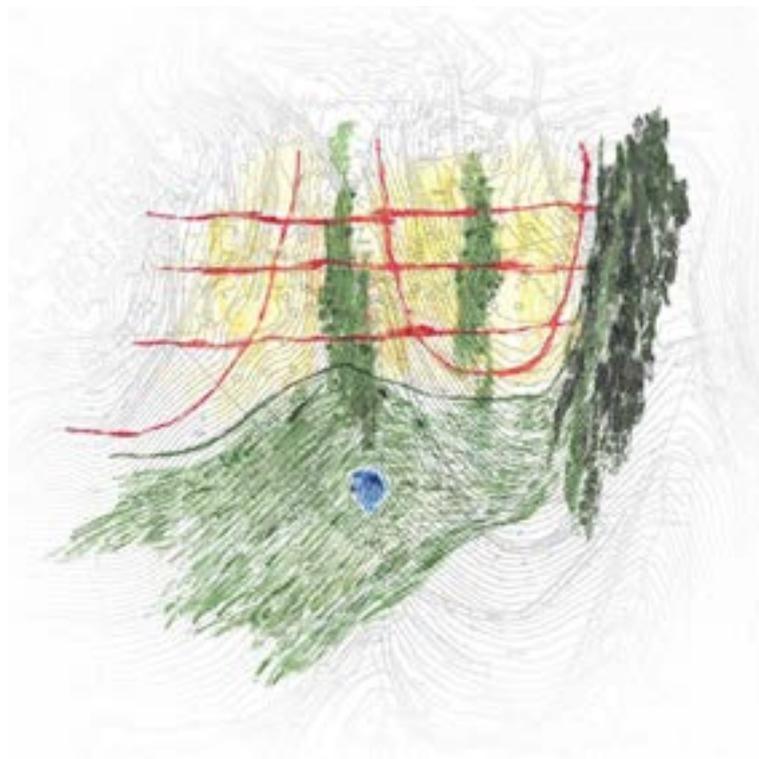




# **RECHES LAVAN**

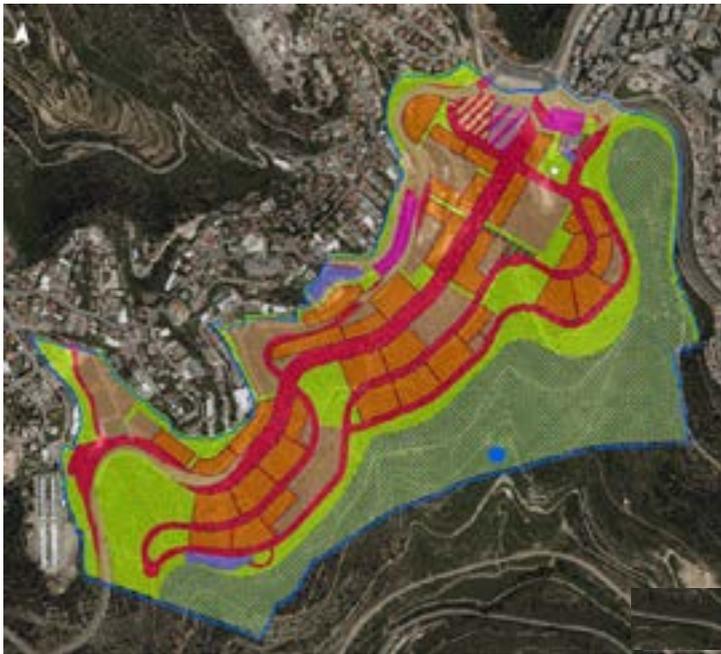
*Alternative Outline Plan*



Kaplan Planners Ltd.

Ein Lavan is a spring in western Jerusalem, many call it the beach of Jerusalem. Next to the spring are water pools, irrigation canals, a blossoming orchard, and walnut, almond, fig and pomegranate trees. Here you will always find children, teenagers, tourists swimming in the pools and enjoying the fruits of the orchards, hiking in the forest and the surrounding natural grove and having a wonderful time.

The spring and the orchard are hidden in the shade of a steep slope, covered with ancient agricultural terraces and a natural forest. A new neighborhood is planned on this slope, the edges of which are supposed to reach up to about 120 meters from the natural spring.



