is defined as a comprehensive plan to ensure the achievement of the goals (Mintzberg, 2001).

Some definitions of strategy as presented by different writers are reviewed below:

- The determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources for carrying out these goals (Chandler, 1966).

- The framework which guides those choices that determine the nature and direction of an organization (Tregoe and Zimmerman, 1980).

- The pattern of objectives, purposes or goals and major policies and plans for achieving these goals stated in such a way as to define what

business the company is or is to be in and the kind of company it is or is to be (Anthony, 1965).

- A plan, a pattern, a position, a perspective and it can also be a ploy, a maneuver intended to outwit a competitor (Mintzberg, 2001).

- A pattern of purposes, policies, programs, actions, decisions, or resource allocations that defines what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it (Bryson, 1996).

## 2.1.2 Definition of Strategic

Strategic is defined as relating to strategy. Also it means "of great significance or importance". All organizations should have strategic plans addressing matters of great importance for every business unit and functional unit. Most of strategic plans are long-term but there are also short-term ones (Nickols, 2011).

Strategic means being clear and aware of the organization's objectives and resources, and combining both into being responsive to a dynamic environment.

## 2.1.3 Planning

Planning is a systematic process of determining a goal and working within a strategic framework to achieve this goal by identifying priorities and operational principles. Planning is defined as thinking about the future and preparing a plan now to specify who will do what and when (Shapiro, 2001).

Planning can be seen at different levels in our life; from simple decisions by individuals and families to complex ones by businesses and governments. Planning doesn't mean making decisions; planners help decision-makers by providing necessary information and identifying best activities to achieve best results (Litman, 2013).

Planning is important in shaping cities, communities and rural areas. Also it helps communities to grow and change for the better. All sectors of community are involved in the planning process; business people, residents, and city council members work together to determine goals and actions necessary to achieve these goals. Planning considers resources, time schedules, money, space, equipment or people. There are no specific guidelines for planning; it is about doing what is suitable for the tasks.

## 2.1.4 Strategic Planning

Various writers and scholars explained strategic planning in different but complementary ways. Strategic planning defined as a management process used by both private and public organizations to allocate resources properly to improve their strategic performance and financial situation (ACCA, 2008).

Strategic planning processes study the organization present situation, how it will grow and change, its desired objectives and goals, and how it will achieve its mission (Gates, 2010). Strategic planning is a way of preparing for the future by trying to simulate the future.

Janet defined strategic planning as "the overall planning that facilitates the good management of a process". Strategic planning helps to see the big picture of the situation and how to achieve desired objectives (Shapiro, 2001).

Under suitable conditions, such as the existence of good leadership, strategic planning may be an effective way for spurring community change and develop and managing locally determined goals in neighborhoods. Strategic planning showing how community can identify its mission and vision and change environment to achieve its objectives. When developing a strategic plan, multiple and different stakeholders should be involved; from residents who are the most affected by this process to those who effect such as leaders in government and business (Watson-Thompson, Fawcett, & Schultz, 2008).

Upper-level management is responsible for doing strategic planning; when strategic plan is approved, lower-level managers implement it by preparing an operating plan.

A strategic plan should develop understanding and vision across a whole range of social, environmental, and economic issues that go far beyond the considerations of conventional land use planning, taking a comprehensive and integrated approach over long time horizons.

The common techniques of strategic planning are (Nickols, 2011):

- Making SWOT analysis and scanning environment to identify priorities and strategic issues.

- Identifying the organization's mission and strategy.

- Establishing financial and non-financial objectives.

- Preparing plans which identify necessary actions to achieve desired objectives.

- Allocating resources based on strategy and goals.

- Reviewing performance, checking results and progress, and making necessary changes and adjustments in the plans to achieve objectives.

- Re-evaluation strategy, goals and objectives periodically at all levels.

## 2.2 The Importance of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning helps to understand the current situation and this will help to make plans for the future. Strategic planning is very essential when thinking about the future because the environment is changing rapidly and unexpectedly. Strategic planning also has a main role to help for long term performance and growth.

Moreover, strategic planning illustrates the main goals, defines orientation and objectives, helps to clarify main issues and allocation of resources, and motivates people.

## 2.3 The Evolution of Strategic Planning

The concept of Strategic Planning developed since man needed to get from one point to another. Strategic planning has military origins in ancient Greek civilization (Bayuk, 2012).

In the 1920s, Harvard Business School developed the Harvard Policy Model, one of the first strategic planning methodologies for business. The systematic assessment of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats or SWOT Analysis came from the Harvard Policy Model (Blackerby, 1994).

In the 1950's strategic planning's focus shifted away from organizational policy and structure toward the management of risk, industry growth, and market share. Business calls this approach to strategic planning the "portfolio model" (Blackerby, 1994).

During the 1960s, it became a standard management tool in big and small companies and began to be included in the curricula of all business schools. Since then, the strategic planning approach has been the subject of many theories (Carron, 2010).

In 1979, Michael Porter of Harvard Business School formed the business strategy model known as Porter's Five Forces Analysis. Strategic planning became a standard management tool in almost every Fortune 500 company. It continued to be a private sector undertaking (Bayuk, 2012).

However, strategic planning entered the public and semi-public sectors during the mid-1980s. The 1990s brought the revival of strategic planning as a "process with particular benefits in particular contexts" (Mintzberg, 2001).

In later years, institutions of higher education had to confront numerous changes in their external and internal environment, and respond to emerging challenges, such as decreasing financial support, rapid technological advances, changing demographics, and outdated academic programs. As a result, many universities engaged in strategic planning as means to "make beneficial, strategic changes to adapt to the rapidly shifting environment" (Rowley, Lujan, & Dolence, 1997).

## 2.4 National Strategic Planning

National strategic planning is defining clearly the objectives a country sets itself. It assesses at a macro-level where a country is in relation to those objectives and describes the policies, programs, options and trade-offs required to achieve those objectives. The outputs of the national strategic planning process are high level in nature but somewhat detailed in describing the desired outcomes (Manuel, 2009).

The national strategic planning aims to inform national, provincial, district and community-level stakeholders on strategic directions to be taken into consideration when developing strategic and implementation plans. National strategic plan will be used as the framework to coordinate and monitor implementation by sectors, provinces, districts and municipalities.

## 2.5 Regional Strategic Planning

Freidman (1936) described regional strategic planning as a process of determining objectives and goals for areas larger than a single city.

Regional strategic planning is applied for large masses and crowds and this process is usually politicized. A regional strategic plan sets out the general long-term development objectives and associated strategies for the region.

The leaders of the region when making strategic planning, they create and identify measures to improve conditions of life of citizenry, to help economic growth, and to create suitable environment for development; so strategic plan should be realistic to give clear picture of desirable future for the region that can be achieved. The result of regional strategic planning is to identify and prioritize main goals and objectives that help achieving region vision (ECOWAS, 2010).

Regional strategic planning is a fundamental tool to guide development, to change land use, and for other activities at the level of large areas that have cultural, socio-economic, or ecological identity (TCPA, 1993).

Regional strategic planning is usually expected to:

- Identify a vision and strategy specific to the region - for example, identifying areas for development or regeneration for a longer period.

- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

- Establish regionally specific policies, which are expected to add to rather than replicate national ones.

- Address regional or sub-regional issues.

- Establish priorities for environmental protection and enhancement.

- Outline key priorities for investment and identify delivery mechanisms, in order to support development.

- Identify how the region's waste should be dealt with.

- Be consistent with and supportive of other regional frameworks and strategies.

## 2.6 Urban Strategic Planning

Cities are may be experiencing a lot of stressors such as vacillation in population, migration, poverty, economic growth, global recession, lack of resources, and environmental degradation; so the need for strategic planning become urgent.

Strategic planning helps cities to define strategies for development, to identify their priorities, to allocate resources efficiently and to analyze their strengths and weaknesses. These strategies are flexible tools for long-term orientation and enable revision and adaptation to change circumstances. Also, strategic plans help improve quality of life as they adopt an overall view of the city and develop all aspects of it as environmental, political, social and economic. Moreover, strategic planning offers possibilities for public-private partnerships. Urban strategic planning finds the possible opportunities to help stakeholders and residents to share all the benefits of the city (Erkan, 2009).

Urban strategic planning is not a static process; it must change to reflect the changing situation in the city. The process moves forward and backward several times before arriving at the final set of decisions.

Stakeholder consultations are essential in urban strategic planning. They enable comprehensive, qualitative and effective stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders from all sectors (public, private and civil society) and various professional backgrounds interact in order to arrive at collective solutions to urban problems (UN-HABITAT, 2007).

The urban strategic planning outlines a collective vision for the future development of the city. This vision is based not only on what the planning team members, key stakeholders and others want, but also on a clear understanding of the problems and resources at hand. Planners provide the analysis and help the city examine the options available for its sustainable development (UN-HABITAT, 2007).

Urban strategic planning is not substitutional for spatial plans at the city level; it provides direction for spatial plans with a view to making them effective and practical.

## 2.7 Neighborhood Strategic Planning

Neighborhood strategic plan is a visionary, forward-looking, long-term plan to meet the needs of communities and creating places that attract residents and businesses.

Neighborhoods are dynamic and changing entities, so strategies should be updated continuously to meet all changes.

The city keeps good communication with each neighborhood to address new issues as they arise. Neighborhood strategic planning supports the city's comprehensive planning process to address planning, zoning and development issues. It helps neighborhoods to be great places to live, work, play and learn. The plan will involve physical, economic and social development to build stronger and healthier neighborhoods into the future (Mallach, 2005).

During neighborhood strategic planning, it's necessary to make SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of neighborhood to help the planners identify priorities of the area such as quality of life, housing, infrastructure, and community enhancement. This will facilitate identifying vision, mission, goals, strategies, responsibility and accountability focusing on those priorities (Mayor, 2005).

Public participation is an important and basic pillar in neighborhood strategic planning; stakeholders and residents should be involved in the process effectively to shape the neighborhood and to produce strategies that reflect the community needs. Public participation gives legitimacy and credibility to the plans.

The plans identify a list of strategies and actions as well as parties responsible for insuring the successful implementation of each strategy or

action. Also the plans describe the resources necessary to perform each strategy.

Some of the neighborhood strategic planning outcomes are:

- Making quality neighborhoods to improve the livability and vitality of the community.

- Improve neighbor-to-neighbor and neighbor-to-city communication.

- Promote beautification and identification of neighborhood.

- Give comprehensive framework for growth and development of neighborhood consistent with city values.

## 2.8 Neighborhood

The American Planning Association defines neighborhoods as "diverse, dynamic social and economic entities with unique characteristics, which are recognized by residents of both the neighborhood and the community at large".

Power (2004) defined neighborhood as a specific area with clear boundaries where people live and identify their homes and lives. Also, she clarified that these barriers can be physical or psychological; such as roads and the social composition of residents. Moreover, neighborhoods close to urban cores and have good transportation network will mix socially. She also identified the main characteristics of neighborhoods and classified them into three groups:

- The inner core includes home, neighbor and security.

- Around the inner core there is environment, shops and schools.

- The outer layers include nearby neighborhoods, the city center, friends, relatives and services such as leisure.

In addition to above, Power said that the social and psychological conditions of neighborhood affect its value and status, how people compete to access homes within it, the degree of quality of services provided and how much people are willing and able to pay to live within it. She mentioned that "Who lives in any area is a powerful determinant of both neighborhood quality and property values" (Power, 2004).

Lebel and Villeneuve defined neighborhood as a place for living, work and family environment and it's a reflection of oneself, values, aspirations and socioeconomic conditions. Also they said that "a neighborhood is a place characterized by a specific collection of spatially based features that can be found at a specific geographic scale". Neighborhoods are different from each other and each one has special identity based on specific combination of homogeneity and/or heterogeneity of many elements such as structural, infrastructural, demographic, class status, public services, environmental, political, and social-interactive characteristics. Both people and place are integrated by neighborhood, so neighborhood planning must consider the characteristics of them (Lebel and Villeneuve, 2007).

Neighborhoods are always in transition. People move in and out, capital is invested or withdrawn, and patterns of good property maintenance become stronger or weaker. Such changes define and redefine the market niche and social cohesion for any neighborhood (Brophy, 2012).

# Chapter Three

# Literature Review

# Chapter Three
# Literature Review

The literature review will be divided into two sections; the first will be about the strategic plans of neighborhoods in some countries and the second will be about current practices of strategic planning in Palestine.

## 3.1 Relevant Neighborhoods Strategic Planning:

There are many neighborhoods in different countries such as USA, England, France, UAE and Saudi Arabia. In this section, the researcher summarizes the strategic planning process for a number of selected neighborhoods in the USA, England, and Saudi Arabia.

## 3.1.1 Aycock Neighborhood Strategic Plan (2003):

Based on Aycock Neighborhood Association and the Greensboro Department of Housing and Community Development (2003), the Aycock Neighborhood is a mixed-use historic neighborhood just north of downtown Greensboro City, North Carolina, in the United States. It is composed of single-family and multi-family homes in its residential areas, as well as offices and businesses.

The strategic plan was prepared by a partnership of the Aycock Neighborhood Association and the Greensboro Department of Housing and Community Development with cooperation of other stakeholders and residents for making changes and developments for the neighborhood (Aycock Neighborhood Association, 2003). Figure 3.1 shows the neighborhood master plan.

**Figure (3.1): Aycock Neighborhood Master Plan.**

**Source: www.historicaycock.org/Documents/StrategicPlan.pdf**

The strategic plan followed on the heels of the original neighborhood district plan. The purpose of the strategic plan was:

1. To involve residents, property owners, and business people in the planning process and get their commitment and support to the plan.

2. To assure that the neighborhood strategic plan is linked to the city's work program and budget.

The strategic plan was developed by the following processes (Aycock Neighborhood Association, 2003):

➢ Identifying the neighborhood conditions and problems by conducting meetings with residents and asking them to say "What's good" and "What's not so good" about the Aycock Neighborhood. Many issues were discussed during the meetings such as: building conditions, pedestrian circulation, traffic management, commercial signage, tree preservation, and parks. The residents were asked to identify their priorities among all ideas and issues.

➢ Deriving the main objectives from ideas and issues that were generated from the first process. The objectives were presented in the second meeting to discuss them and to take the participants approvals. After all, the objectives were identified such as: strengthen the relationship of the neighborhood to downtown Greensboro, improve neighborhood identity, preserve and enhance a pedestrian-friendly environment, and the proper use of neighborhood amenities.

➢ Identifying priority actions to achieve the common objectives. These actions reflected the priorities of residents, property owners, and business people and integrated within city zoning and building code limitations and restrictions.

➢ Developing measures to monitor the plan implementation and the percentage of the progress.

The recommendations reflected the priorities of the clear majority of the residents, property owners and business community people in the Aycock Neighborhood as well as limitations and restrictions that exist under city zoning and building code. The actions also were recommended to be wholly consistent with city policy as set forth in the comprehensive plan (Aycock Neighborhood Association, 2003).

The development of neighborhood is a shared responsibility between city and neighborhood; the city provides the basic services such as streets, sidewalks, water and sewer lines, etc. The improvements and developments of neighborhood are under the city's budget unless there is a special project that city requires time to secure its funding (Aycock Neighborhood Association, 2003).

### 3.1.2 Broadview Neighborhood Strategic Plan (2003):

Based on Broadview steering committee members and representatives of Bloomington City (2003), Broadview Neighborhood is located near Bloomington's downtown area and Indiana University campus, in the United States, and it is characterized by its single family residences and attractive green spaces (Broadview Neighborhood Steering Committee, 2003).

The Broadview Neighborhood is the second neighborhood to participate in Bloomington's Neighborhood planning initiative set forth in

the Growth Policies Plan (GPP). Figure 3.2 shows the neighborhood master plan.



