

INTRODUCTION OF AUSTIN MOSQUE PROJECT

Alhamdulillah, Austin Jama'at is initiating the project to build a custom-designed mosque with Islamic architecture designed, according to our needs. Amir sahib, USA has given us permission to begin fundraising for this project. Here are the highlights of what you will find in this document.

- We are running out of space and Austin Jama'at is growing rapidly
- Austin is growing fast and land tracts will be hard to buy if we don't buy now
- We need \$1.2 Million in 6 months (July 31) for the land purchase and design work
- We plan to sell the current mosque and use those funds for building the new one once we have the land purchased

Background

Austin Jama'at is one of the most active Jama'at and we have a building which we use as the mosque. We are rapidly running out of space in our current facility and in order to secure a property that serves our needs for many decades to come, we need to act.

What Issues are we facing?

The current mosque used to be a church, while it has served us well for 15 years, we can see that it will not be sufficient for us in the future. In the past couple of years, the activities at the mosque were limited due to COVID but we will be restarting them in earnest. The main issue is the lack of space to conduct all our activities such as general meetings, auxiliary meetings, children's classes, guest programs, cooking, dining, washrooms, parking, etc. The infrastructure is also old and it is not easy to repair or add to it to fulfill our needs. Also, the mosque is not designed according to our needs and the way typically our mosques are used.

Have we looked at the alternatives?

Yes, the Amila of Austin Jama'at has been studying this issue for at least 7 years and we have come to the conclusion that having a purpose-built mosque designed for our needs is the most cost-effective and long-lasting solution. Three years ago Amila formally approved the decision to acquire a new property. While COVID delayed many of our plans, we are now restarting in earnest and intend to move quickly.

Why the urgency?

Austin metro is the fastest growing area in all of the USA. Almost on a monthly basis, we have new families moving to Austin. We are all aware of the rapidly rising prices and tight real-estate market. At the same time, larger tracts of land (3-5 acres) that we are looking for are depleting fast within a reasonable distance. So, if we don't buy now, we may be priced out of the market and we may have to buy a property which is very far from the city where most members cannot easily get to. The purpose of the mosque is to keep it populated for worship of Allah.

Where will the new mosque be?

The short answer is, we don't know. We cannot bid on a property in today's real estate market unless we have cash in hand. However, our intent is to keep it close to the current location. The biggest concentration of Ahmadi households live in Round Rock and North Austin, so it makes sense to keep it within that general vicinity while being flexible.

Why such a short fundraising timeline?

As already explained above, we are rapidly running out of time to secure a larger tract in a reasonable distance due to price appreciation and lack of inventory. Our current survey indicates that there are still some properties in our intended radius but these are being snapped up every day. So, we want to quickly raise funds for the land purchase, which will give us some time to then design and build the new mosque.

What will happen to the current mosque?

We intend to sell this property. It can be purchased by another religious group, used as daycare or offices, etc. It has commercial zoning and prime location. In talking to several real estate brokers, the mosque is currently valued at \$1.5 Million at \$250 per sq. ft.

How much will the new mosque cost?

It is hard to answer this question since we do not have a piece of land and we do not have a design but our initial estimate is approximately \$3 Million including the land. This will satisfy most of our current needs and with bigger tract of land we can add more to it as needed in the future. With the inflation, it is in our interest to start quickly otherwise we will have to spend more. Keep in mind, we already have half of that amount in the value of

our current property which we will be able to leverage during the building phase but we have to buy the land first!

What is the current ask?

We need to raise approximately \$1.2 Million in six months. This will allow us to purchase a piece of land and do the initial design work. While we are happy to take donations after the six-month deadline, keep in mind we need to have sufficient funds in hand to bid on a property, so most of the fundraising needs to be done upfront given the realities of the real-estate market explained above.

Wow, That Seems Hard!

Yes, the goal is high and the timeline is short but we know the dedication of all of our members. Jama'at Ahmadiyya has done bigger things in a shorter time, We can do this too. This will require a lot of sacrifice but keeping our priorities in mind and with the faith in the promises made by Allah for those who spend in his cause, we are confident that we can do this. It requires your prayers and your sacrifice.

Why should I donate for this project?

Building a mosque is Sadqa-e-Jariyyah (a charity that keeps on giving). Anytime someone prays in the mosque or uses it otherwise, for many decades to come, you will get blessings because you participated in building this mosque. Indeed, this mosque may still be here after we have passed away and yet we will be getting blessings from it. Hazrat Muhammad (sa) has said that whoever builds a mosque in this world, Allah will make a house for him in Janah (Sahih Bukhari & Muslim). Moreover, Allah has promised in the Holy Quran, that any money you will spend in the cause of Allah will be returned to you manyfold. Indeed, it is an investment for which there is a Guarantor whose word is without a doubt. It is an investment in our future generation. As we spend so much for their physical and educational needs, shouldn't we spend a little now for their spiritual needs?

How can I donate?

The first step is to fill out the pledge form. You can do it on the post-card you received or preferably online at <https://islaminaustin.org>. While everyone's financial situation is different, while pledging the amount, it should feel really hard, otherwise you are probably not pledging enough,

After filling the pledge form, you can donate via cash, check, online, or donation of other assets (ask us how, if you plan to donate other assets). On <https://chanda.ahmadiyya.us>, pick Austin Mosque Project from the donation list.

Questions or comments?

Reach out to Sadr sb. or the mosque committee (11 members), chaired by Gen. Secretary sb.