

## HERITAGE

A RICH PAST  
FOR A BRIGHT  
FUTURE

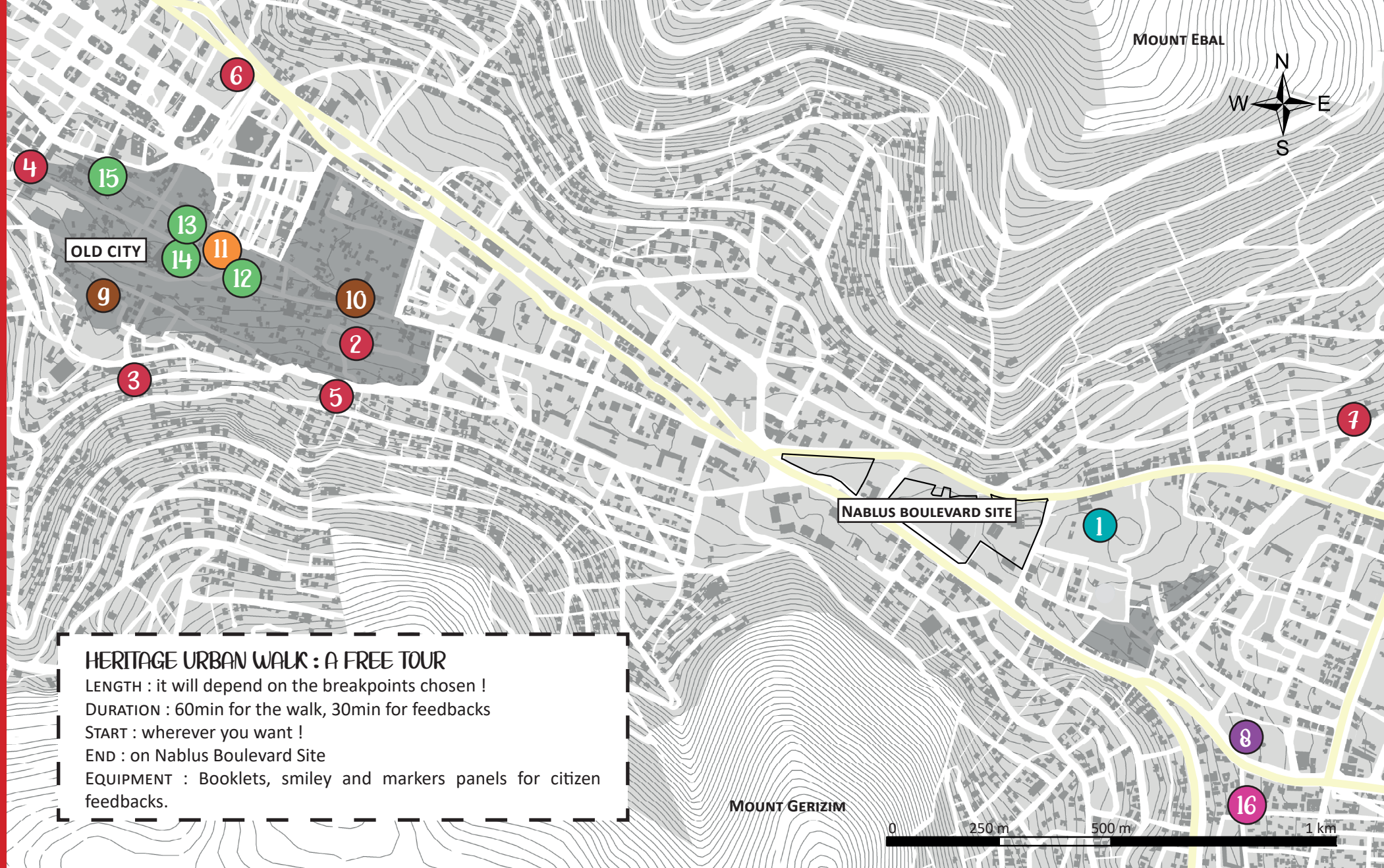
In the course of time, each city develops itself around five interacting thematic : **BUILDING HERITAGE**, **MOBILITY**, **NATURE**, **TRADITION** and **WATER**.