**Figure( 3.2): Broadview Neighborhood Master Plan.**

**Source: https://bloomington.in.gov/sections/viewSection.php**

The strategic planning process based on the neighborhood character and identity. The strategies focused on the priorities of stakeholders to improve the quality of life at the neighborhood. Broadview's strategic planning process was as follows (Broadview Neighborhood Steering Committee, 2003):

➢ City staff members met stakeholders and residents and made a presentation about the neighborhood planning initiative and identified the purpose of the plan, time, and commitment to it. Members, stakeholders, and residents participated in studying the existing conditions and making SWOT analysis for the neighborhood and this was the first step in the process. Participants were divided into two

teams and given maps, cameras, and notebooks to record their ideas and observations. After that, they analyzed what they found and identified the SWOT items of the neighborhood.

➢ The SWOT analysis involved the following dimensions:

I. Broadview's strengths included: unique and affordable housing, access to Bloomington transit bus lines, and amenities such as elementary school playground, parks, and small businesses.

II. Broadview's weaknesses included: poor storm water drainage system, poor city services, vacant units and properties that need rehabilitation, and cluttered sites in the area.

III. Broadview's opportunities included: future development of school, affordable housing attracts residents, and increased employment opportunities.

IV. Broadview's threats included: dangerous road conditions, uncertainty, lack of services, and public image may be affected by few unattractive features.

➢ Another part of the analysis process was preparing maps for neighborhood's land use and zoning. Zoning is important to give a clearer picture about the appropriate development of the area, create healthier living environment, and prevent overcrowding.

➢ The process involved forming the steering committee that was responsible for preparing the plan; writing vision statement, and

establishing goals, objectives, action strategies, target dates, and resources needed for neighborhood development for the next five years.

➢ The next step was conducting a public meeting to discuss the plan draft with all parties to make sure that the plan represents the neighborhood's interests. After the meeting all suggestions and comments were taken into consideration and necessary changes were made to the plan and the final draft was submitted.

➢ The strategic plan included goals such as: improving public services, promoting the reuse of Broadview elementary school, encouraging pride in homeownership, improving public image, and encouraging new and existing small business. Based on these goals, staff determined objectives and strategies.

➢ The neighborhood plan organized the goals, objectives, and action strategies into action strategy charts. These charts clearly stated the action strategies and summarized the logical resources and anticipated timeframe needed for completion of each action (Broadview Neighborhood Steering Committee, 2003).

➢ The action strategies were reviewed periodically to ensure the expediency of the plan to the neighborhood interests and that it still serves the residents' needs. The success of the plan was measured by the accomplishment of the neighborhood goals (Broadview Neighborhood Steering Committee, 2003).

➢ The land use classifications for the Broadview Neighborhood focused on the type of activity that is occurring on a particular parcel. Assigning each parcel of land a specific type of land use was one method the City of Bloomington used to track land development processes. Large areas adjoining Broadview also had an impact on the types of land use activities occurring in the neighborhood (Broadview Neighborhood Steering Committee, 2003).

## 3.1.3 Harpurhey Neighborhood Strategic Planning (2004):

Based on Manchester City Council (2004), Harpurhey is a neighborhood within the inner core of North Manchester, England, approximately two miles from the city center.   The area is largely residential in character, with some businesses clustered. Figure 3.3 shows the neighborhood master plan.
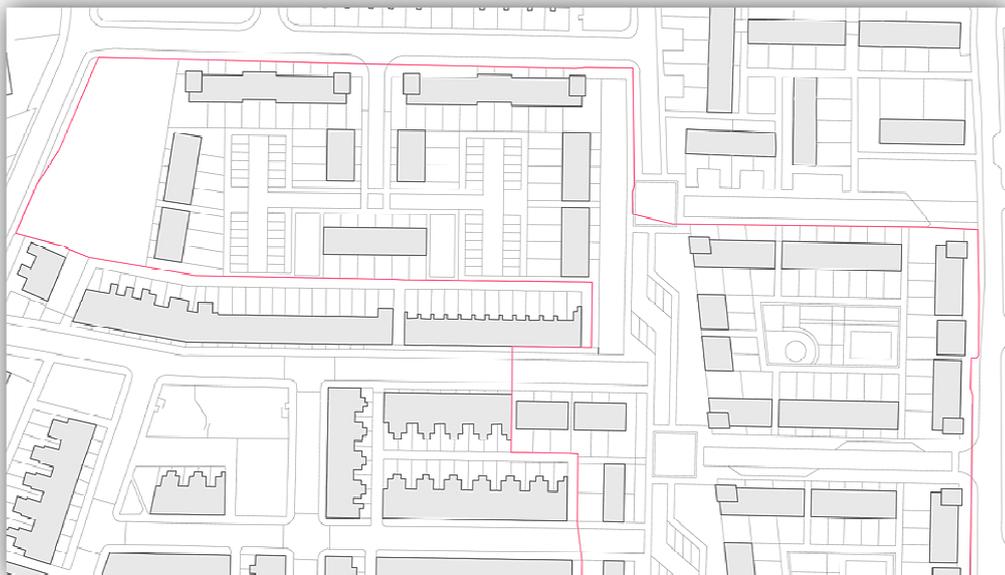


**Figure (3.3): Harpurhey Neighborhood Master Plan.**

**Source: http://www.calderpeel.com/projects/masterplanning/harpurhey/**

Harpurhey benefited from improvements in major projects in the area's infrastructure in terms of employment, education and services. With the close proximity of Harpurhey to the city center, the area seems well placed to benefit from the economic growth of the city (Manchester City Council, 2004).

The strategic plans aimed to provide the context for the development of Harpurhey by providing long term (10-15 years) strategies addressing the physical, social and economic needs of the areas. The strategic plans had been drawn from the aspirations outlined in the North Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework. They had been developed through collaborative involvement building on community consultation exercises and workshop sessions with stakeholders (Manchester City Council, 2004).

The vision statement was formulated as: "Harpurhey will be an attractive, stable, successful and diverse residential area of choice -meeting the aspirations of existing families and of new residents who may wish to make the area their home, connected with sustainable local service hubs containing good quality and accessible community facilities" (Manchester City Council, 2004).

The vision was translated into a set of objectives. The Harpurhey strategy was approved in 2004. A range of strategies and actions were agreed, which have been continually reviewed in consultation with local members and other stakeholders to ensure that the strategy responds quickly to changes in the neighborhood. The annual review will continue

so that strategies remain flexible and utilize the public resources available to develop the area intelligently and appropriately (Manchester City Council, 2004).

The delivery of the plan was the responsibility of the North Manchester regeneration team. The extent of investment and change required partnership between the council, partner agencies, the community, and the private sector.

**3.1.4 Fairmont Southside Neighborhood Strategic Plan (2007):**

Based on Vera Sansalone, Bob Gribben, and Jay Rogers (2007), the Southside Neighborhood is an area within the corporate limits of the City of Fairmont, West Virginia, in United States. Figure 3.4 shows Fairmont Southside Neighborhood plan.



**Figure (3.4): Fairmont Southside Neighborhood.**

**Source:www.blueprintcommunities.com/wv/locations/communityplans/Fairmont_Plan.pdf**

The strategic planning was conducted by the City of Fairmont with West Virginia University after several meetings with residents, property owners, business owners, general public, and other stakeholders (Sansalone, Gribben, and Rogers, 2007).

The City of Fairmont prepared a strategy for addressing the many abandoned and vacant properties concentrated in a 12-block area of this neighborhood. This strategic plan built on that effort and expanded the focus of the effort beyond the physical characteristics of the area to include social, economic, and other community goals (Sansalone, Gribben, and Rogers, 2007).

The strategic plan identified the objectives that can be achieved during five years. The plan focused on infrastructure development, community outreach programs, construction activity, private investment, and entrepreneurialism. The strategic plan was integrated with the city main comprehensive plan and developed according to the following steps (Sansalone, Gribben, and Rogers, 2007):

1. Studying existing conditions which included four stages: data collection, data classification, mapping, and findings. Information was collected about the neighborhood and based on collected data; all properties were classified into categories. Information was reflected into a map to make it fast and easy to analyze and to understand. The findings of this stage were encouraging for revitalization and redevelopment of the overall neighborhood.

2. Formulating mission statement which was: "To facilitate and foster the redevelopment and renewal of the Southside Neighborhood through collaborative partnerships with its residents and property owners that will create economic opportunities and attract additional public and private investment".

3. Establishing objectives and necessary strategic actions to achieve the desired objectives. Some of these objectives were:

   ➤ Improve livability in the neighborhood by developing some actions such as: promote pedestrianism, encourage green space development, and promote neighborhood driven activities.

   ➤ Promote economic development by developing actions such as: hold a workshop for potential developers to highlight the neighborhood, and promote landlord interaction.

   ➤ Improve appearance of the neighborhood by developing actions such as: encourage property re-investment, and develop a streetscape project.

   ➤ Promote the preservation of historic properties by developing actions such as: encourage re-adaptive, host a historic preservation workshop, and develop a resource center in the neighborhood.

4. The committee was created to specifically work on the objectives and action strategies of the strategic plan and the defined mission of the Southside Neighborhood.

5. Implementing, monitoring and evaluation of strategic plan. The panel and stakeholders of the neighborhood held regular meetings to monitor the progress and evaluate the percentage of achieved objectives, prioritize or re-prioritize strategies and modify or delete components of the strategic plan.

## 3.1.5 Oak Grove Neighborhood Strategic Plan (2010):

Based on Foothill Planning Associates and Oak Lodge Community Council (2010), Oak Grove is an unincorporated area of Clackamas County, Oregon, in the United States. Figure 3.5 shows the neighborhood planning boundary.
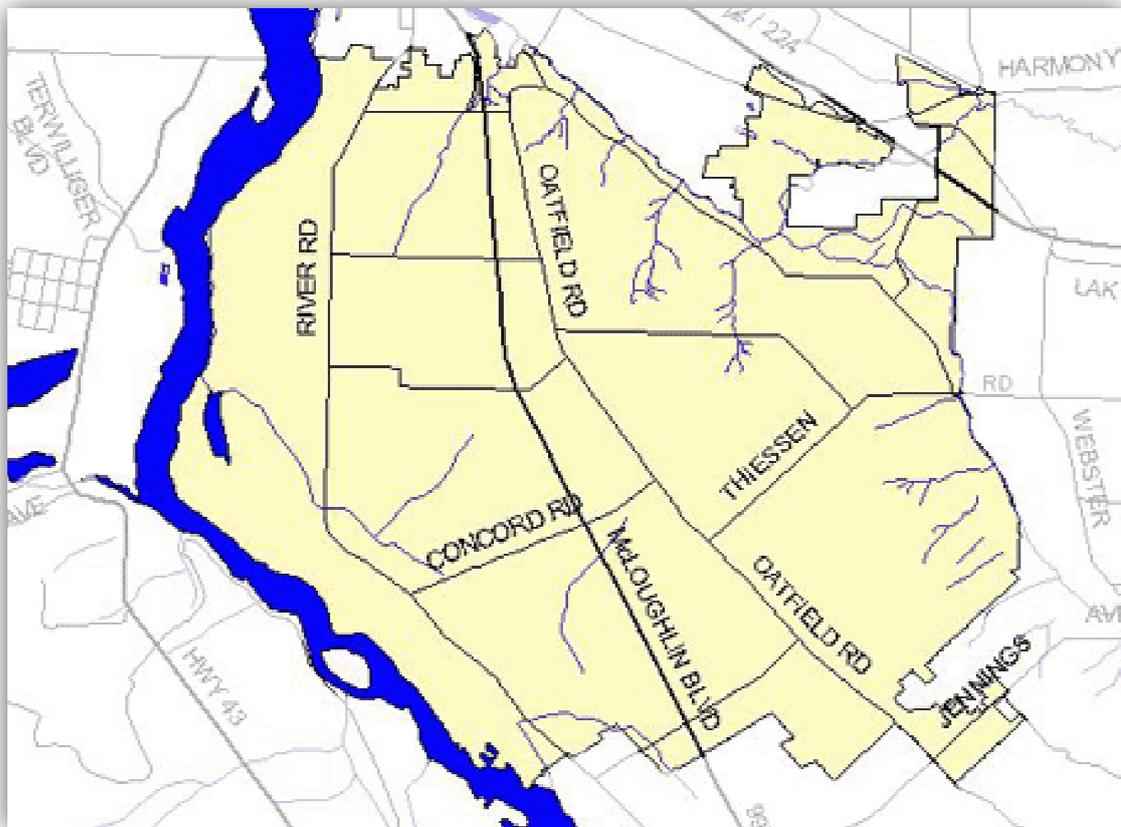


**Figure (3.5): Oak Grove Neighborhood Planning Boundary.**

**Source: http://nathanmcneil.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/oakgroveneighborhoodcen terplan_web.pdf**

This neighborhood was expected to face population growth and this could change the neighborhood character.

A number of previous and current planning efforts focused on Oak Grove and the broader Oak Lodge area in understanding the future of Oak Grove and community preferences (Foothill Planning Associates, 2010).

Oak Grove strategic plan was developed by Foothill Planning Associates and OLCC. The project used prior plans, community input, and consideration of coming investments to identify opportunities and ways to improve livability (Foothill Planning Associates, 2010).

The strategic planning process of the neighborhood can be summarized as follows (Foothill Planning Associates, 2010):

➢ Public outreach and participation. This stage included:

1- Stakeholder interviews and business surveys were conducted to reveal the interests and concerns about the neighborhood.

2- Site inventory and studying the conditions of the site, assets, and needs by doing research on site.

3- Walking workshop in which participants were asked to give their opinions about what they liked and disliked about the neighborhood and discussed all thoughts together.

4- Open house and presentation, a technical advisory committee held meetings to discuss many ideas and recommendations about the development of the neighborhood.

Many ideas, concerns, and aspirations were emerged from public outreach and participation process such as: lack of control over change in Oak Grove, new development out of character with existing neighborhood, loss of neighborhood feel through increased population, and more opportunities to interact with nature.

➢ The next step was the study of existing conditions of the neighborhood which included environmental conditions, demographics, zoning, land use, transportation, and existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

➢ The outcome of the previous processes was the identification of main objectives for the development of the area and determining the action strategies to achieve each objective.

➢ Finally, policy mechanisms were established to guide future development and community change and implement the plans. Policy mechanisms implementation was under the responsibility of both government and residents.

Oak Grove Neighborhood supposed to face challenges in implementing recommended changes. Some policy tools which might help with implementation included: continued advocacy for implementation of existing plans, special zoning or overlay areas to specify redevelopment requirements, special highway designations such as the special transportation area (STA) and urban business area (UBA), and the Clackamas County capital improvements project list (Foothill Planning Associates, 2010).

## 3.1.6 King Fahd Neighborhood Strategic Planning (2013):

Based on Dammam Municipality (2013), King Fahd Neighborhood is the largest neighborhood in Dammam, the capital of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. The neighborhood is located on the west of the city on Abu Hadriyah Highway occupying a total area of about 30 square kilometers. Figure 3.6 shows the neighborhood master plan.

