

## Request for Modification of Conditional Use Permit - Letter of Justification

04/29/2025

**Address: 16769 Farley Road, Los Gatos CA 95032**

**Property Zoned: R-1:8**

**APN: 424-21-062**

**Owner and Applicant: West Valley Muslim Association (WVMA)**

**Conditional Use Permit Application: U-24-010**

**Planner: Jocelyn Shoopman, Senior Planner, Town of Los Gatos**

### **CUP MODIFICATION REQUEST**

West Valley Muslim Association (“WVMA”), a religious non-profit organization, currently operates a mosque at 16769 Farley Road, Los Gatos under a Conditional Use Permit [U-20-001](#) issued on March 11, 2020. This most recent CUP replaced an original one issued to the Los Gatos Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Inc. on January 25, 1990.

The facility is 2.76 acres of land, has ~12,000 sq. ft. of indoor space across three auditoriums, and 180 parking spaces. This facility was constructed, in its current size, in 1990 when the original CUP was issued.

WVMA is requesting a clarification of the Conditional Use Permit to establish a time of day before which services are not allowed, allow usage of our facility until 10:30 p.m., and usage once a year during the holy month of Ramadan, to accommodate indoor religious prayers.

- Morning Hours: Indoor prayer services starting one hour and half prior to sunrise.
- Nighttime Hours: Indoor prayer services until 10:30 p.m.
- During the 30-day month of Ramadan: Indoor prayer services until:
  - 11:30 p.m. whenever sunset is before 7:30 p.m. (e.g., from now to the year 2039), or
  - 12:00 a.m. whenever sunset is after 7:30 p.m. (e.g., 2040 to 2054).
- Any impact based on changes to Federal, California or local laws related to start and end of Daylight Savings Time should be incorporated into the allowed timings for use of the facility indoors for dawn and nighttime prayers.

Current Language:

Maximum hours of operation shall not extend past 10:00 p.m. except for 30 days during religious service for the month of Ramadan which hours of operation shall not extend past 11:00 p.m.

Requested Modification:

Maximum hours of operation shall not begin prior to one hour and half before sunrise, or extend past 10:30 p.m. except for 30 days during the months of Ramadan until 11:30 p.m. whenever sunset is prior to 7:30 p.m., or until 12:00 a.m. whenever sunset is after 7:30 p.m.

The letter provides critical background information about the vision of the organization, our long and extensive search to find a home, congregational prayers, and information about Ramadan prayers that we believe is important to understand our religious norms, practices, and practicalities that are at the core of our usage, and central to this application. We have detailed our outreach to neighbors, their feedback, and the many actions we have already undertaken or propose to take to address the feedback we received. Additionally, we are including a noise study performed by Salter, that concludes that their measurements and analysis indicate that the requested extended use hours would not violate the Town’s noise standards.

## **Reasons for the Modifications**

We are requesting modification of the CUP to allow on-site five daily prayers and Ramadan prayers, as prescribed for Muslims, by our faith. Our daily prayer schedule is based on sunrise and sunset timings, and our Ramadan prayer schedule is based on the Islamic (lunar) calendar, which is 10 to 12 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar. These timings and changes may seem complicated to those not familiar with it. Accordingly, in order to ensure there is an understanding of our norms and practices, we are providing additional details herein. However, to keep matters simple, we have kept our requested modification for the CUP in simple terms - allow dawn (Fajr) prayers from hour and a half before sunrise; night (Isha) prayers until 10:30 p.m.; and use in Ramadan until 11:30 p.m. during the years 2026 to 2039, or 12:00 a.m., during the years 2040 to 2054 when Ramadan falls during the summer months. The approximate start and end dates of Ramadan come back to the same time of the year every 33 years.