Today, in partnership between the city of Lille-France and Nablus-Palestine, the municipality of Nablus introduces you to the Nablus Boulevard project, which aims to improve the Eastern part of the city through the revival of an urban wasteland. For this project, your participation is needed ! This booklet invites you to follow a specific urban walk around one of the thematic of the city in order to take part in the understanding of the project and get involved.

This walk introduces you to the historical phases of Nablus by seeing different areas and buildings shaped over the centuries by previous civilizations. Are you aware that Nablus is one of the oldest cities in the world ? Did you know that the main road networks of the city were built by the Romans around 2000 years ago ? Do you see the architectural influence of Christianity around you ?

The aim of this walk is to immerse yourself into the different centuries that shaped the city. You will also see interactions with the other thematic (**MOBILITIES**, **NATURE**, **TRADITIONS**, and **WATER**), which are inherent to the establishment of Nablus.

# HERITAGE URBAN WALK



## HERITAGE URBAN WALK : A FREE TOUR

LENGTH : it will depend on the breakpoints chosen !

DURATION : 60min for the walk, 30min for feedbacks

START : wherever you want !

END : on Nablus Boulevard Site

EQUIPMENT : Booklets, smiley and markers panels for citizen feedbacks.

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Canaanite period

Roman period

Byzantine period

Islamic period

Crusader  
period

Mamluk period

Ottoman period

British  
period

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Welcome to the **free walking tour** based on the historical **HERITAGE** of Nablus.

**Ask yourself** : How much heritage from the former civilizations of Nablus is there ? Which architectural design is linked to which period ? Were those elements enough preserved in the course of time ?

Nablus is one of the oldest cities in the world and its territory has been built over the centuries. **You are free to explore them through this walk !** Use this freedom to reach at least **one spot for each century**. Use the **map** and the **timeline** and make your own itinerary. On each spot, you are encouraged to **OBSERVE, FEEL** and **ANALYZE** it.

**Answer the questions and feel free to explore the territory and give your opinion !** Please come back to the Nablus Boulevard Project House once you are finished.

## Canaanite Period Around 4000 BC. to 72 BC.

### Who were the Canaanites ?

The Canaanites were the first settlers and the first civilization that inhabited the region of Nablus. Their existence was found thanks to the discovery of pottery dated from 4.500 BC. They created a city on top of Tell Balata called *Shechem*, meaning "highland".



### Tell Balata

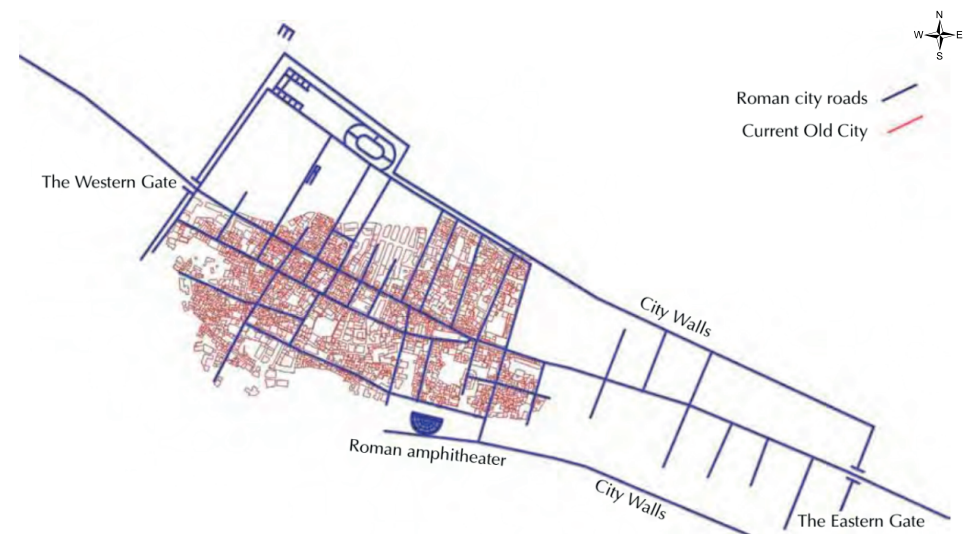
It contains the remains of the ancient city of *Shechem* which dates back to the second millennium BC. A fully developed city state located two kilometres east from present-day Nablus.