King Fahd Neighborhood strategic plan was developed by Dammam Municipality. The municipality formed the steering committee that was responsible for preparing the strategic plan, taking into consideration all residents' complaints, needs, and interests (Dammam Municipality, 2013).
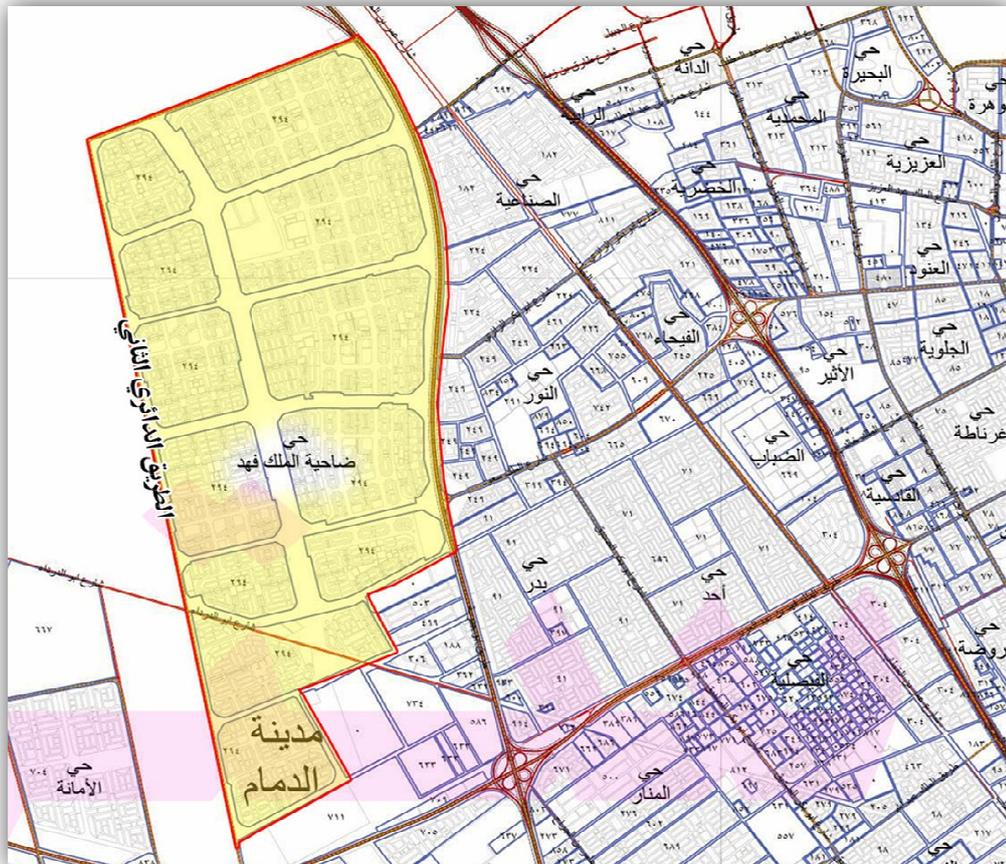


**Figure (3.6): King Fahd Neighborhood Master Plan.**

Source: http://im9.gulfup.com/2011-08-26/1314345007631.jpg

During the neighborhood input meeting, the residents and business owners provided the steering committee with their complaints and comments about the lack of basic services and problems they face in their neighborhood and the false promises they got from some officials about the future developments. Residents were asked to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within their neighborhood. The committee identified priorities among all issues in consultation with all residents and stakeholders (Dammam Municipality, 2013).

Based on the neighborhood input, the steering committee was able to narrow its focus to formulate vision and mission statements and to identify goals and strategies for the priority areas.

Dammam Municipality is responsible for the overall implementation of the strategic plan and it formulated a committee to coordinate the projects between all parties such as water, electricity, and telecommunications companies. Periodic assessments and evaluation of the progress will be conducted during the implementation to achieve desired goals (Dammam Municipality, 2013).

### 3.1.7 Conclusions

Based on the previous literature, some important conclusions could be summarized as follows:

- Strategic plan for neighborhood must align and integrate with main strategic plan of the city.

- Residents and stakeholders participation in the strategic planning process is very essential in determining the future developments.

- In order to develop a strategic plan, SWOT analysis should be implemented and priorities should be identified.

- Strategic planning is a series of concentric circles. The vision, mission, goals, objectives, and strategies are included in the circles, moving from vision on the outside to strategies on the inner most circle.

- Implementation of the strategic plan requires continued commitment and support from all parties.

- Continual review and revision of strategic planning documents, including the mission and vision statements, is a vital component of the strategic planning process.

- The strategic plan is simply a tool to be thought of as a guide or map. It has a starting point (today's conditions and environment), and an ending point where the neighborhood wants to be in the future, as well as mechanisms to reach such ending point.

## 3.2 Current Practices of Strategic Planning in Palestine:

Strategic planning experience in Palestine is a recent experience associated with the beginning of the middle of past decade, and this experience is not yet complete and is still in the first stage of development. Efforts have been made towards the development of strategic planning at

different levels in a number of local authorities and regions in Palestine. These efforts were mostly under the leadership and supervision of the Ministries of Local Government and Planning, with funding mainly from several international donors, while some of these efforts were funded locally such as the strategic planning for Nablus Governorate, Hebron City, Beita Town, and Maythaloun Town. The first attempt was the strategic development planning for the cities Ramallah, Al Bireh, and Bitunia, while there have been efforts underway to prepare strategic development plans for the rest of communities (MOLG, 2009).

As a result of these successful efforts, the culture of strategic planning is spreading widely in the Palestinian territories. Many local bodies are showing their interests to obtain support for the preparation of strategic planning at the regional, urban, and local levels (MOLG, 2009).

The current social, economic, and environmental conditions and challenges, especially those perceived at the Palestinian local level, urge the Local Government Units to utilize innovative approaches in managing their cities, towns, and neighborhoods to be able to respond to such challenges and to the increasing demands of the Palestinian citizens. This approach requires the Local Government Units to consider strategic planning processes that focus on the identification of strategic issues and priorities, taking into consideration their available resources opportunities and potential obstacles (MOLG, 2009).

Most of the recent economic reports indicate the significant growth witnessed which is related to real estate investment in Palestine. According to the PIF, real estate investments provide economic opportunities that are making a significant impact to the Palestinian economy. This can be seen from the neighborhoods in several areas of Palestine being constructed by the PIF such as Al-Reehan Neighborhood in Ramallah and Al Jinan Neighborhood in Jenin, as well as other neighborhoods which have been developed by private sectors such as Rawabi and Al Ghadeer Neighborhood in Ramallah and other neighborhoods in several cities in Palestine (PIF, 2010).

Despite this, no strategic plans of the neighborhoods in Palestine have been prepared as observed in other countries such as USA, England, and Saudi Arabia where strategic plans have been developed for a number of neighborhoods to guide future growth and establish programs and projects related to the enhancement and development of neighborhoods in such areas over the next years.

# Chapter Four

# Plan and Methodology

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# Plan and Methodology

This chapter describes how the study was conducted and what methods were used to collect and analyze the data by an explanation of the procedures and main steps connected with each other in a sequential way, benefiting from literature review and the general guidelines prepared for strategic planning for small towns by MOLG (2013), after careful simplification and adaptation.

## 4.1 Proposed Plan

The proposed plan benefited from the SDIP manual developed for Palestinian Cities and Towns by the MOLG (2009) and that directed for small towns (2013). However, proper adaptation and modification were considered as needed to suite specificity of the neighborhoods, benefiting from the international experience in this regard.

Figure 4.1 summarizes the proposed plan that will be illustrated in the following sections.

| Reviewing of Literature in the Neighborhood Strategic Planning |
| Choosing the Case Study |
| Preparing for Collecting Data About the Neighborhood |
| Diagnosing the Current Conditions of the Neighborhood |
| Applying SWOT Analysis |
| Determining Priorities |
| Developing Vision and Mission |
| Specifying Goals |
| Formulating key Strategies and Actions |
| Preparation for the Implementation of the Strategic Plan |
| Preparation for Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating processes |
| Identifying a Framework for Neighborhood Strategic Planning |

**Figure (4.1): The Proposed Plan and Methodology for the Neighborhood Strategy.**

## 1- Reviewing of literature in the neighborhood strategic planning:

The researcher had explained and illustrated some related concepts and definitions and analyzed few case studies of neighborhood strategic planning in different countries and identified the key steps of the process and its outputs as shown in Chapters Two and Three.

## 2- Choosing the case study:

The researcher had chosen Al-Reehan Neighborhood in Ramallah – Al Bireh suburbs in Palestine, as a case study which the strategic planning process will be applied to.

**3-  Preparing for collecting data about the neighborhood:**

In order to get the required information and data about Al-Reehan Neighborhood, the researcher has contacted Amaar Group, the developer of the neighborhood, to gather all information, reports, figures, and tables that would give a clear picture about the existing conditions of the neighborhood.

Since the resident's involvement is essential in the strategic planning process, the researcher has selected randomly a group of residents including representatives of 20 families, from a total of 60 families who currently live in the neighborhood, and invited them to several meetings, by sending emails and making phone calls, to discuss the neighborhood current conditions to come up with ideas, needs, concerns, complaints and suggestions that would help in the development of the neighborhood.

**4-  Diagnosing the current conditions of the selected neighborhood:**

It's very important to be aware of the current conditions of the neighborhood and to identify the problems that affect the development and quality of life at neighborhood. This will help to specify best strategies that should be applied with such problems and situations.

The involvement of neighborhood residents is very important in this stage to give a full picture about their neighborhood and help to gain their commitment to the process. Residents' feedback through the meetings will be used for determining what is good and what is not good about their

neighborhood that will cover many issues such as public image of the neighborhood, streets, buildings, landscaped areas, pedestrians, services, infrastructure, parks, transportation, and security.

**5- Applying SWOT analysis to the neighborhood:**

After data collecting from residents and other stakeholders, analysis has been conducted using the SWOT approach. SWOT analysis is a tool of summarizing the current internal and external situations of the neighborhood, putting the information into a logical order and helping to develop a strategic plan for the future. SWOT analysis does not make any strategic choices, but it is the first and most basis step in the strategic decision-making process (Tidd, 2005).

SWOT analysis is categorized according to the following dimensions:

❖ Strengths: are resources and capabilities that can be used as a basis for developing a competitive advantage of the project.

❖ Weaknesses: are the flip side of strengths. The absence of certain strengths may be viewed as weaknesses.

❖ Opportunities: external environmental analysis may reveal certain new opportunities for benefits and development of the neighborhood.

❖ Threats: external elements in the environment that could cause troubles or disadvantages for the neighborhood.

**6- Determining priorities:**

It is necessary to prioritize and determine what are the most important among all issues that are discussed during the public meeting. Doing so helps to maintain a clear focus on the vision and on reaching the most important goals first and to avoid becoming overwhelmed when trying to reach multiple goals.

**7- Developing vision and mission for the neighborhood:**

Based on the previous steps, the vision and the mission of this project could be developed. In this research, the vision of the Al-Reehan Neighborhood was developed by Amaar Group and it was approved by the focus group during the second meeting.

The vision is a future oriented and a detailed description of the outcomes and the end results. A strategic vision delineates the aspirations and provides a panoramic view of "where we are going". Strategic vision becomes real when it is imprinted in the minds of all stakeholders and then translated into objectives and strategies. The more the vision identifies positive support and excitement, the greater its impact in terms of ensuring a committed effort and getting all stakeholders and residents to move in a common direction.

If the vision statement looks to the future, the mission statement points to the present. The mission statement answers the questions "Why do we exist?" and "What we do?", so it is a brief description of the project's

fundamental purpose. Vision statement should inspire people to dream; while mission statement should inspire them to action.

The researcher asked the focus group during the second meeting to formulate the mission of the neighborhood by dividing them into groups and asking them to write, within 10 minutes, descriptive phrases expressing what the neighborhood is doing now. Each group then was asked to present its proposed draft to all participants in order to agree upon a certain draft. The agreed upon draft was reviewed for making any lingual amendments.

The vision and mission can be developed by defining the issues that matter most to people in the neighborhood and what they would like their neighborhood to be in the future.

## 8- Specifying the strategic goals to develop the neighborhood strategy:

Constructing goals is another important step in developing this neighborhood strategy.

Goals are generalized and broad statements identifying what the neighborhood wants to accomplish. They should include a vision of community desires for the future and provide targets for assessing progress in achieving the vision considering funding implications (Garcia, 2006). Goals are believable, attainable, and represent the results of early brainstorming exercises and evolve to reflect the desires and needs of the neighborhood as expressed in public input process. Once goals are

identified, it is easier to plan the necessary strategies and activities for developing the neighborhood.

**9- Formulating the key strategies and actions of the neighborhood planning:**

That is to agree upon key strategies that need to be accomplished in order to achieve the neighborhood's goals. Strategy begins to identify what kinds of actions may be required. This process depends on where the neighborhood is now and where the vision and goals want the neighborhood to be, and identifying strategies to get there. These strategies require setting clear priorities and identifying means for achieving and reviewing them. Strategies should take into account existing barriers and resources (people, money, power, materials, etc.).

**10- Preparation for the implementation of the neighborhood strategic plan:**

The researcher has explained the necessary activities and issues to be considered while preparing for the implementation of the strategic plan.

**11- Preparation for monitoring, evaluating and updating processes of the neighborhood strategic plan:**

Monitoring is the systematic collection and analysis of information during implementation. It helps to keep the work on track and provides a useful base for evaluation. Evaluation is the comparison of actual outcomes against the agreed strategic plans. After evaluation process and when it

becomes clear that significant changes are needed, it may be necessary to update the action plans to meet the desired goals.

In this section, the researcher has clarified some actions and preparations for performing these processes properly.

## 12- Identifying general guidelines for developing the framework of neighborhood strategic planning:

In this section, the researcher has listed the main steps and components of neighborhood strategic planning framework. In addition, some necessary forms were also included as they relate to the work steps.

Although all the previous strategic development steps have a serial nature, as every step depends on what has achieved in the previous steps, they have also a dynamic nature, so it is necessary to review the results of a step after finishing the step that follows and so on until the end of the process. This may lead to the re-evaluation of many of the solutions and suggestions in order to keep up with the conditions that may arise during the process of studying and development or during the stages of executing the strategy.

## 4.2 Methodology

## 4.2.1 Methodological Approach

This study utilized the descriptive/qualitative methodological approaches. Descriptive/qualitative research describes a certain present

condition. Relatively, the method was appropriate to this study to describe and gather information about the current condition of the neighborhood. In addition, this research utilized the following approaches:

- Comparative approach to study and compare between different case studies of the strategic planning process for a number of selected neighborhoods in different countries.

- Analytical approach to analyze the positive and negative neighborhood issues considering SWOT analysis.

- Deductive approach to develop the general guidelines for strategic neighborhood planning.

- Descriptive approach regarding the used approaches for SDIP for Palestinian cities, towns, and small towns by MOLG, neighborhood strategic concepts and case studies, and the description of the neighborhood case study.

### 4.2.2 Research Tools

- Internet/desk research to review existing literature on the strategic planning and to review studies and reports about neighborhood strategic planning.

- Field study and visits to the site to diagnose the current situation of the neighborhood.

- Analysis of reports and documents collected from relevant ministries and institutions such as PIF, Amaar Group, and MOLG.

- Several meetings conducted with a focus group of the neighborhood's residents for analysis a development of the strategic plan.

# Chapter Five

# Strategic Analysis for the Case Study: (Al-Reehan Neighborhood)

# Chapter Five
# Strategic Analysis for the Case Study:
# (Al-Reehan Neighborhood)

This chapter is on performing the strategic analysis for the case study of Al-Reehan Neighborhood in Ramallah – Al Bireh suburbs, Palestine, taking into account the collected data from Amaar Group and the residents through the public meetings and other available information. Strategic analysis is the starting point of strategic planning process of the neighborhood which includes studying current conditions, making SWOT analysis, and identifying priorities. The analysis of the neighborhood's external and internal environment is necessary to address the most important issues and to effectively formulate vision, goals, and strategies.