1. **Pre-sunrise indoor congregation prayers:** The Muslim faith mandates five daily prayers, and they must be performed within their appointed times. A Mosque's fundamental requirement is to offer prayers in congregation. We are requesting a time to be added to the CUP before which services would not be allowed and that it allow usage of the facility for pre-sunrise indoor prayer services as mandated by our faith.
2. **Departure by 10:30 p.m.:** The night prayer's appointed time starts approximately 1.5 hours after sunset, and in some summer months the earliest it can be prayed is 10:10 p.m. Prayers take approximately 15 minutes, with additional time for arrival and departure. We are requesting usage until 10:30 p.m. to accommodate the offering of the nightly prayer indoors. See the additional background information, later in this document, about the religiously required five daily Islamic prayers.
3. **30 days during the month of Ramadan:** Ramadan is a month of reflection and additional prayers. The additional prayers are offered immediately following the night prayer, and take about 2.5 hours. During the 30 days of Ramadan, which occurs once a year, we are requesting extended indoor usage for the additional prayers until 11:30 p.m, whenever sunset occurs at 7:30 p.m. or earlier; and 12:00 a.m. whenever sunset occurs after 7:30 p.m.

## **Conditional Use Permit Findings**

WVMA believes that it meets all requirements for the Town of Los Gatos to find in favor of modifying the existing CUP, including as follows:

### ***1. The proposed uses of the property are essential or desirable to the public conveniences or welfare.***

The existing use is consistent with, and promotes the Guiding Principles outlined in the Los Gatos [2040 General Plan](#) that focus on community, diversity and inclusivity:

- **Community Vitality:** *Invigorate Los Gatos as a special place for community gathering, ... activities for residents and visitors.*
- **Diverse Neighborhoods:** *Foster appropriate investments to maintain and enhance diverse neighborhoods, ... of all current and future residents.*
- **Inclusivity:** *Value the importance of and promote ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic diversity and equity to enhance the quality of life in Los Gatos.*

Furthermore, this finding was made twice before on this property on January 25, 1990 issued to the Los Gatos Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, Inc., and on March 11, 2020 issued to West Valley Muslim Association. We have not added any square footage, or removed any parking spaces since the original CUP was issued.

The additional hours of usage requested will continue to meet the requirements of this finding. This additional usage is essential to the use of the religious facility to offer the five daily congregational prayers, and Ramadan nightly

prayers as mandated by the faith. The appointed times for the five daily prayers in Islam are determined by the position of the sun at a specific location, and cannot be changed by individuals or institutions, similar to how other faith traditions observe fixed times tied to natural events, such as sunset marking the start of the Sabbath in Judaism or sunrise rituals in Hinduism.

***2. The proposed uses will not impair the integrity and character of the zoning district.***

The existing conditions of approval ensure the existing use does not impair the integrity of character of the district. The facility size and the parking has not changed since the original permit was issued in 1990, where the Town determined that the size of the auditoriums, the parking capacity and the traffic it creates were compatible with the residential neighborhood.

To be a good neighbor, we have already made the following changes based on specific concerns that were raised:

1. **Replace fences:** We have worked with our neighbors to improve privacy, and reduce noise and light disturbance by replacing or adding fences, and adding lattices above a 6-foot fence. In one case we paid for the full cost of the fence and lattice. Some of the original fences were chain link fences and were replaced by good neighbor fences.
2. **Tree planting:** We have planted 10 trees to increase privacy, and reduce noise and light.
3. **Gate track:** We have removed the gate track over the entrance and exist, and we will ensure that any replacement gate will minimize noise disturbance.
4. **Traffic guards:** During Ramadan in 2025, we hired traffic guards to ensure a smooth flow of traffic, and to remind attendees to minimize noise.
5. **Use both driveways for exit:** During Ramadan in 2025, we used both driveways for exit to distribute traffic in both directions of Farley Road.

We have also made many additional changes based on the feedback from as many neighbors as we were able to reach. Much of the feedback is not directly related to our application for a clarification of the hours of usage, nevertheless, we have taken meaningful actions whenever possible to address feedback received as best as we can. In addition to the 5 changes listed above, we have documented **20 actions** we have taken in response to feedback received in the accompanying Neighborhood Outreach document, attached as Exhibit C.

In addition, we have taken even more steps to increase communication with neighbors so that any specific concerns can be raised, and good faith efforts can be made to address them:

6. **Share contact information:** WVMA has provided phone, email and text contact information to neighbors.
7. **Regular notices to neighbors:** We will continue to inform our neighbors about our major activities on a regular basis.
8. **Open houses:** We welcome our neighbors to visit us any time by coordinating with the executive director, and will strive to have an open house on an annual basis. WVMA has been hosting open houses for the neighborhood since purchasing the facility in 2018.