Excavation work has been done during the early and middle 20th century. New excavation has been made in 2011. Then the site has been open to the public and a visitor centre has been built.

## Roman Period From 72 BC. to 285 AD.

### Who were the Romans ?

The Romans conquered Palestine from 9 AD. In 50 AD, they destroyed the city of *Shechem* and reconstructed a city named *Neopolis*. The Romans planned the city roughly on a space of 1,500 meters long and 700 meters wide, where the old city is now. They used the natural characteristics, from East to West. They had specific designs, a city's wall and a road network. They also had a rich cultural life that they left through architectural buildings.



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### The Cardo

The main street of the Roman city, constructed on the East to West axis of Nablus, between the two mountains. It settled the development of the Roman city around it. This street had a water canal under it. Today, you access to it via Zafir Al-Masri School (Al Qisariyyah quarter), it is located underground.

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### The city's wall

Also a main construction of Roman's city planning. The city's wall stood to the south starting at the Ras Al-Ein water spring. If you go to that spring, you will stand where the Roman's city wall was. This western part of the wall included a military fortress for defence and for guarding the water spring. The city's cemeteries and the horse racing tracks were found outside the wall.



### The gates

An other main construction of Roman's city planning. The Western Gate is currently the Old City's entrance. The Eastern gate (As Suq Ash Sharqi) shows the beginning of the Eastern part of the city.

*Al-Fatimiyyah Street*



### The Theatre

In the Kshaikah quarter, built during the reign of Hadrian (2nd century AD). It had a capacity of 12 000 spectators, used for opera and other theatre shows.

*Ras al-Ayn Street*



### The Hippodrome

Situated south of al-Watani Hospital, it was built during the reign of Hadrian (2nd century). It could host around 25 000 spectators.



### The Cemeteries

There are many different ones. For example, the eastern roman cemetery is a cemetery founded in the first century AD, and it was reused in the second and third centuries. It shows a kind of Hellenistic art and civilization. There are ten graves in it, and it is believed that it belongs to one of the wealthy families in Nablus at this time.

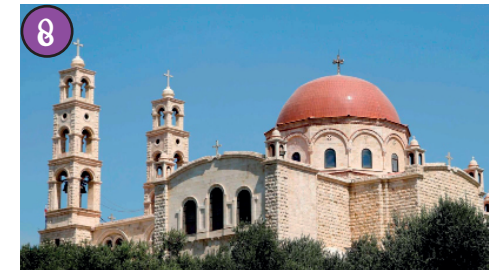
## Byzantine Period

From 285 to 636

### Who were the Byzantines ?

In the period of 324 to 636, the influence of Christianity through the Empire of Rome gained Nablus, which was declared a Bishop's seat.

At this time, the population of Nablus was a mix of Christians, Samaritans and Romans. Therefore, Nablus grew to build Christian churches mainly at the top of Mount Gerizim, but many of them were destroyed either by earthquakes, or by the Samaritans around 531.



### Jacob's Well

Located on the Eastern Part of the city, the well is situated inside the church. The well was here before the present and seen as holy by the Samaritans.

*Kobri Bour Saeed Street*

## Crusaders Period

From 1099 to 1260

### Who were the Crusaders ?

From 1099, the crusaders occupied Nablus peacefully. They were missionaries from the Catholic Church's pope in order to conquer further territories.

At that time, Nablus was Islamic and its people surrendered to the Crusaders, who believed Nablus was a city characterized by a holy blessing. The Crusader's influence remained until 1187.



### Observation Tower

Between 1100 and 1118, King Baldwin and the crusaders built a defensive system to protect the town. In the western part of the Old City, they implanted an observation tower.

Today, the basement of this tower still exist, and is located in al-Yasminah quarter.



### 10 Church of Passion and Resurrection

In 1167, King Amalric granted the Holy Sepulchre church in Jerusalem some land inside Nablus city on which to build a church. This is the Church of the Passion and the Resurrection situated in the eastern part of the city, where Al-Kabir Mosque currently stands. The true location of the church, however is more likely to be the present day Al-Kabir Mosque. A modern mosque was built after the church was destroyed in the earthquake of 1927. This can be seen from it remains, which now form part of the mosque's western wall.

