

## Developments Concerning E1, Beit Hanina and Al-Issawiya

1 message

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Over the past few days, there have been several developments on issues Ir Amim has been closely monitoring:

#### **The Publication of the E1 Plan's Documents**

As a follow up to [Ir Amim's previous report on the delay in publication of the E1 plan's documents](#), yesterday (March 18) the documents were published on the Planning Council's website and are now accessible for those intending to submit objections. The public is given 60 days to submit objections to a plan from the time of the notice's official announcement. However due to the gap between the notice's formal publication in February and the actual release of the plan's documents, there is uncertainty as to when the 60-day period commenced. Ir Amim is working to clarify this issue.

Given the current circumstances with the outbreak of COVID-19 and the corresponding government restrictions, it is unclear how this will impact the planning processes. However, the situation will nevertheless greatly limit the mobilization of Palestinian residents affected by the plan and the ability to meet and work together to formulate and draft objections.

Due to the plan's lethal implications on the necessary conditions for a viable two state-two capital in Jerusalem framework, it is crucial that there be heightened attention and opposition to the plan's advancement during this 60-day period.

#### **Settlement Plans for Beit Hanina Omitted from Committee Agenda**

As Ir Amim reported, [the outline plans \(TPS 740993 and TPS 740951\) for the establishment of two new settler compounds inside Beit Hanina](#) were scheduled to be discussed at the Local Planning Committee on March 18. While the Planning Committee did indeed convene for discussions yesterday, the two settler-initiated plans were removed from the committee's agenda and therefore not raised for discussion.

#### **Escalation of Hostile Police Activity in Al-Issawiya**

While it appeared there was a reduction in police operations in Al-Issawiya in late January, the situation has since deteriorated once again with the intensification of violent police raids and measures in the neighborhood. As Ir Amim reported in the past, Al-Issawiya [has been the target of a concerted aggressive police campaign for the past ten months with no reasonable cause.](#)

Despite the COVID-19 crisis and the government's imposition of stringent restrictions and social distancing to curb the spread of the virus, there has been heightened police and para-military presence in the heart of the community's residential areas. This has not only generated acute friction as in the past, but due to the unique

circumstances concerning the Coronavirus, the stark increase in police presence and operations in close quarters has induced extreme anxiety and apprehension among the neighborhood's residents. Among the various measures which the police have employed over the past few weeks include: arbitrary detainment of residents for the purpose of identification and/or body searches, mandatory closure of businesses, search and arrests, and the imposition of roadblocks and restrictions on movement within the neighborhood as well as along its main entrances.

Since March 7, there has been a palpable escalation in police activity and harassment marked by incidents of police brutality and violent altercations with the residents. One attorney representing the detained individuals estimates that 15-20 community members, many of them minors, have been arrested since then. The raids are often accompanied by indiscriminate use of tear gas, stun grenades, rubber bullets and physical assault in densely populated residential areas. Moreover, the presence of a large contingent of police forces without the necessary protective gear in close proximity to residents constitutes a violation of the Israeli Ministry of Health regulations to stem the potential spread and contraction of the Coronavirus.

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