***3. The proposed uses would not be detrimental to public health, safety, or general welfare.***

WVMA does not anticipate any detrimental impact to the public health, safety, or general welfare due to a small adjustment of the hours of usage. The limitations already existing in the previous conditions of approval are still applicable, address the potential impacts, and will not be detrimental to public health, safety or general welfare.

***4. The proposed uses of the property are in harmony with the various elements or objectives of the General Plan and the purposes of the Town Code.***

The proposed modifications meet the objectives of the General Plan and Town Code. The Los Gatos [2040 General Plan](#) promotes the guiding principles of community, diversity and inclusivity. Institutions for religious observance are

distributed throughout the Town. The use is consistent with the Low Density Residential General Plan land use designation for the property with the approval of a CUP. The proposed changes to the hours of usage would have no exterior impacts, maintaining the small-town, residential scale and natural environments of adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The goals and policies of the 2020 General Plan applicable to this project support our request to extend the hours of operation for indoor religiously mandated prayers. They include, but are not limited to:

- Policy LU-1.5 Encourages private/public funding, development, and operation of cultural amenities, activities, and centers consistent with the small-town character of Los Gatos.
- Policy LU-6.2 - Allow non-residential activity in residential areas only when the character and quality of the neighborhood can be maintained.
- Policy LU-9.6 Encourage development that maintains and expands resident-oriented services and/or creates employment opportunities for local residents consistent with overall land use policies of the Town.

WVMA respectfully requests a modification to the CUP as set forth herein.

### **WVMA BACKGROUND AND VISION**

West Valley Muslim Association was founded to enable a new and growing Muslim community in the West Valley area to practice their faith. The members of the community are ethnically diverse, well-educated with primary professions represented in technology, engineering, medical, and other professionals. Almost all of the key leadership of the community has resided in the area for 30+ years, and their children have been born and raised here, attend local schools, and participate in sports and other civic activities throughout the area. It is a group of West Valley residents who live, work, worship, and raise their families in this community. Service and charity are a core part of our faith - members of the community are actively involved in civic duties and currently serve or have served on the city councils of Saratoga, Monte Sereno, and Sunnyvale, as well as the planning commission of Saratoga. Community members are volunteers in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, AYSO Soccer, Little League Baseball, Second Harvest Food Bank, Martha's Kitchen, the Rahima Foundation, and many other activities.

Like all other faith communities around us, we envision a space for spiritual, social, and personal growth - a place where individuals of all ages can strengthen their connection to God, foster meaningful relationships, and contribute positively to society. Our faith is lived daily through five scheduled prayers that serve as both a reminder and a moment to reset amidst life's busyness, congregational prayers that unite our community, the observance of Ramadan that teaches self-discipline and the practice of resisting temptation, and a commitment to living in a way that benefits others. Our vision and mission are to exist for the betterment of not just WVMA and its members, but also the Town of Los Gatos, our state and our country.

We are committed to sharing the moderate teachings of Islam, grounding our youth and families in compassion, justice, service, and ensuring our community reflects Islam's true spirit. Our mosque is a learning center, where these Islamic values take root and ripple outward, enriching lives and bridging divides. We work diligently to keep our youth grounded in the foundational tenets of peace, service to others, improving the lives of those around them, and benefiting our country and humanity around the world. We counter misinformation and misguidance that is easily accessible to young and impressionable youth and children. We offer a vision of Islam that bridges cultures, inspires dialogue, and equips our community to shape a more harmonious tomorrow.

Even in the San Francisco Bay Area - a region celebrated for its progressive spirit and diversity - Muslim children and youth face a harsh reality. Despite the area's reputation as a hub of inclusivity, these young individuals often experience faith-based bullying, derogatory labels such as "terrorist," and social exclusion that make them feel isolated.

The persistent message they internalize is a sense of “other” or not belonging here. According to the [2023 Bullying Report](#) by Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) California Chapter, 46% of Muslim students in California public schools report having experienced bullying tied to their religious identity - more than double the national average for school bullying. This persistent discrimination has taken a severe toll, with the [Khalil Center](#), a leading mental health provider for Muslim communities, documenting a 45% increase in anxiety and depression among Muslim youth in the Bay Area. These statistics reveal a crisis of social-emotional well-being, as children grapple with isolation, pressure, and the erosion of their self-worth in an environment where they should feel welcome and included.