### Mamluk Period From 1260 to 1517

### Who were the Mamluks ?

The Mamluks were originally slaves from Turkish origin and became a powerful military class that conquered different Arabic areas. From 1260, armies from the main Mamluk power (Egypt) settled in Nablus and stayed for 250 years. During that period, security and stability prevailed. There was a good development in educational and scientific life.



### 11 An-Nasr Mosque

An-Nasr Mosque was built on the ruins of the old mosque, levelled by the earthquake of 1927. This old mosque was previously a Crusader church converted during the Mameluk dynasty (1260-1516 AD). An-Nasr Mosque is one of the ten historic mosques located in the Old city of Nablus.

### Ottoman Period

From 1517 to 1917

### Who were the Ottomans ?

The Ottomans conquered Nablus after the battle of Marj Dabiq in 1517 and gave the power of the administration of the city to local governors. This period lasted until 1917, which really built the city's traditions and architecture. While they were there, the Ottomans gave the city prosperity and stability.



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### Clock Tower

The Manara Clock Tower is located in the middle of the central square (*casbah*) in the Old City, in front of As-Saraya government, next to the An-Nasr Mosque.

It dates from the Ottoman period. Five stories high, it was erected in 1900 AD / 1318 AH on the order of the Ottoman sultan Abdul Hamid II to celebrate his 25 years of reign. Other Palestinian cities were also given such a clock tower. The Manara Clock Tower is currently the symbol of the Municipality of Nablus.

*Khaled Bin Al Walid Street*



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### Public baths

Establishing public baths in Nablus, as in other Islamic cities, was linked with religious needs, social customs, and traditions. They served not only the need for cleanliness and hygiene, but also provided a forum for community life and leisure for both men and women. Public baths number among the architectural treasures of Old Nablus. They are found both in commercial and in residential areas..

*Al Jame' Al Kabeer Street*



Al Yasmineh Quarter

### Soap factories

Soap factories are among the most important buildings of the city, easily recognizable by the wide gate and the large windows on the first floor. Nablus has been the centre of this industry for centuries, where factories were located within residential areas. Many factories have been demolished but 4 factories still produce in the traditional way, such as the ash-Shakaa soap factory. The protection and development of this industry should be maintained as a national priority since it is an important part of the Nabulsi heritage.



### Old Khan Al-Wakala

The final renovation project attempts to recover the original functions of the *caravanserai*, or *khan*, in hosting merchant caravans : accommodation for travellers, trade, catering, presentation of local crafts of the Nabulsi heritage.

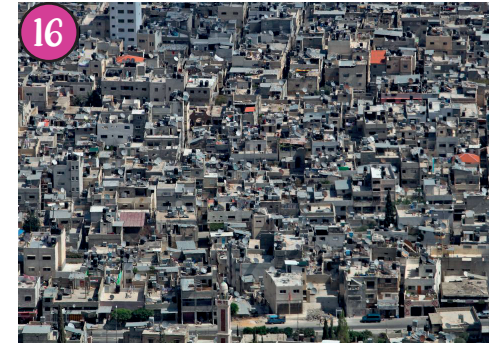
Alhadadeen Market

## British Period

From 1917 to 1948

### Who were the British ?

From 1917, the British occupied Nablus after the first world war and lord Balfour's declaration, which announced the support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This period was marked by the earthquake of 1927 and the imposition of British laws and system. This period is also marked by Palestinian refugee camps that were settled in the Eastern part of the city.



### Balata Camp

Palestinian refugee camp established in the northern West Bank in 1950, adjacent to Balata village on the outskirts of the city of Nablus.

It is the largest refugee camp in the West Bank. Balata Camp is densely populated with 30,000 residents in an area of 0.25 square kilometres.



### Askar Camp

Palestinian refugees camp established in 1950, borders the Nablus municipality in the northern West Bank. The camp population grew significantly between 1950 and 1960. Some residents subsequently settled in an area one kilometre away, that is now known as New Askar. Residents of New Askar originally utilized many facilities in Askar camp.

## FREE PAGE FOR YOUR EXPRESSION !

For example, you can make a building analysis. You choose a building linked to the characteristics of the walk. Why is it interesting for you ?



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