## 5.1 Diagnosing the current conditions of the neighborhood:

## 5.1.1 Project Location

Al-Reehan Neighborhood is one of the residential projects of Amaar Group which belongs to the PIF. The neighborhood is situated on a strategic hill-top location in Ramallah-Al Bireh suburbs, in the north-west of Ramallah city and south of Abu Qash village, 800m above sea-level with 360 degree panoramic views. The site of the project combines a land of 2 adjacent parcels totaling 250 dunums in area; the first parcel is 44 dunums in area and is part of the master plan of Abu Qash, whereas the second parcel is 206 dunums in area and is part of Al Askariyya Block of Ramallah lands. The neighborhood benefits from proximity to Ramallah -

Al Bireh metropolis and direct infrastructure links include a 4 lanes, 20m wide, ring, and main road (Amaar Group, 2010).



**Figure (5.1): The Location of Al-Reehan Neighborhood.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2010.**

## 5.1.2 The Neighborhood Phases and Services

Al-Reehan Neighborhood will be built in 3 phases, as shown in Figure 5.2, as follows:
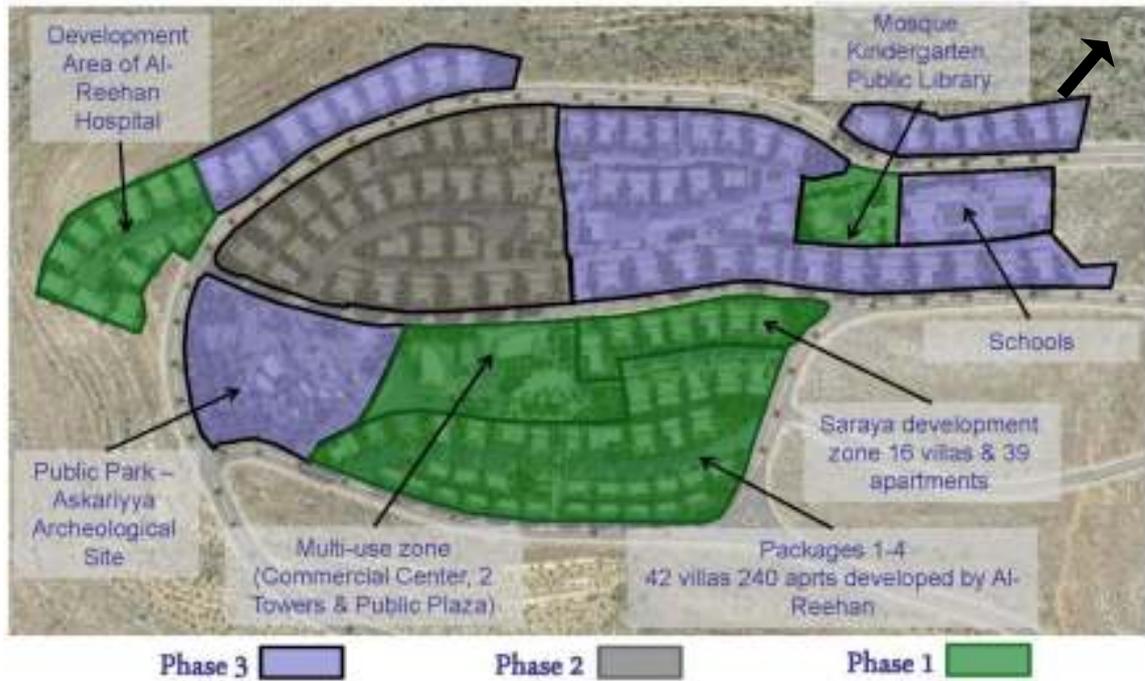
**Figure (5.2): Al-Reehan Neighborhood Phases.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2011.**

- Phase One: is almost done which includes 323 apartments, 58 semi-detached villas, commercial center, mosque, kindergarten, public library, a specialized hospital on 12 dunums of land to provide high level health and medical services, public spaces and green areas, and pedestrian with paved and planted walkways connecting all zones.

The neighborhood offers a wide range of housing units with different designs and areas ranging from 100m² to 350m², in addition to semi-detached villas with private gardens (Amaar Group, 2011).

The commercial center is the most vital element in the neighborhood; it provides the residents with all their needs. It includes supermarket, shops, restaurants, coffee shops, sports center, office

apartments, indoor and outdoor parking, and public spaces, as shown in Figure 5.3 (Amaar Group, 2011).



**Figure (5.3): General View of the Public Spaces Behind the Commercial Center.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2011.**

- Phase Two: it's under construction and developed by Jawwal Company to provide residential units for their employees. It consists of 250 units with different areas including apartments, semi-detached villas and independent villas, streets, and pedestrian areas (Amaar Group, 2011).

- Phase Three: it is in the design stage and it will include approximately 370 apartments that varying in sizes and designs, school, archeological park, sports field, streets, pedestrian areas, and the second phase of commercial center that will include offices (Amaar Group, 2011).

### 5.1.3 Infrastructure

The neighborhood's infrastructure networks include roads, water lines, sewage network and wastewater treatment plant, and underground electricity networks. All infrastructure networks in phase one are constructed completely. In phase two, the networks are under construction and they will be ready with the completion of phase two, while the construction of the networks in phase three has not started yet.

### 5.1.3.1 Roads Network:

Al-Reehan Neighborhood is located on the top of hill with a rough topography, where the maximum slope reaches more than 40%. The neighborhood roads network includes three types of roads: main external ring roads (Roads A, C), commercial road (Road B), and internal roads (Roads D, F, H, I, J), as shown in Figures 5.4 and 5.5.
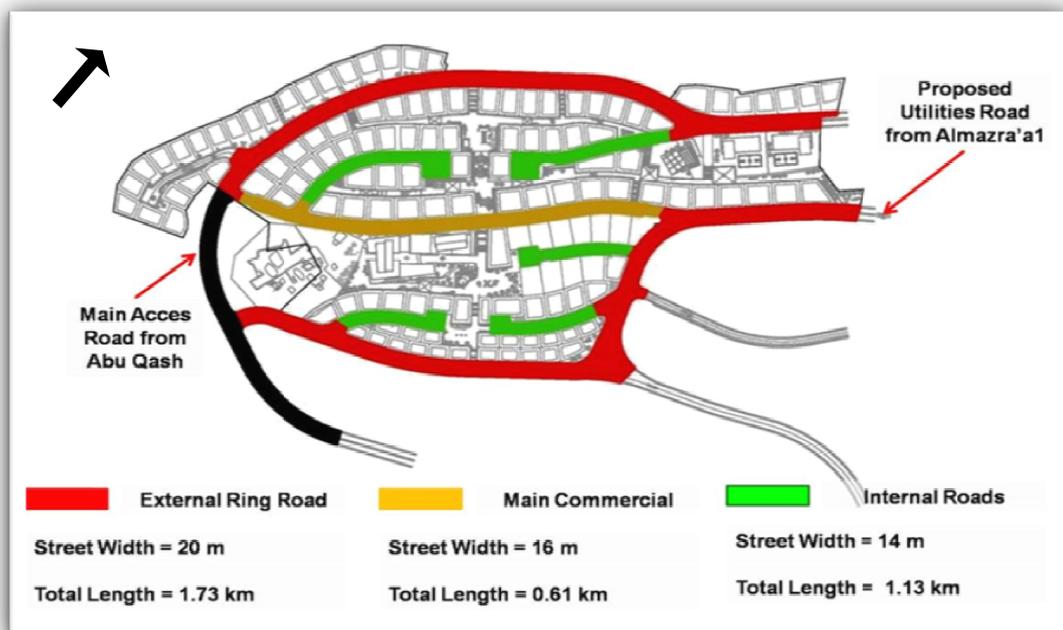


**Figure (5.4): Al-Reehan Neighborhood Roads Network.**
**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**
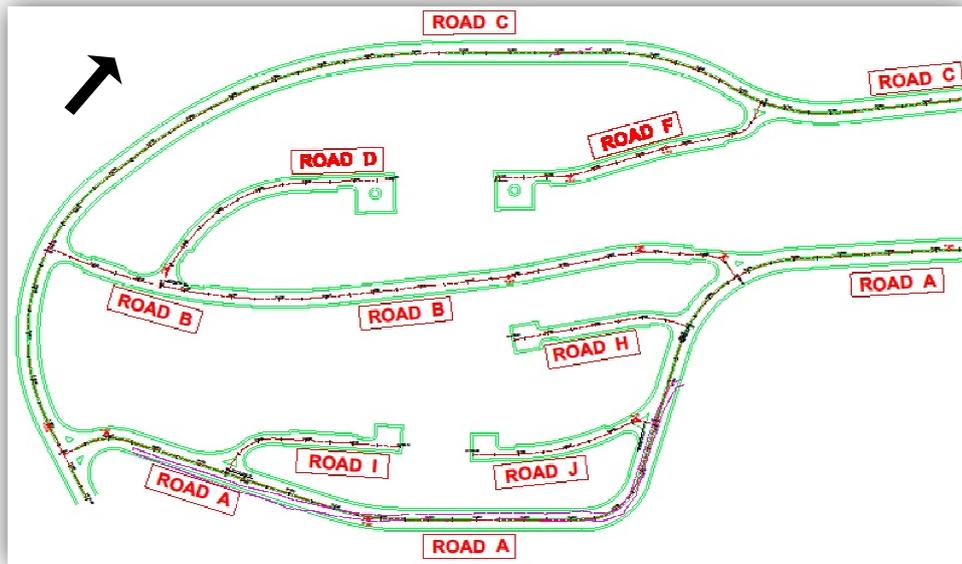
**Figure( 5.5): Al-Reehan Neighborhood Roads Codes.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**

- Main external ring roads (Roads A,C):

These roads are divided into two parts, Road (A) is 966m long, and Road (C) is 1730m long. Both roads are turning around the site, the width of the roads is 20m width divided into two ways and two lanes for each way and with a 2m width median and a 2m sidewalk, as shown in Figure 5.6. The maximum slope of these two roads is 14.00% and the minimum is 0.40% and the design speed is 50 km/hr (Amaar Group, 2009).
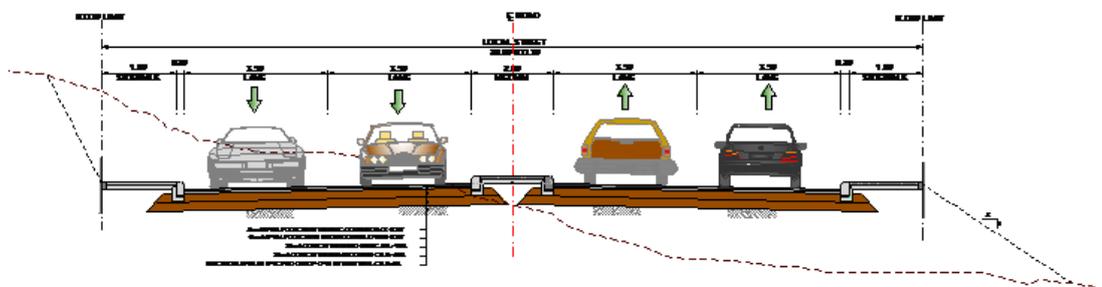


**Figure (5.6): Typical Road Cross-Section for Roads A & C.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**

- Commercial road (Road B):

    This road is the main spine road that passes in the middle of the site and connects Road (A) with Road (C) which connect the main entrance road with the rest of the project. Road (B) is a two way road with a length of 610 m, and 16.00 m width and divided into two lanes, 3.5 m width for each lane, and two parking lanes, one on each side with a 2.5 m width, and with a 2m sidewalk as shown in Figure 5.7. The maximum slope is 13.00% and the minimum is 2.00% and the design speed is 40 km/hr (Amaar Group, 2009).
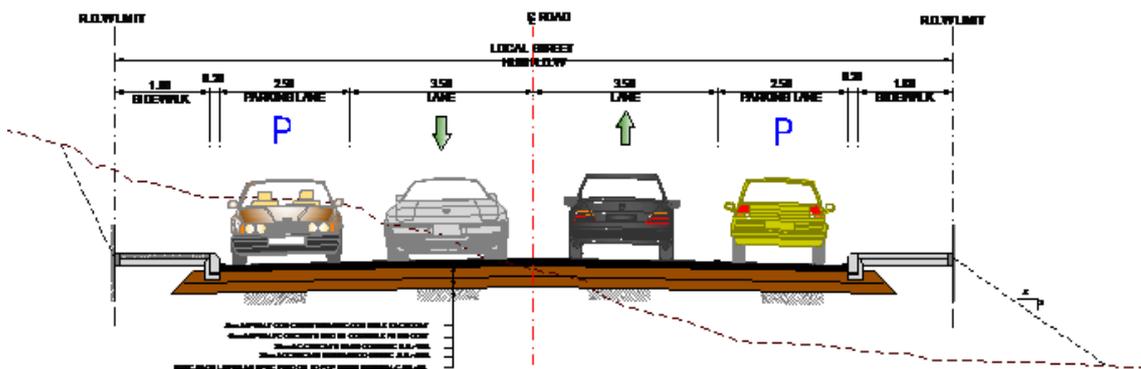


**Figure (5.7): Typical Road Cross-Section for Road B.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**

- Internal roads (Roads D, F, H, I, J):

    The rest of the roads on the project are Cul-De-Sac Roads; a Cul-De-Sac is a dead-end street with only one inlet/outlet, it is used to reduce the amount of car traffic on residential streets within the subdivision, thus reducing noise and the potential for accidents. These roads are connecting the residential areas with the main roads (Roads A, B, and C). The total lengths of these roads are approximately 1130m. The total width of these

roads are 14.00 m divided into two ways with a 2.5 m parking lane on one side of the road and a 2m sidewalk, as shown in Figure 5.8. The maximum slope is 14.00% and the minimum is 0.50% and the design speed is 40 km/hr (Amaar Group, 2009).
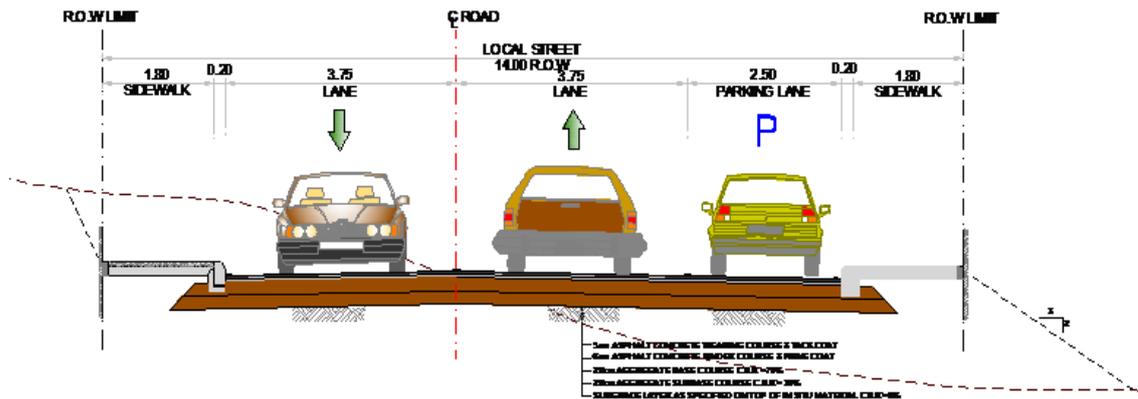


**Figure (5.8): Typical Road Cross-Section for Internal Roads.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**

Proper connections between the roads, signage and marking are applied to ensure safety. Pedestrian crossings are on certain locations on the site to maintain a safe pedestrian circulation.