In response, we have created a sanctuary designed to meet this urgent need for our children and youth. This space offers Muslim children a welcoming place to learn about the true teachings of Islam, free from the fear of judgment or harassment. Central to our mission is fostering an open atmosphere where children and youth can interact, form friendships, and simply enjoy each other’s company—regardless of their names, appearance, attire, or specific practices of faith. We provide both structured programs and unstructured free time, encouraging them to engage with each other away from digital distractions and be true to themselves.

Our facility offers children, families, the elderly, and young professionals a welcoming environment to learn about Islam, build lasting relationships, foster community cohesion, and nurture a sense of belonging.

## **ORGANIZATION, STAFF & OPERATIONS**

WVMA is primarily a volunteer-based organization. It is managed by a volunteer Board of Trustees, and a volunteer Board of Directors for day-to-day operations. The Executive Director is currently the only full-time employee, and shares responsibility across the two facilities operated by WVMA (Los Gatos owned, Saratoga rental). We also have a resident Imam (clergy), as well as 3 additional part-time employees. All activities that are conducted by WVMA are led by volunteer committees.

## **FACILITY & LOCATION**

### **Decades Long Extensive Search**

The founders of the community had longed for a place near where they live in the West Valley Area and founded WVMA in 2007. At that time, WVMA began by renting a small facility in Saratoga in the Azule Shopping Center at 12370 Saratoga Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga CA 95070. It is approximately 1,100 sq. ft. and is primarily used for the five daily congregational prayers. The facility can accommodate about 100 attendees. As our community started growing, we needed a bigger facility. While searching to purchase a facility, we started renting the Saratoga Prospect Center, in 2009, on an hourly basis for Friday and Ramadan prayers, and for other programs.

We have been searching to purchase a larger facility (2+ acres) since 2007, and struggled to find a building that would meet that requirement. We also ran into zoning restrictions that limit the areas where religious facilities can be located. Many of the cities and towns have significant restrictions, and limit usage to residential areas, or only allow secondary uses when in commercial zones. Cities and towns further limit zones by adding overlays (e.g., Cupertino’s Heart of the City and Bubb Road overlays). New state mandates to increase housing stock such as RHNA Housing Element zoning changes, designation of larger properties as opportunity sites, builders remedy projects, and SB-4 that promotes religious organizations to build affordable housing, decreased the stock of available choices, increased the land values significantly and created an even bigger problem for religious organizations to acquire larger properties. To the best of our knowledge, in the last two decades, there have been no new religious facilities that have come into existence in the Town of Los Gatos, despite a 22% increase in residents of the town. Out of a total of [16 approved](#)

[church CUP's](#) in Los Gatos including WVMA, the last new CUP issued was in 2001 to Addison-Penzak Jewish Community Center. Faith Lutheran (2019), St. Mary's (2013), Calvary (2008), Congregation Shir Hadash (2007), Los Gatos United Methodist Church (2005) and Venture Christian Church (2002) were all modifications to existing CUP's. We are not aware of any churches that have changed owners (other than WVMA) in Los Gatos, Saratoga, Campbell, Cupertino or the West San Jose area in over a decade.

Our search over the last decade was extensive, meeting with interfaith leaders, talking to city and town officials, retaining real estate agents with a monthly retainer to find a property, and considering office or industrial spaces as an alternative. We made offers on many properties, including unsolicited offers at two facilities. We also filed preliminary CUP applications for two potential facilities, one a former bank at the border of Sunnyvale and Cupertino, and another an office building in Saratoga, only to withdraw when the cities advised us that religious assembly use would not be allowed for those facilities. We were in extended negotiations with a church with lower attendance to split the lot, but we were unable to finalize an agreement.