*A map of the original plan. Primary legend: Housing designation is marked in orange, public institutions in light brown, roads in red, open areas in green.*

The spring will indeed be preserved, but imagine travelers' experience: noise, commotion, waste surrounding them. This story sparked an unprecedented public protest.

Demonstrations, protests, petitions, protest delegations to the mayor and government ministers. The protest was joined by dozens of scientists, ecologists and hydrologists who described the expected damage new neighborhood would cause the spring, the surrounding nature and the hydrological system that feeds it.



*Demonstration in Jerusalem against the original Reches Lavan Project. Photograph by Emil Salman*

The solutions proposed by the neighborhood planners were the allocation of lots in the heart of the new neighborhood, and the flow of tap water to the subsoil, and from there to the spring, in the hope that the matter would be successful. Whether or not it would succeed, who is interested in an artificial spring fed by tap water?

The mayor of Jerusalem, Moshe Leon, was attentive to the protest and has subsequently assigned the planner Moti Kaplan to compose a new alternative, which would densify the built area and distance it from the spring. This is the new plan:



*The new plan. The area designated for housing is significantly reduced. Construction is outlined in accordance with surface conditions.*

### **Importance of the new plan:**

1. Preservation of 50 hectares of open, high-quality area, offering it as an open park, national park or forest. The open space will be linked to the neighborhood by a network of paths and roads.
2. Formation of a new perception, of a dense, saturated, mixed-use city. The program is rich in linear parks, in wadis and at the tops of the ridges, a promenade open



*Mayor Moshe Leon and planner Moti Kaplan*

to the landscape surrounding it from all sides.

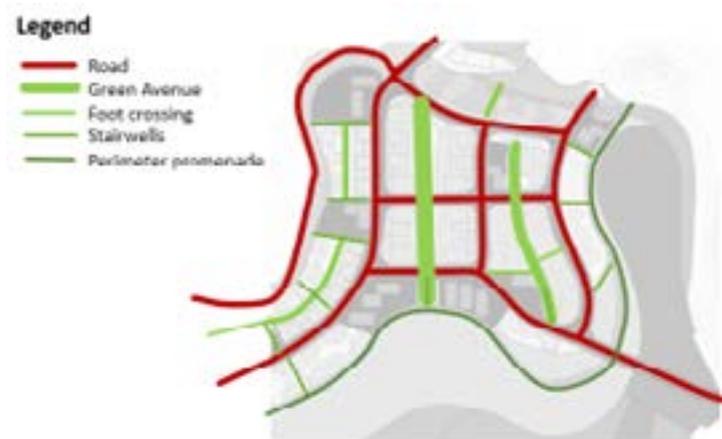
3. The alternative plan is based on bringing life back to the street level - a network of two-way streets, encouraging public transportation and walkability. The network maintains high connectivity between all parts of the neighborhood and avoids steep slopes.
4. The new neighborhood relies on the light rail station at the Ora intersection so that approximately 70% of the neighborhood's residents, and most of the commercial and employment centers, will be within a radius of up to 300 meters from the station, and on a flat to moderately steep surface. The transportation infrastructure will be built with light traffic-oriented streets, avoiding the use of wide roads.

The new alternative plan constitutes a real revolution in the planning culture in Israel. Frugal, restrained, mixed-use planning. The realization of the dream of a walkable city, where you can get from any point to any point in less than 15 minutes.

**The main points of the new program:**

In the new plan, light rail will not be required to enter the neighborhood. The reduction of the built area and the addition of housing units in the proposed layout were determined in light of the latest planning principles on density issues, which are promoted by the Planning Administration of the Ministry of the Interior.

According to the proposed plan, the new



Lavan Ridge neighborhood will become Jerusalem's western boundary - a west-south gate to Jerusalem. A national park and forests will cover its borders, and no construction will be made possible beyond them.

Should this move prove successful, we may have a real turnaround in the planning culture in Israel.

The conceptual outline as a whole was examined by a team of planners led by the Moriah company, Dr. David Guggenheim, Dr. Shelly Guggenheim, Dr. Ram Isenberg, Jay Kaplan, Dr. Ron Leshem, Zeev Barkai, Dr. Efrat Farber, Moshe Yarkoni, Nir Maoz, Niv Sotovsky. The members of the team unanimously approved the planning product, and recommended to promote it as an urban plan.



*A cross-section from the new plan, demonstrating construction on levels and mixed-use development*