## 5.1.3.2 Water Network:

According to the design provided by Jerusalem Water Authority, the water network is connected from the main pipe crossing of Birzeit University by 10" pipes; these pipes connected with 6" pipe which is installed particularly for Al-Reehan Neighborhood as shown in Figures 5.9 and 5.10, as follows (Amaar Group, 2009):
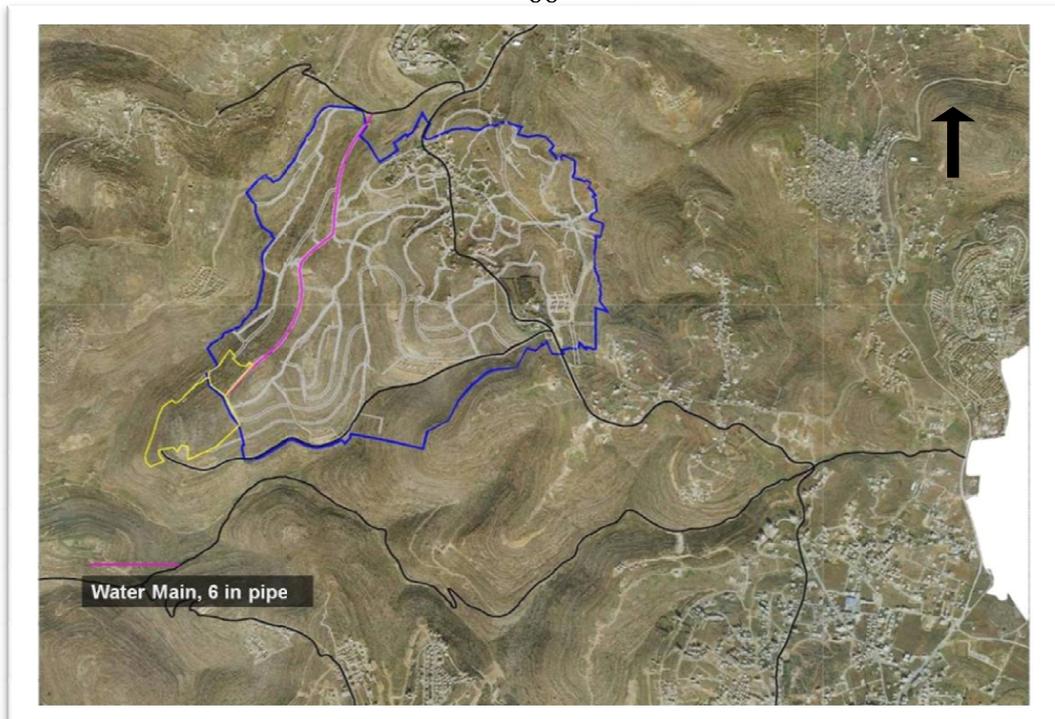
**Figure (5.9): Water Network Main Connection.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**
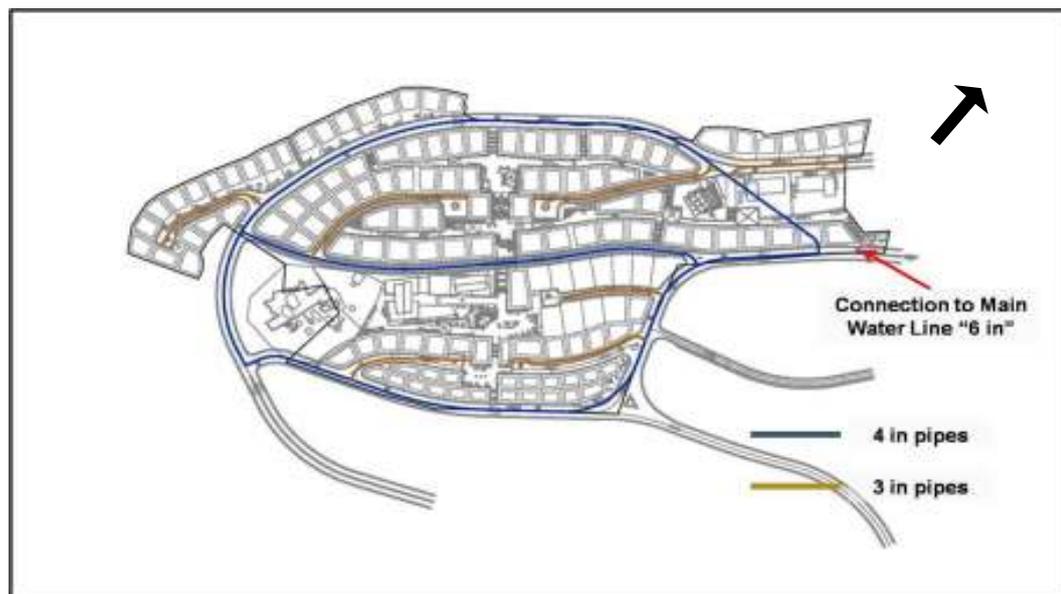


**Figure (5.10): Water Network.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**

## 5.1.3.3 Sewage Network and Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP):

The sewage network consists of 6" plastic pipes in internal roads, 8"
pipes in main streets in addition to the main sewer lines to the WWTP

which serves Al-Reehan Neighborhood and surrounding residential blocks. The wastewater network system consists of UPVC pipes and is based on the collection of all generated wastewater flows by gravity to eliminate the need for pumping or lifting stations. Figure 5.11 shows the WWTP location (Amaar Group, 2009).
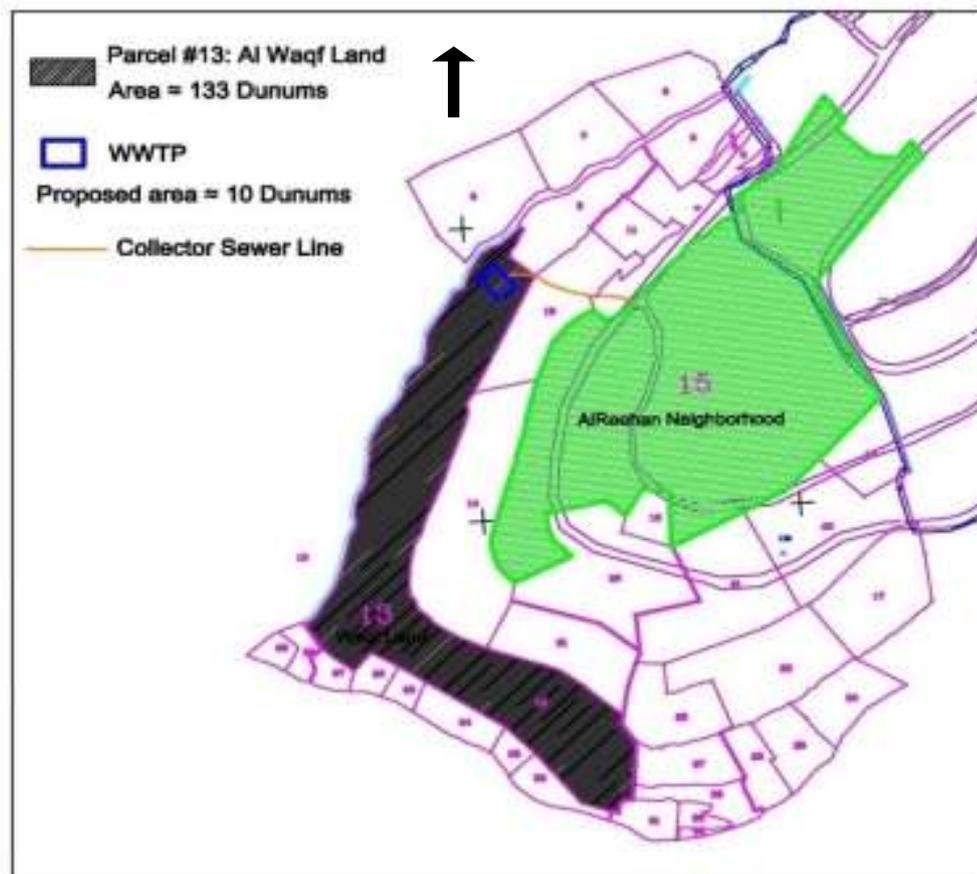


**Figure (5.11): Wastewater Treatment Plant location.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**

## 5.1.3.4 Electricity Network

This network consists of two parts; the first is connecting the neighborhood by high voltage line above the ground, up to the limits of neighborhood along the main road connecting to the project. The second part is the internal distribution network in the main streets, the ring road

and internal streets. High voltage network is installed from underground cables to transformer stations along the streets. The Electricity network is constructed by JDECO instructions (Amaar Group, 2009). Figure 5.12 shows the electricity network connections, as follows:
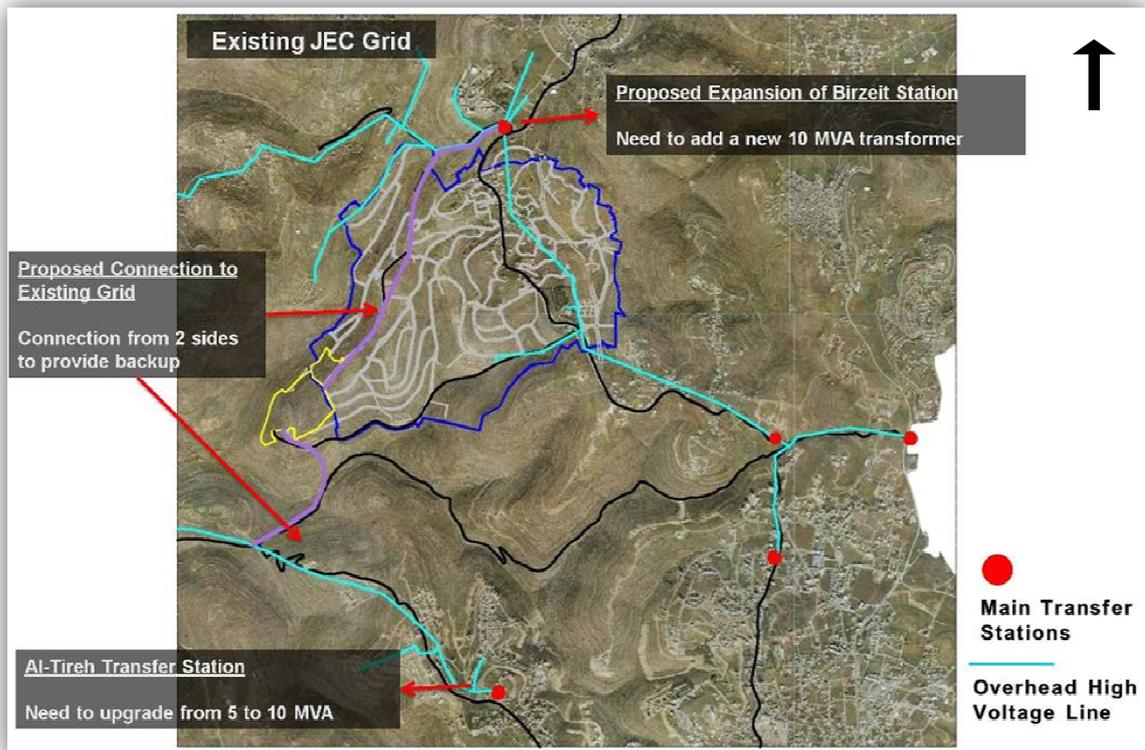


**Figure (5.12): Electricity Network Connection.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2009.**

Electrical main station is located close to residences where noise from excessively loud transformer can impinge upon residences and other public areas to create disturbances in these areas. The station is left unenclosed that provides no protection from noise.

## 5.1.4 Demographics

The expected total population of Al-Reehan Neighborhood is 1500 families, which can house an estimated population of 8,000 residents.

Based on the statistics of Amaar Group (2013), 220 units had been sold by the end of October 2013. Currently the number of families that live in the neighborhood is 60 families. In 2013, the marketing team at Amaar Group conducted a survey on the 163 of 220 families and it was found that 20% of the neighborhood heads of families are within the age of (25-30), 41% are within the age of (31-40), 20% are within the age of (41-50), and 19% are above the age of 50 as shown in the Figure 5.13.
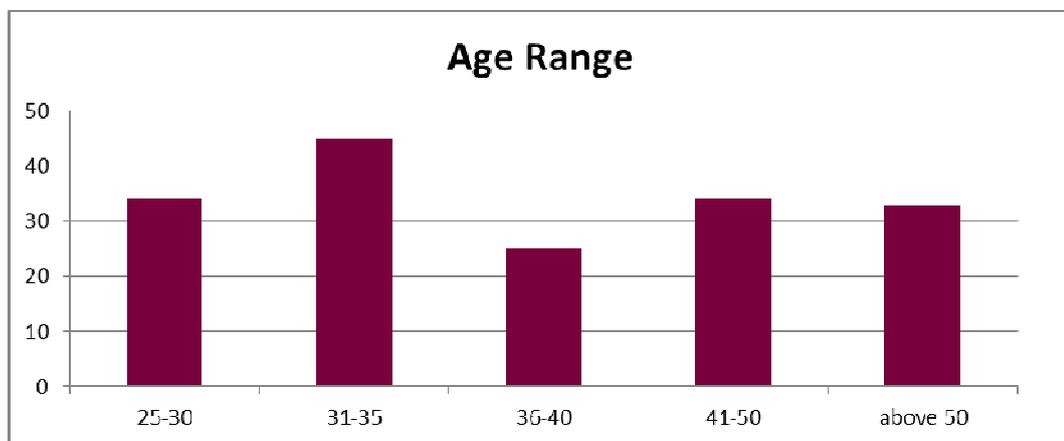


**Figure (5.13): Al-Reehan Heads of Families' Age.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2013.**

The analysis had also shown that 77% of the residents are married and 53% of the families 'size ranging between (4-7) individuals, 44% ranging between (1-3) individuals, and 3% are more than 7 individuals as shown in Figures 5.14 and 5.15 (Amaar Group, 2013).
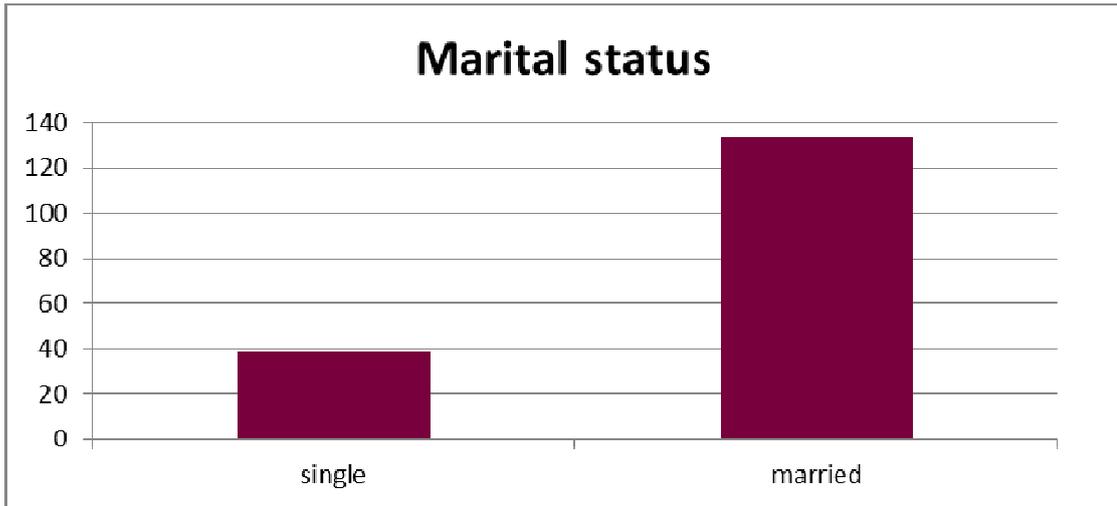
**Figure (5.14): Al-Reehan Residents' Marital Status.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2013.**
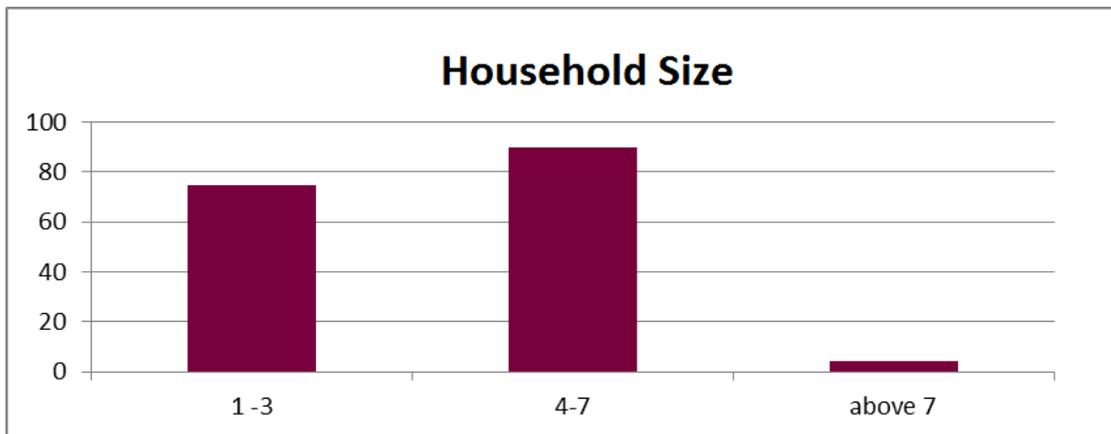