Through our clergy that participates actively in interfaith activities, we even reached out (see attached letter Exhibit B) to Bishop Patrick McGrath, then Bishop of San Jose, The Diocese of San Jose, in early 2018, seeking his help in acquiring any of their facilities, and proposed a possible way to apportion lands from the Church of Ascension in Saratoga with a shared parking lot across three monotheistic faiths. We left almost no stone unturned in our quest to acquire a facility for our congregation.

After searching for over a decade, we happened on the Los Gatos facility by mere chance. One of our community members attended a Town of Los Gatos [Conceptual Development Advisory Committee](#) meeting on March 14, 2018 on an unrelated agenda item. The Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses applied for approval to build 10 (Concept A) to 17 (Concept B) homes, and faced stiff opposition. When we learnt of this church with an existing CUP, we jumped on an opportunity to purchase this existing religious facility, at a steep price, as it was an ideal facility with plenty of parking, and space for our growing community. Our community has since then benefited tremendously from the welcoming attitude of the vast majority of our neighbors.

## **Our Facility**

We currently operate a mosque at 16769 Farley Road, Los Gatos under a Conditional Use Permit [U-20-001](#) issued on March 11, 2020. This most recent CUP modified an original one issued to the Los Gatos Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, Inc. on January 25, 1990. The facility is 2.76 acres of land, has 180 parking spaces, ~12,000 sq. ft. of indoor space across three auditoriums, two housing units for clergy, three conference rooms, a lobby, and a full kitchen. This facility was constructed, in its current size, in 1990 when the original CUP was issued.

The three large auditoriums are between 1,600 to 2,600 sq. ft., and have building occupancy limits up to 869 when sitting, and 1,217 when standing. Of the two housing units onsite that are currently used by our resident clergy (Imam) and his family. The location of the living quarters is on the east side of the property, next to the large empty lot. The facility has multiple storage sheds.

We acquired the Los Gatos facility to serve as a mosque, ensuring we can perform our essential prayers, including daily prayers, Friday (Jummah) prayers, and Ramadan Taraweeh prayers. Our Friday prayers parallel the Sunday worship services for Christians or Shabbat services for Jews, acting as a weekly cornerstone of communal worship. Similarly, Ramadan, with its nightly Taraweeh prayers, mirrors the extended rituals and community engagement seen in other faith traditions annually, such as Christianity's Holy Week—marked by special services like the Easter Vigil or Good Friday prayers—or Judaism's High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, when there are gatherings in synagogues for intense prayer in September or October.

Our use of the facility is similar to that of any other religious community, and among other things includes use for prayers, talks and seminars for adults, educational classes for children and youth including a Sunday school or after school classes, religious holiday prayers and children's activities, fundraising activities, community lunches and dinners, community iftars (breaking of the fast in the month of Ramadan), neighborhood outreach, and other community classes/events/activities (e.g., Islamic calligraphy, youth and women's activities, Quran classes, parenting classes, college application assistance, marriage ceremonies, health and wellness activities, and other community benefit activities, etc.)

We may charge fees for some of these activities directly to attendees, or to reduce administrative overhead, we may seek fees from the service provider for use of our facility to cover costs such as utilities, set up and cleaning for use relating to the mosque's activities. This is similar to other faith institutions (see [1](#) and [2](#)).

We also offer and conduct a few private religious ceremonies like [Nikah](#) or [Katb al-Kitaab](#) (signing of the wedding contract), Aqeeqa (newborn service, similar to baptism), funeral prayers, and other religious ceremonies. These are not listed on the events calendar as they are generally limited to families and their friends, and not open to the rest of our community.

We also hold prayers for the two annual religious holidays, Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha. These are open to our faith community, and conducted within our premises. In both of the Eid holidays, we hold a prayer service lasting about 45 minutes. To accommodate additional attendees, we have staggered these into three services in the morning and early afternoon. The prayer services are held indoors. We manage the attendance through a registration and ticketing process. As these are joyous days, families carpool and come together. We have traffic guides posted at the entrances and exits to ensure smooth flow, and we inform our neighbors in advance about the activities. We also typically hold a community open house in the late afternoon and early evening with fun activities for children. Families come and go throughout the open house.

None of our activities include alcohol or music.

Severely restricting the use of our facility, or prohibiting these services from occurring in this facility, would fundamentally undermine our ability to fully express and sustain our religious identity and community.