**Figure (5.15): Household Size.**
**Source: Amaar Group, 2013.**

About the residents' employment, it was found through analysis that 47% of the residents are private sector employees, while 34% of them have their own business, and 19% are public sector employees as shown in Figure 5.16 (Amaar Group, 2013).
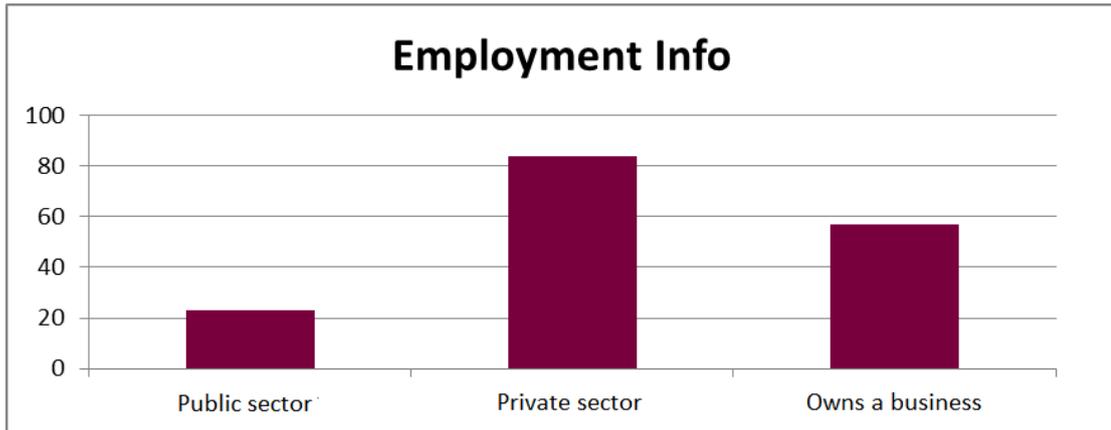
**Figure (5.16): Al-Reehan Residents' Employment.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2013.**

According to the survey analysis 76% of the residents bought the apartment to live in, while 24% of them bought the apartment only for investment purposes as shown in Figure 5.17 (Amaar Group, 2013).
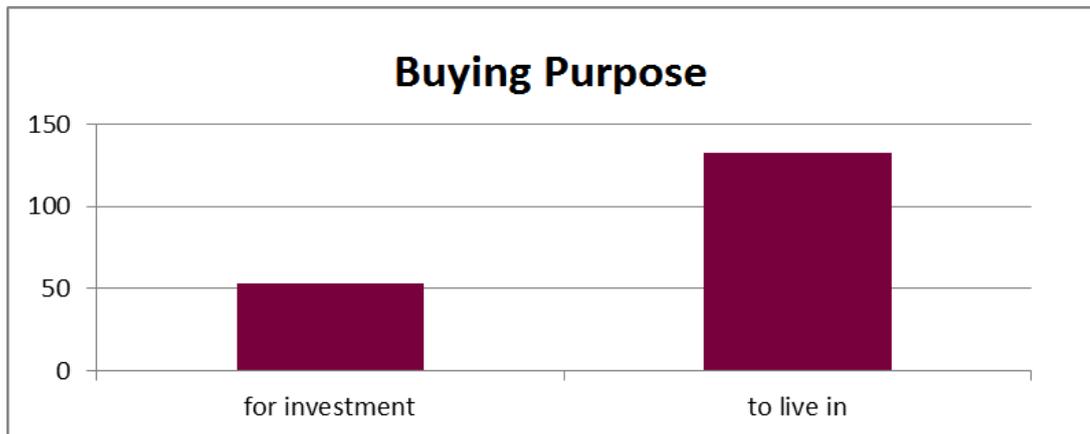
**Figure (5.17): The Buying Purpose.**

**Source: Amaar Group, 2013.**

## 5.2 Applying SWOT analysis to the neighborhood:

The external and internal environmental analysis generates a host of information and ideas. SWOT analysis summarizes such information and ideas into lists to understand the key issues and problems. The resulting lists help to provide the background food-for-thought to the following steps

that aimed to formulate strategies for neighborhood development that will build on existing strengths and hopefully diminish existing weaknesses.

In this study, it's not easy to separate and distinguish between strengths and opportunities from one side, as well as between weaknesses and threats from the other side. So, the information will be listed into two groups: the positive aspects that include strengths and opportunities and the negative aspects that include weaknesses and threats. This goes in line with the procedure followed when conducting strategic analysis on the small towns' level as illustrated in the manual on strategic planning prepared by MOLG (2013).

To begin with this process, the first meeting was conducted with the focus group of neighborhood residents. During the meeting, the following question was presented for discussion: "Think about current conditions in your neighborhood as well as any concerns you might have for the future of the area, then list your thoughts in two categories: what's good and what's not good about the neighborhood".

Participants recorded their thoughts and concerns. All items had been sorted into four fields similar to these presented in the guidelines for strategic planning for small towns (MOLG, 2013):

- Infrastructure and environmental field, including: energy, roads and transport, environment, water and drainage, solid waste, and housing.

- Economical field, including: employment (various sectors), agriculture, tourism, industry, trade, and services.

- Social field, including: education, health, social protection and empowerment (women, children, marginalized groups, people with special needs, etc. ...), culture, heritage, sports, and housing.

- Management and governance field, including: security, risk management, planning, information, and institutional development.

## 5.2.1 Positive Aspects (Strengths and Opportunities):

Participants made several comments about what are the positive aspects of their neighborhood that are summarized as the following:

➢ **On the Infrastructure and Environmental Field**

- The neighborhood's existing housing is generally well planned and maintained.

- Walkable neighborhood through having pedestrian walkways, sidewalks on both sides of street, stairs, and ramps throughout the neighborhood, that were constructed according to the master plan.

- Daily needs are present within walking distance.

- Very quiet after 4 pm and have inspiring views.

- Clean environment where there is no pollution after 4 pm.

- Modern infrastructure networks.

- Installations of gas in the neighborhood are central, and gas tanks are outside the fence of the buildings which is safer for the residents.

> **On the Economical Field**

- Amenities of nearby commercial services such as supermarket, pharmacy, bakery, shops, restaurants, coffee shops.

- Employment opportunities in hospital, offices, and businesses in the neighborhood.

- Potential large residential base will attract national and local retailers and businesses to invest in the neighborhood' commercial center.

> **On the Social Field**

- Active and friendly neighbors.

- Multi-cultural and multi-generational demographics.

- Residents care about living in the neighborhood.

- People with special needs can easily move using ramps that are constructed throughout the neighborhood.

- There is a library, mosque, and kindergarten in the neighborhood.

- Availability of medical services after the completion of work at the hospital in the neighborhood.

> **On the Management and Governance Field**

- Proximity of the neighborhood to cities especially Ramallah-Al Bireh city.

- The neighborhood is generally well planned, includes mix of homes, businesses and services and built according to a master plan.

- Amaar Group manages the neighborhood so well that a number of company's employees exist on a permanent basis in the neighborhood to serve the residents and business owners until the delivery of the neighborhood to Ramallah Municipality.

- Good and clear neighborhood identity.

- Well-defined entrance of the neighborhood.

- Low Larceny crimes.

- Availability of vacant lands for developing new projects that will serve the neighborhood such as community center, school, and sports field.

## 5.2.2 Negative Aspects (Weaknesses and Threats):

After discussing the positive aspects of the neighborhood, participants identified the negative aspects of their neighborhood. They complained about the following:

➢ **On the Infrastructure and Environmental Field**

- Not enough parking and too many cars and this enforce people to park their cars on streets.

- Random selection of plants in the public gardens and the landscape was not taken care of professionally.

- Low and short greenery.

- Trees are planted in the sidewalks in many parts of neighborhood, and this in turn leads to a narrowing of the sidewalk width for pedestrian.

- Poor services related to streets lighting, streets cleaning, and plants and trees irrigation.

- No public transportation to the neighborhood and no bus stop shelters.

- The street that connects the neighborhood with Al Tireh is in bad condition and narrow especially at the confluence of two cars together.

- No bike lanes to bike.

- Lack of traffic signs.

- There is fear that development could not be green.

- Noise from nearby amusement park that is located on a plot adjacent to the neighborhood.

- Non-completion of work within a single phase affects the residents in terms of the lack of street cleaning and dust.

- The main station of electricity is close to some buildings causing nuisance to the residents in these buildings, and there are fears among

the residents of the harmful effects of radiation resulting from the station.

- Residents complain about the availability of water. The neighborhood is supplied with water from Jerusalem Water Undertaking only two days a week.

- High water pressure in the pipes reading 25 bars, compared with 7 bars in the normal situation, causing problems in the water tanks on the roofs.

➢ **On the Economical Field**

- High prices of residential units.

- Few retailers serving the neighborhood.

- No post office.

- Currently no employment opportunities in the neighborhood.

➢ **On the Social Field**

- The developer didn't deliver all promises related to public areas including park and sports field.

- There is no sports gym although there is a space for it in the commercial center.

- There is no community center in the neighborhood.

- Lack of communication among neighbors.

- Vacant homes and absentee landlords don't take care of their property and have no interest in the neighborhood.

➢ **On the Management and Governance Field**

- Currently weak pace of investment policy of the developer, related to the unwillingness to invest in the neighborhood.

- There is no neighborhood association.

- Some residents are not committed to the rules of the neighborhood with respect to the external appearance of the buildings, which will affect the aesthetics of the neighborhood in the future.

- Buildings adjacent to each other because setback distance between buildings is the minimum which is 7m only.

- Delayed delivery of finished units.

- Lack of municipal funding and support.

- Serious competition from other developments such as Rawabi and Al Ghadeer has affected the attraction of new residents.

- Delays in construction projects due to lack of funding or lack of demand for apartments resulting from general economic and political situations.

- Disinvestment in affordable housing.

## 5.3 Determining priorities

In order to achieve the desired development of the neighborhood, a well-defined set of priorities would be needed to ensure the best economic allocations and sustainability of the processes.

Priority issues are identified at intervals longer than the lifetime of the strategic plan, so the top priorities are distributed on the first four years, then the rest of the issues are distributed on the following four years (8 years), and then on the four years that followed (12 years) (MOLG, 2013).

During the second meeting that was conducted with the same focus group, participants were invited to choose the top priorities up to five in each field among all issues that were discussed in the first meeting by a simple voting process.

It was necessary before choosing top priorities to discuss and analyze all issues and problems, their causes, their effects on the neighborhood, which of these is difficult to deal with, and which is easier to deal with and to change. Participants listed their top priorities as shown in Table 5.1, as follows:

**Table (5.1): Al-Reehan Neighborhood Priority Issues.**

| No. | Field | Priority Issue |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **On the Infrastructure and Environmental Field** | 1. The existence of problems related to the location of the main station of electricity.<br>2. Lack of proper water supply at the neighborhood.<br>3. Non presence of public transport services.<br>4. Poor infrastructure of Al-Tireh - Al-Reehan Street. |
| 2 | **On the Economical Field** | 1. Unavailability of employment opportunities on the site.<br>2. Lack of retailers and businesses in the neighborhood. |
| 3 | **On the Social Field** | 1. Lack of education services.<br>2. Poor services of recreation facilities, such as: park, sports field, bicycle and walking/jogging pathway system, and sports center.<br>3. Weak communication among neighbors. |
| 4 | **On the Management and Governance Field** | 1. Unavailability of neighborhood association.<br>2. Lack of affordable housing.<br>3. Poor residents' commitment to the rules of the neighborhood. |

**Chapter Six**

# Neighborhood Strategic Planning Framework: Al-Reehan Neighborhood Case

# Chapter Six

# Neighborhood Strategic Planning Framework:
# Al–Reehan Neighborhood Case

After performing the strategic analysis and determining the priorities, the second phase in the neighborhood strategic planning process is the formulation of the strategic plan framework. In addition, the researcher will summarize the sequence of the strategic planning process at the end of this chapter.

## 6.1 Developing the Vision of Al-Reehan Neighborhood

The vision articulates the "end state" towards which collective efforts should lead. Effective vision statement is clear, concise, and memorable. It gives shape and direction to the neighborhood's future. It implies the work still needs to be accomplished and lends credibility and motivation to the mission statement. A long term vision needs, as far as possible, to have the commitment of all stakeholders.

Amaar Group, the developer of Al-Reehan Neighborhood, has prepared a general master plan for the neighborhood in 2009. In this plan the vision was developed to be:

**"Create a neighborhood that is socially sustainable and economically viable, developed by private sector in partnership with public entities, targeting working and middle classes, offering them environmentally friendly housing at affordable prices".**

This vision statement was discussed with the focus group during the second meeting. They accepted and approved this vision and found it deals with all necessary and important aspects of the neighborhood.

## 6.2 Developing the Mission of Al-Reehan Neighborhood

Mission statements are similar to vision statements, in that they look at the big picture. However, they are more concrete, and they are definitely more action-oriented than vision statements.

The mission statement should be a concise statement of the strategy and developed from the residents' perspective and it should fit with the vision for the neighborhood. The mission should answer the question: "What do we do?", so it is a brief description of the neighborhood's fundamental purpose.

Since Amaar Group didn't formulate mission statement within the general master plan that was prepared in 2009, the mission of the neighborhood was formulated based on the previous strategic analysis and on the vision of the neighborhood and with consultation with the participants in the second meeting. This mission was formulated as **"Al-Reehan provides a strong, cohesive, and viable society, promotes activities and projects that enhance economic and social opportunities for the community, and preserves and improves the quality of life of its residents".**

## 6.3 Specifying the Strategic Goals of Al-Reehan Neighborhood

After formulating the vision and mission, the next step is establishing the goals and objectives of the neighborhood.

The goals are considered as the backbone for any strategic plan. They determine a general framework for the development work in the neighborhood during the implementation of the strategic plan. Goals should answer the question "What do we want to do to achieve the development and improve the quality of living of the residents?". All the strategic plan outcomes including procedures and projects are based on the desired goals of the neighborhood.

Based on the strategic analysis and the formulated vision and mission, and with consultation with the focus group, and learning from the experiences of similar strategic plans for neighborhoods in other countries, the strategic goals of Al-Reehan Neighborhood are:

❑ To create vibrant and dynamic neighborhood.

❑ To strengthen the social aspects of the neighborhood.

❑ To develop affordable housing in phase three of the neighborhood.

❑ To improve infrastructure for the neighborhood.

❑ To improve governance and management of the neighborhood.

## 6.4 Formulating Strategies and Actions

To succeed in achieving the desired goals, a set of strategies and actions is needed. In this section, strategies and actions related to each goal were outlined after been discussed with the focus group, to promote the development of Al-Reehan Neighborhood.