This is the only facility currently owned by the West Valley Muslim Association.

We continue to rent a small 1,100 sq. ft. facility at 12370 Saratoga Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga CA 95070. We also rent the Saratoga Prospect Center from the City of Saratoga on an hourly basis, and this requires set up and tear down every time it is used. We have three staggered Friday prayers at this facility. We also hold Ramadan nightly prayers at this location.

### **Saratoga Prospect Center**

The [Saratoga Prospect Center](#) facility has been rented by WVMA for Ramadan prayers for the last 16 years without neighbor concerns being raised. This facility has many similarities to WVMA's Los Gatos facility:

1. 2.6 acres (vs. 2.7 acres), ~150 parking spots (vs. 180), 2 auditoriums (vs. 3).
2. Residential homes surround the Saratoga Prospect Center on three of the four sides.
3. Entry and exit are immediately adjacent to the fence separating home backyards.
4. Buildings are in the middle of the property.
5. Parking spots are at the back of the property, next to neighbor fences. ~150 parking spots.

We have used the Saratoga Prospect Center since 2009 in a very similar way:

1. Prayers during Ramadan. We are allowed use of the facility until midnight by the City of Saratoga.
2. Indoor and outdoor community Iftaar's (breaking of the fast) in Ramadan at sunset time.
3. Friday Prayers. We hold 3 prayers in summer months, and 2 in winter months since shorter days result in limited permitted times.
4. Use both halls (Friendship Hall and the Grace Building) simultaneously for our services to accommodate the number of attendees.
5. Attendees walk quietly at night next to the side and backyards of homes to get to their vehicles in the parking lot, or behind residential homes on Colby Court.

We reach out to our neighbors every year before Ramadan, provide them information about our activities, and share our contact information. We have continually demonstrated for 16 years that our use is compatible with a residential neighborhood. Nina Walker, the former recreation facilities manager of the City of Saratoga, provided a letter to the Town on her positive experience with WVMA's use of Saratoga Prospect Center.

Our usage in Ramadan of the Saratoga Prospect Center is almost identical to our usage of our Los Gatos facility, without any concerns raised from the city or neighbors.



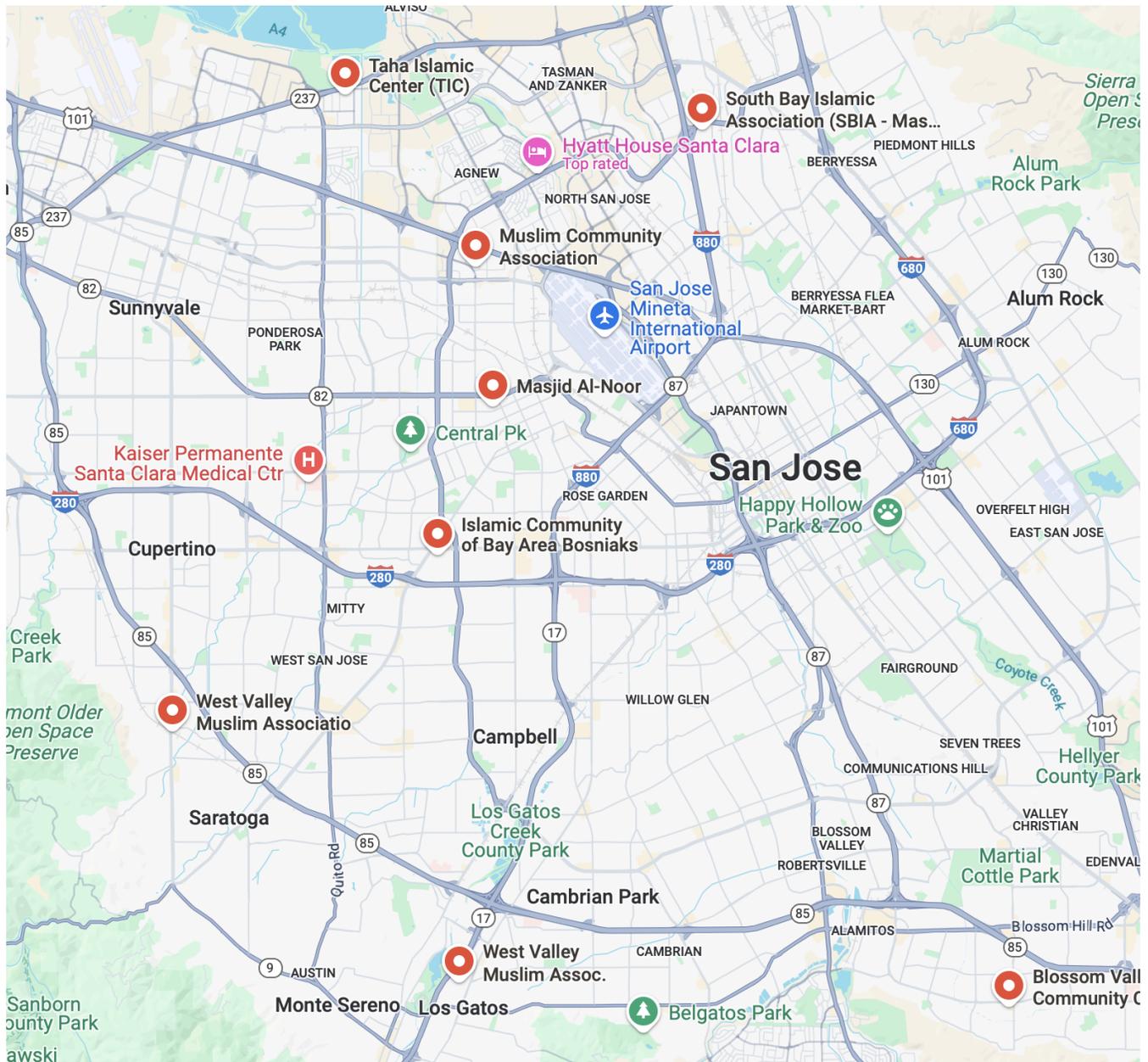
Note: As our community has grown, we continue to use the Saratoga Prospect Center for Ramadan and Friday prayers, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Our use at 16769 Farley Road is not a replacement, but an addition to our use of the Prospect Center.