❑ **Goal 1**: **To create vibrant and dynamic neighborhood**

This goal will be achieved through adoption of the following strategies:

➢ Providing recreational opportunities in the neighborhood. This could be done through:

✓ Building the archaeological park according to master plan.

✓ Constructing sports field according to master plan.

✓ Providing gym in the commercial center.

✓ Seeking appropriate funding for implementing desired projects.

➢ Promoting economic development in the neighborhood and attracting new businesses. This could be done through:

✓ Creating marketing plan that promotes the advantages of the commercial center and the neighborhood.

✓ Constructing the second phase of the commercial center that will include offices according to master plan.

✓ Increasing residential base to motivate business owners to open their shops and retails and to attract new ones.

❑ **Goal 2: To strengthen the social aspects of the neighborhood**

This goal will be achieved through adoption of the following strategies:

➢ Building relationships between residents and connecting them with each other. This could be done through:

✓ Creating neighborhood events to celebrate something that people share.

✓ Making cultural gatherings to display artwork, food and music.

✓ Using technology to improve communication such as email list-serve for community alerts, notices, invitations, and information.

✓ Building community center to be a place for the residents to gather and do joint activities by making changes on the master plan and determine the suitable location and design for the building.

➢ Providing educational services at the neighborhood. This could be done through:

✓ Building school on the vacant land that is allocated for it in the master plan and seeking appropriate funding to implement it.

✓ Holding all necessary meetings and studies with Ministry of Education to begin and follow through with process.

❑ **Goal 3**: **To develop affordable housing in phase three of the neighborhood**

This goal will be achieved by reducing the cost through adoption of the following strategies:

➢ Obtaining facilities and incentives for affordable housing. This could be done through:

   ✓ Holding all necessary meetings and studies with MOLG, Ramallah Municipality, and Engineers Association to change some regulations regarding lands and buildings and reducing fees.

   ✓ Holding all necessary meetings with government representatives to obtain facilities on taxes of affordable projects.

➢ Providing funding for affordable housing. This could be done through:

   ✓ Seeking funding from local and foreign grants.

➢ Reducing construction period is the key to reduce the cost of construction. This could be done through:

   ✓ Adopting systems and innovative ways in construction that were proven to cut time by as much as half in forming different types of elements such as the use of precast stone facades, thus saving overhead and labor cost as well as many other associated costs.

➢ Designing smartly helps in reducing cost. This could be done through:

   ✓ Using modular designs that enable repetitive use of material.

✓ Using new design methodologies such as BIM system to discover conflicts before construction.

✓ Adopting lean structural designs: structural designs should be performed using 3D analysis tools by professional engineers. Some practices such as adding more reinforcement because of unjustified fears by designers or lack of experience increasing the cost of skeleton works.

✓ Giving special attention to site analysis: it shall lead to optimal building orientation, maximum use of available land plot, and correct use of land natural levels.

➢ Savings in materials. This could be done through:

✓ Procuring directly from suppliers and in bulk quantities to achieve prices that are only available through economies of scale.

✓ Reducing waste of materials through proper supervision during constriction stage.

❑ **Goal 4**: **To improve infrastructure for the neighborhood**

This goal will be achieved through adoption of the following strategies:

➢ Improving and facilitating connectivity with Ramallah Municipality to develop Al-Tireh – Al-Reehan Street and to improve municipal services. This could be done through:

- ✓ Holding all necessary meetings and studies to begin and follow through with process.

- ✓ Preparing application and proposal to submit to proper authorities.

➢ Providing public transit for affordable transportation for the neighborhood to improve mobility of the residents. This could be done through:

- ✓ Holding all necessary meetings with MOT to provide public transit.

- ✓ Identifying the locations of bus stops in the neighborhood and providing the bus shelters at these locations.

➢ Reducing the suffering of the residents regarding the problems of water and electricity main station. This could be done through:

- ✓ Coordinating with JDECO to check the nuisance and radiation resulting from the station.

- ✓ Installing noise barriers and sound walls around the main station can produce excellent noise level reductions while also enhancing station security.

- ✓ Installing an additional water tank for each apartment on the roof of the building.

- ✓ Building water well for each building to serve all apartments.

❑ **Goal 5**: **To improve governance and management of the neighborhood**

This goal will be achieved through adoption of the following strategies:

➢ Strengthening residents' commitment to the laws of the neighborhood. This could be done through:

✓ Organizing workshops to educate residents about the importance of preserving the neighborhood public image.

✓ Monitoring and enforcing violations by the neighborhood association that will be created.

➢ Creating neighborhood association to help residents work together for the preservation and improvement of their neighborhood and to facilitate neighborhood social activities. This could be done through the following steps:

✓ Forming a startup committee: developing an initial group of neighbors who have a real interest in neighborhood involvement. This committee will meet to establish the purpose and boundaries of the association.

✓ Outreaching to the neighborhood through a variety of means, such as: hosting a small event, posting flyers in the neighborhood, or conducting a neighborhood needs survey.

✓ Conducting meetings: the committee can introduce the purpose and responsibilities of the association and discuss the vision, mission, and goals of the association to begin working toward resolving their issues and projects.

Table 6.1 summarizes strategic goals, strategies, actions and projects.

**Table (6.1): Al-Reehan Neighborhood Goals, Strategies, and Actions.**

| Goals | Strategies | Actions and Projects |
|---|---|---|
| To create vibrant and dynamic neighborhood. | 1- Providing recreational opportunities in the neighborhood. | • Building the archaeological park according to master plan.<br>• Constructing sports field according to master plan.<br>• Providing gym in the commercial center.<br>• Seeking appropriate funding for implementing desired projects. |
| | 2- Promoting economic development in the neighborhood and attracting new businesses. | • Creating marketing plan that promotes the advantages of the commercial center and the neighborhood.<br>• Constructing the second phase of the commercial center.<br>• Increasing residential base to motivate business owners and to attract new ones. |
| To strengthen the social aspects of the neighborhood. | 1- Building relationships between residents and connecting them with each other. | • Creating neighborhood events to celebrate something that people share.<br>• Making cultural gatherings to display artwork, food and music.<br>• Using technology to improve communication.<br>• Building community center to be a place for the residents to gather and do joint activities. |
| | 2- Providing educational services at the neighborhood. | • Building school and seeking appropriate funding to implement it.<br>• Holding all necessary meetings and studies with Ministry of Education. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| To develop affordable housing in phase three of the neighborhood. | 1- Obtaining facilities and incentives for affordable housing. | • Holding all necessary meetings and studies with MOLG, Ramallah Municipality, and Engineers Association.<br>• Holding all necessary meetings with government representatives to obtain facilities on taxes. |
| | 2- Providing funding for affordable housing. | • Seeking funding from local and foreign grants. |
| | 3- Reducing construction period is the key to reduce the cost of construction. | • Adopting systems and innovative ways in construction that were proven to cut time by as much as half. |
| | 4- Designing smartly helps in reducing cost. | • Using modular designs.<br>• Using new design methodologies such as BIM system.<br>• Adopting lean structural designs.<br>• Giving special attention to site analysis. |
| | 5- Savings in materials. | • Procuring directly from suppliers and in bulk quantities.<br>• Reducing waste of materials through proper supervision. |
| To improve infrastructure for the neighborhood. | 1- Improving and facilitating connectivity with Ramallah Municipality to develop Al-Tireh – Al-Reehan Street and to improve municipal services. | • Holding necessary meetings and studies to begin with municipality.<br>• Preparing application and proposal to submit to proper authorities. |
| | 2- Providing public transit for affordable transportation | • Holding necessary meetings with MOT to provide public transit.<br>• Identifying the locations of bus stops and providing bus shelters. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | for the neighborhood to improve mobility of the residents. | |
| | 3- Reducing the suffering of the residents regarding the problems of water and electricity main station. | • Coordinating with JDECO to check the nuisance and radiation resulting from the station.<br>• Installing noise barriers and sound walls around the main station.<br>• Installing an additional water tank for each apartment on the roof of the building.<br>• Building water well for each building. |
| To improve governance and management of the neighborhood. | 1- Strengthening residents' commitment to the laws of the neighborhood. | • Organizing workshops about the importance of neighborhood image.<br>• Enforcing violations by the neighborhood association. |
| | 2- Creating neighborhood association. | • Forming a startup committee.<br>• Outreaching to the neighborhood.<br>• Conducting meetings to introduce the purpose and responsibilities of the association and discuss the vision, mission, and goals of the association. |

## 6.5 Preparation for the Implementation of the Neighborhood Strategic Plan:

The effectiveness of the strategic plan largely depends on the degree of commitment in carrying it out. The real work will then begin. Implementing the strategic plan requires continuous care and involvement by all stakeholders.

It's necessary at this stage to work with key institutions and the neighborhood community to implement the strategic plan, and to divide

actions amongst all actors to maximize collaboration and participation in the execution of the plan.

The first step in the implementation process is to establish a neighborhood committee to assume responsibility for developing implementation plan. The committee should be composed of representatives from neighborhood residents, including but not limited to, members of the strategic planning group who developed the neighborhood strategic plan. All projects and activities should be coordinated by the committee.

The implementation plan that emanated from the strategic development plan is a quad plan; a four-year comprehensive plan. In order to facilitate executing, monitoring and updating of this plan, it should be divided into four annual action plans, each one of them should include a time frame (quarterly) to implement the projects within one year, the expected cost, and the candidates to execute and finance these projects. This goes in line with the procedure followed when preparing implementation and action plans for small towns as illustrated in the manual prepared by MOLG (2013).

After the adoption of the annual action plans, the necessary preparations to start the execution of each project become obvious. Accordingly, the arrangements to execute the projects of the first year will begin.

## 6.6 Preparation of Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating the Neighborhood Strategic Plan:

Following up the execution of the annual implementation plans should be on an annual basis through detecting delayed projects that are not implemented according to the plans, and the projects that are executed earlier than they are planned. Besides, it's necessary to evaluate the achievement of the goals that are identified in the strategic plan.

To monitor the implementation process and evaluate the achievement of desired goals, performance indicators should be developed and the measurement tools must be identified. This will help the neighborhood committee as well as the residents to assess the successes and failures, and to update the plan for the coming year.

At this stage, and after the annual evaluation of the plan, it's very important to inform the local community about the results through conducting a meeting and inviting the representatives of the community. Such a meeting will help to keep the communication with the local community regarding the annual action plan and its output. This will for sure enhance the confidence of the community about the strategic planning as a tool for organizing the local development.

After finishing the evaluation process, it becomes possible to review the implementation plan and update it depending on the recommendations resulting from monitoring and evaluation processes. Accordingly, the

annual action plans must be renewed through development of new plans for the next year.

## 6.7 General Guidelines for Developing the Framework of Neighborhood Strategic Planning:

In this section, all stages and steps of developing neighborhood strategic plan will be summarized sequentially including some necessary forms that could be used to facilitate performing of the process.

The framework of neighborhood strategic planning includes the following stages:

❖ **The organization and analysis**. This includes the following steps:

1 • Making necessary arrangements for forming a strategic planning team (see Form 1).

2 • Analyzing of relevant stakeholders (see Form 2).

3 • Setting up a committee of stakeholders' representatives (see Form 3).

4 • Conducting the first community meeting.

5 • Diagnosing the current situation.

6 • Applying SWOT analysis (see Form 4).

7 • Identifying the key priorities (see Form 4).

8 • Preparing a short report describing the outcome of the strategic analysis.

❖ **Identification of the vision and development goals**. This includes the following step:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | • Conducting the second community meeting in order to develop the vision and the mission, as well as to identify the development goals (see Forms 5 & 6). |
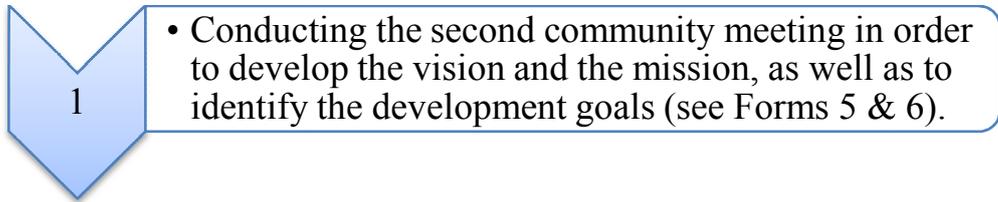
❖ **Identification of strategies and projects**. This includes the following steps:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | • Conducting the third community meeting in order to formulate key strategies. |
| 2 | • Identifying actions, development projects and interventions. |
| 3 | • Preparing draft strategic plan by the strategic planning team as per the proposed outline contents (see Form 7). |
| 4 | • Reviewing the strategic plan by community. |
| 5 | • Adopting the strategic plan by all parties. |
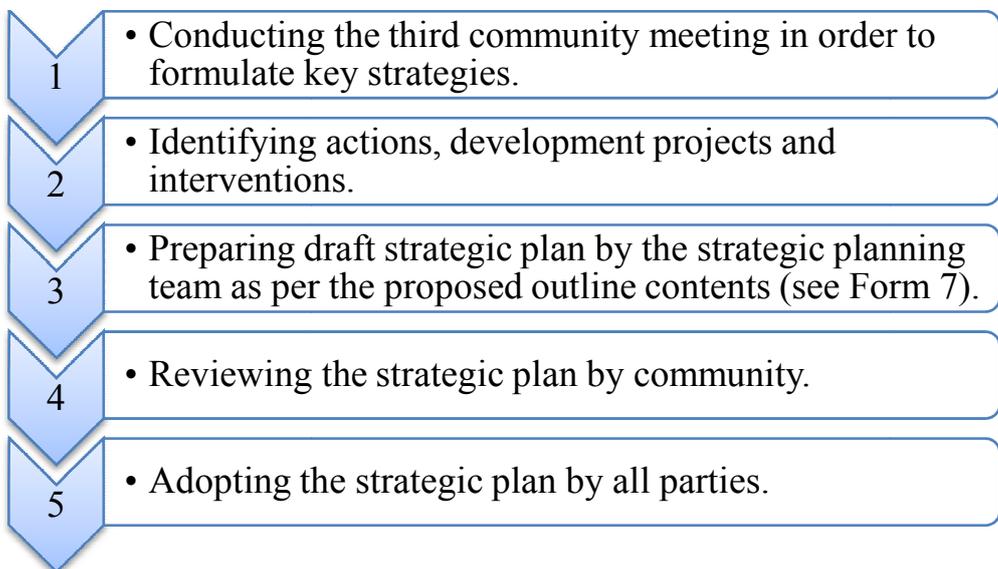
❖ **Preparation for the implementation**. This includes the following steps:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | • Preparing the implementation plan (see Form 8). |
| 2 | • Preparing the annual action plans. |
| 3 | • Approving the annual action plans by all parties. |
| 4 | • Approving the annual budget by all parties. |
| 5 | • Preparing all studies and arrangements to execute the projects. |
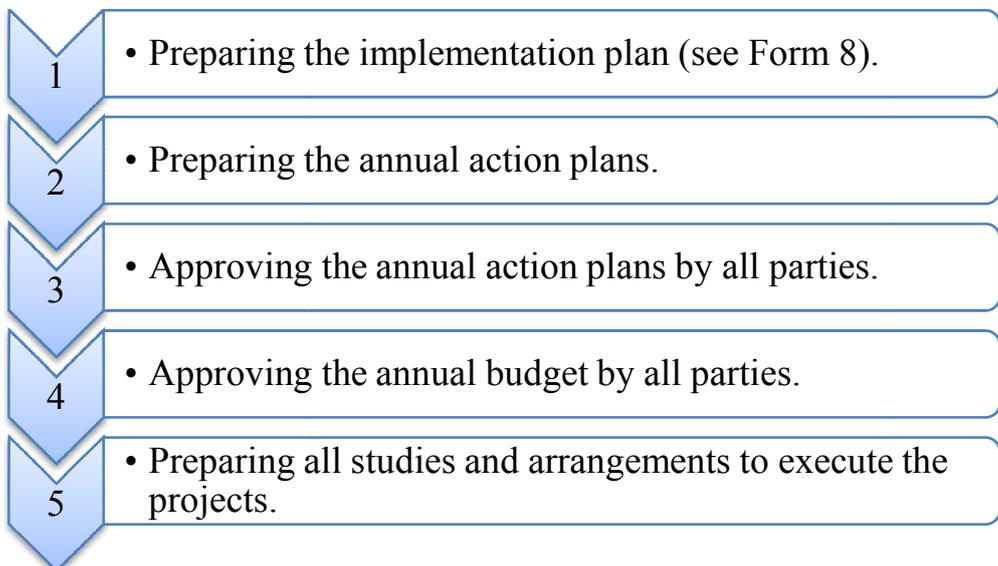
❖ **Preparation for monitoring, evaluation, and updating the plan**.