### Location / Nearby Mosques

There are no other mosques located in Los Gatos, or nearby areas like Campbell, Monte Sereno, Cambrian Park, Willow Glen or Santa Cruz mountains. The nearest Mosque to WVMA's Los Gatos facility is WVMA's other smaller

facility in Saratoga. All other nearby Mosques are significantly smaller, with space for about 100 attendees. The next large Mosque, 11.2 miles away, is the [Muslim Community Association](#) (MCA) in Santa Clara near Highway 101 and San Tomas Expressway. Other nearby facilities with distances and sizes:

- West: WVMA’s Saratoga facility. 8.2 miles, small facility (~100 attendees). No Friday or Ramadan prayers.
- North: [Islamic Community of Bay Area Bosniaks](#), 8.8 miles, small facility (~100 attendees)
- East: [Blossom Valley Muslim Community Center](#): 9.5 miles, small facility (~100 attendees)
- South: [Islamic Center of Santa Cruz](#), 25 miles, small facility (~100 attendees)



**PRAYERS & RAMADAN ARE PILLARS OF ISLAM**

Islam is based on five fundamental pillars, which are core obligations and acts of worship for Muslims. Two of these five obligatory acts - prayer (#2) and Ramadan (#4) - are directly relevant to this application to modify the conditional use permit.

1. **Declaration of Faith (Shahada):** Reciting this with conviction is what makes someone a Muslim. While the Shahada is a personal act, it's often affirmed publicly in a mosque.
2. **Prayer (Salah):** Muslims are obligated to perform five daily prayers at set times (Fajr (dawn), Dhuhr (midday), Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (evening), and Isha (night)). Each prayer includes specific recitations and movements. It is preferred that prayers are performed in congregation and in a mosque.
3. **Charity (Zakat):** Zakat is an obligatory charity, usually 2.5% of a Muslim's annual savings, given to support the poor, orphans, and community needs. It's a built-in system to redistribute wealth and care for the vulnerable.
4. **Fasting during Ramadan (Sawm):** Sawm is the fast during the month of Ramadan, where Muslims refrain from food, drink, and other physical needs from dawn to sunset. It's a time for spiritual growth, self-control, and empathy. By voluntarily giving up what is normally allowed, such as food and drink, Muslims learn to avoid what is prohibited, such as bad habits, and illegal or immoral acts. After sunset, Muslims break their fast with Iftar, often communally, followed by Taraweeh—special nightly prayers unique to Ramadan. Taraweeh involves reciting the Quran, with the entire Quran completed over the course of the month. At the end of the month, Muslims celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, the first of the two annual major festivals.
5. **Pilgrimage (Hajj):** Hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca, required once in a lifetime for Muslims who are physically and financially able. It includes rituals like circling the Kaaba. Hajj is a journey of renewal, connecting Muslims worldwide. Muslims who do not travel to Hajj, celebrate Eid-ul-Adha locally, the second annual major festival.