This includes the following steps:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | • Setting indicators for measuring the achievement of the development goals (see Form 9). |
| 2 | • Identifying measurement tools (see Form 9). |
| 3 | • Monitoring the implementation (see Form 10). |
| 4 | • Monitoring and evaluation (see Form 11). |
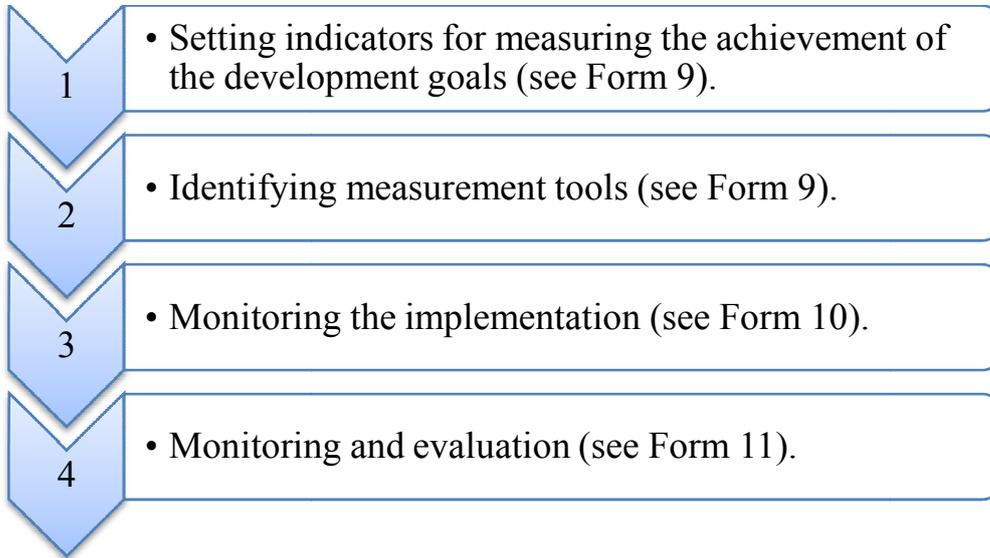
# Chapter Seven

# Conclusions and Recommendations

# Chapter Seven
# Conclusions and Recommendations

## 7.1 Summary

This study has focused on the strategic planning of neighborhoods. It has formulated a strategic framework for Al-Reehan Neighborhood in Ramallah – Palestine as a case study, which could be followed when preparing a strategic plan on the neighborhood level.

In this study, the researcher made use of several studies, research and scholarly papers written on strategic planning, and examined case studies from a number of countries in order to learn from their experiences. In addition, the researcher conducted several meetings with neighborhood's residents.

A two-step analysis of Al-Reehan Neighborhood's environment was conducted. First, the neighborhood current conditions were clarified which included project location, demographics, services, and infrastructure including roads network, water network, sewage network, and electricity network. The second step was applying strategic analysis using the SWOT analysis, addressing positive and negative aspects of the neighborhood through conducting meetings with them and determining top priority issues to be focused on.

As a result, a strategic framework has been proposed for Al-Reehan Neighborhood. This framework includes a vision, mission, strategic goals, strategies, actions and projects, and some steps and clarifications regarding

the preparations for implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and updating of the strategic plan.

## 7.2 Conclusions

- The strategic analysis, which includes studying the current situation of the neighborhood and conducting SWOT analysis, is the base of the strategic framework formulation. This strategic framework includes the formulation of vision, mission, and the strategic goals to achieve a successful neighborhood, and the related strategies.

- The SWOT analysis is based on the residents' feedback on what is good and what is not good regarding their neighborhood. So, the residents' involvement is very important in the strategic planning process.

- A framework of the strategic plan of Al-Reehan Neighborhood comes in accordance with Amaar Group's vision which is "Create a neighborhood that is socially sustainable and economically viable, developed by private sector in partnership with public entities, targeting working and middle classes, offering them environmentally friendly housing at affordable prices".

- A mission for Al-Reehan Neighborhood was developed with consultation with the residents. This mission states that "Al-Reehan provides a strong, cohesive, and viable society, promotes activities and projects that enhances economic and social opportunities for the

community, and preserves and improves the quality of life of its residents".

- Based on the suggested vision and mission statements, the strategic goals have been developed which included:

  ➢ To create vibrant and dynamic neighborhood.

  ➢ To strengthen the social aspects of the neighborhood.

  ➢ To develop affordable housing in phase three of the neighborhood.

  ➢ To improve infrastructure for the neighborhood.

  ➢ To improve governance and management of the neighborhood.

- Based on the SWOT analysis and the strategic goals, several strategies were suggested to achieve the goals. The strategies could be summed up as follows:

  ➢ Providing recreational, educational, and economic services at the neighborhood.

  ➢ Building relationships between residents, creating neighborhood association to facilitate neighborhood social activities, and strengthening residents' commitment to the laws of the neighborhood.

  ➢ Obtaining facilities and incentives for affordable housing and reducing the cost of the construction.

➢ Improving and facilitating connectivity with Ramallah Municipality to improve municipal services and develop Al-Tireh – Al-Reehan Street.

➢ Providing public transit for affordable transportation for the neighborhood to improve mobility of the residents.

➢ Reducing the suffering of the residents regarding the problems of water and electricity main station.

## 7.3 Recommendations

After the formulation of a strategic framework for Al-Reehan Neighborhood in Palestine and determining the appropriate strategies to achieve the strategic goals, the following recommendations are proposed:

- It is recommended to adopt the proposed strategic planning framework for the development of the neighborhoods in Palestine.

- Neighborhood success depends on the active involvement of all stakeholders, so the neighborhood strategic planning and development needs the developer leadership and an effective unified effort across all the parties with a proper representation and engagement in order to achieve the strategic goals.

- It is recommended that municipalities and developers engage the residents in the strategic planning process and consider their concerns and comments regarding their neighborhoods.

- It is recommended to prepare a detailed action plan that will clarify and illustrate the entity responsible for the implementation of each activity, the time period, and the budget that is needed to execute the works to assure the best performance and results.

- It is highly recommended that a neighborhood committee be established and should include key stakeholders and representatives from the main developer, related municipal and governmental entities and residents to follow up and monitor the progress of the process.

- It is important to follow common standards in monitoring and measuring the progress in order to assess such progress.

- It's recommended to continually to promote, revise, and update the neighborhood strategic plan, in order that the strategic plan should be a "living document".

- Study development proposals on a case-by-case basis, using the strategic plan as a basis for analysis. The neighborhood development process must be guided by the comprehensive strategic plan.

- The neighborhood committee should, on an ongoing basis, seek public and private resources of funding for financing neighborhood development.

- Making partnerships with other agencies, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses to leverage support and resources.

- Ensure that new development projects are compatible with the integrity and stability of the neighborhood and appropriate to the character of the neighborhood.

- Neighborhood association that will be created should have the opportunity to review and comment on all future development proposals.

- It is recommended that further studies should be done on spatial planning on all levels; national, regional, urban, as well as the neighborhoods level to choose the most appropriate locations considering the identified relevant issues.

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# Annexes

## Form 1: Formation of the Strategic Planning Team.

| Name of Member | His / Her Role in the Committee (Coordinator /Member) | His / Her Specialization | Gender | | Age | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Male | Female | 16-29 | Above 29 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

## Form 2: Stakeholders Analysis.

| Guiding Questions | Stakeholders |
|---|---|
| Who may be negatively or positively influenced by the strategic development plan that is intended to be prepared? | |
| Who should be involved due to their official rank relevant to the project? | |
| Who should be involved due to their dominance on the required sources (money, expertise, information, and staff)? | |
| Who has the ability on hindering or ceasing the implementation of the project? | |

## Form 3: Setting Up the Committee of Stakeholders' Representatives.

| No. | Name | Institution | Job Title | Phone No. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

**Form 4: Applying SWOT Analysis and Identifying Priorities.**

|  | Infrastructure and Environment Field | Social Field | Economic Field | Governance and management Field |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Positive Aspects (Strengths/ Opportunities) | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. |
| Negative Aspects (Weaknesses / Threats) | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. | 1-<br>2-<br>.<br>.<br>. |
| Priorities | 1-<br>2-<br>3-<br>4-<br>5- | 1-<br>2-<br>3-<br>4-<br>5- | 1-<br>2-<br>3-<br>4-<br>5- | 1-<br>2-<br>3-<br>4-<br>5- |

**Form 5: Steps of Drafting a Development Vision and Mission.**

| No. | Step |
|---|---|
| 1. | Meeting is held for the community and relevant stakeholders. Dividing the participants into small brainstorming groups, provided that the number of the group members should not be more than 7 persons. |
| 2. | Asking each of the group members to think in silently within 5 minutes, how they want the future of their neighborhood to be as different from present and what neighborhood is doing now. |
| 3. | Asking each group to write, within 10 minutes, descriptive phrases expressing their future vision and current mission of the neighborhood. |
| 4. | Asking each group to present its proposed draft to all participants in order to agree upon a certain draft. And in case of non-agreement, on a certain draft, the participants may vote on the proposed drafts. |
| 5. | The agreed upon draft is reviewed for making any lingual amendments |

**Form 6: Steps of Identifying Goals of the Neighborhood.**

| No. | Step |
|---|---|
| 1. | During the same meeting as in Form 5, the groups are asked to review the positive and negative aspects and the priority issues that have been previously identified. |
| 2. | Each group suggests the most important alternatives of what can be done to handle the priority issues. Such alternatives should be drafted as development goals. |
| 3. | Each group evaluates its proposed goals, taking the vision into consideration, to select the most important goals. The group can review and evaluate its proposed goals through answering the following questions:<br>- Will the proposed goals, if achieved, handle a priority issue (s)?<br>- Does the goal apply on the characteristic "SMART"?<br>- Is the goal important in itself or repetition of another goal (s)?<br>- Is the drafted goal actually an action or a goal?<br>- Does the goal serve to achieve the vision? |
| 4. | Asking each group to present its proposed draft to all participants in order to agree upon a certain draft. And in case of non-agreement, on a certain draft, the participants may vote on the proposed drafts. |
| 5. | The agreed upon draft is reviewed for making lingual amendments |

**Form 7: Contents of the Strategic Plan**

- **Introduction:**
  - ➢ Objectives of the plan
  - ➢ Committees that participated in preparing the strategic plan and the names of its members
  - ➢ Methodology of preparing the strategic plan
- **About the Neighborhood:**
  - ➢ Geographical characteristics
  - ➢ Demographic characteristics
- **Diagnostic Analysis - diagnosing Fields of Development:**
  - ➢ Infrastructure and environmental field, including: energy, roads and transport, environment, water and drainage, solid waste, and housing.
  - ➢ Economical field, including: employment (various sectors), agriculture, tourism, industry, trade, and services.
  - ➢ Social field, including: education, health, social protection and empowerment (women, children, marginalized groups, people with special needs, etc. ...), culture, heritage, sports, and housing.
  - ➢ Management and governance field, including: security, risk management, planning, information, and institutional development.
- **Strategic Development Framework:**
  - ➢ Priority issues
  - ➢ Vision and mission statements
  - ➢ Development goals
  - ➢ Strategies
  - ➢ Actions, projects, and interventions
- **Annexes:**
  - ➢ Reports
  - ➢ Maps

**Form 8: Matrix Implementation Plan.**

| Development Field | Issue | Project Title | Estimated Cost | Plan Year-Year Annual Expenditures | | | | Implementing Body | | | | Funding Body | |
| | | | | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | Committee | Developer | Local Govern-ment | Others | Local | Non-Local |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Infrastructure and Environment | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Social | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Economic | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Management and Governance | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Form 9: Setting Measuring Indicators and Tools.**

| Field: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Goal | Indicator | Information Source | Measurement Tool |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

**Form 10: Monitoring the Implementation of Annual Plan    for Some Year**

| Delayed Projects | Development Field | Reasons | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Advanced Projects | Development Field | Reasons | Recommendations |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

**Form 11: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

| Field | Goals | Measurement Indicators | Current Value of the Indicator | Expected Value of the Indicator for All Years | | | | Source of Information | Measurement Tool | Body Responsible for Monitoring |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | First Year | Second Year | Third Year | Forth Year | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
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# التخطيط الاستراتيجي للضواحي السكنية:
# اتجاهات التطوير المستقبلي

إعداد

سحر عبد الغني فارس

إشراف

أ. د. سمير أبو عيشة

**التخطيط الاستراتيجي للضواحي السكنية: اتجاهات التطوير المستقبلي**

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إشراف

**أ. د. سمير أبو عيشة**

# الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إعداد وتوضيح الإطار العام للتخطيط الاستراتيجي للضواحي السكنية، وتكمن أهمية هذه الدراسة بارتباطها بالضواحي السكنية وبمفهوم التخطيط الاستراتيجي، وعدم وجود دراسات سابقة في الخطط الاستراتيجية على مستوى الضواحي السكنية في فلسطين.

استفاد هذا البحث من التجارب الدولية السابقة من خلال دراسة وتحليل عملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي لبعض الضواحي السكنية في عدة دول مختلفة ومحاولة تطبيق المبادئ العامة لعملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي على الحالة الدراسية وهي ضاحية الريحان في فلسطين بما يتناسب مع خصوصية المنطقة. حيث بدأت عملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي للضاحية بتشخيص الوضع القائم من خلال جمع المعلومات التي شملت عدة جوانب وهي الموقع الجغرافي والسكان والخدمات والبنية التحتية للضاحية . وبعد ذلك تم عقد عدة لقاءات مع سكان الضاحية لعمل تحليل للجوانب الايجابية والسلبية التي شملت مواطن القوة والضعف والفرص والتحديات التي تواجه الضاحية وتحديد الاولويات من بينها. هذا التحليل أدى فيما بعد لبلورة الرؤية والرسالة والأهداف الإستراتيجية للضاحية والتي تركز على الأولويات، وتحديد الاستراتيجيات والمشاريع الضرورية لتحقيق الأهداف المرجوة.

استنادا إلى الخبرة المكتسبة من خلال عملية إعداد الخطة الاستراتيجية لضاحية الريحان وبمشاركة سكان الضاحية، توصلت الدراسة الى المبادئ التوجيهية العامة لإعداد التخطيط الاستراتيجي للضواحي السكنية في فلسطين، بما في ذلك الخطوات والإجراءات والأدوات اللازمة لذلك.

وقد تضمن البحث عدة توصيات أهمها اعتماد هذه المنهجية لعمل خطـــط اســتراتيجية مستقبلية لتطوير الضواحي السكنية وضرورة اشراك السكان من قبل البلديات والمطورين فــي عمليات التخطيط الاستراتيجي   وضرورة عمل دراسات في التخطيط المكـــاني علـــى جميـــع المستويات و على مستوى الضواحي السكنية لتحديد أفضل المواقع لبنائها.