## Prayers

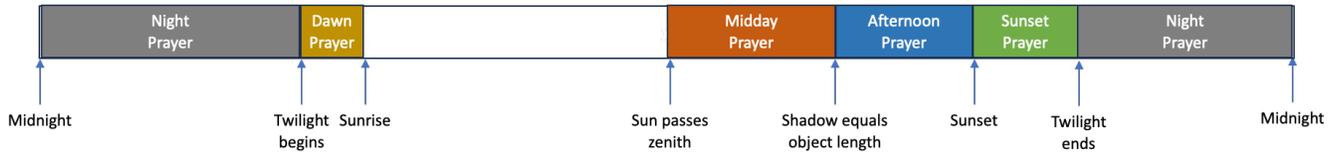
Prayer (Salah) is the **second pillar** in Islam underscoring its vital importance in a Muslim's daily life. For all adult Muslims, performing the five daily prayers is mandatory. The fundamental purpose of every mosque is to serve as a place for congregational (Jamah) prayers. Congregational prayer timings for two of the prayers - dawn (#1) and night (#5) - are directly relevant to this conditional use permit.

Prayer serves as a direct connection between the individual and God, reinforcing faith and discipline through regular practice. These prayers are spaced throughout the day and night, ensuring a constant rhythm of devotion. Prayers must be offered during their set time range, preferably at the earliest time. Each prayer takes about 15 minutes to perform, with additional time for ablution prior to praying, and time for arrival and departure. Prayers in Islam do not involve any music or alcohol.

While individuals can pray by themselves, congregational prayers in a Mosque are highly encouraged. Muslims believe the reward for praying in a Mosque is 27 times more than a prayer offered alone, as Islam places great emphasis on community, brotherhood and unity. The five prayers are:

1. **Dawn (Fajr):** The dawn prayer, performed any time between when twilight begins until sunrise.
2. **Midday (Zuhr):** The midday prayer, performed any time after the sun passes its zenith, until the time for the afternoon prayer.
3. **Afternoon (Asr):** The afternoon prayer, performed before sunset. Time is based on when the length of shadow equals the length of the object.
4. **Sunset (Maghrib):** The sunset prayer, just after the sun sets, until the time for night prayer.
5. **Night (Isha):** The night prayer, performed after twilight fades.

Prayer times are based on the location of sun relative to your location. As sunrise and sunset times change, so do prayer times.



As sunrise and sunset change on a daily basis, the timings of prayers also change on a daily basis. In Los Gatos, the end of the time period for the dawn prayer is prior to 8 a.m. throughout the year. The start time of the night prayer occurs after 9:30 p.m. from about mid-May to mid-August, based on current Daylight Savings Time laws in effect.

In summary:

- Prayer times are based on the location of the sun relative to each location, and change daily.
- Sunrise and sunset times play a critical role in determining prayer times. The prayer schedule is impacted by whether standard vs. daylight savings is in effect.
- Sunrise, sunset and prayer times are approximately the same every year (+/- couple minutes) on a particular day. For example, the times on April 1, 2025 will be approximately the same as on April 1 of any other year, assuming there is no change in standard vs. daylight savings time.
- Prayers must be performed during their set time. They cannot be performed before or after their set time.
- Congregational prayers are highly recommended in a mosque. Walk into any mosque around the world and expect to see a similar prayer schedule based on local positions of the sun.
- Congregational prayer times are recommended to be set at the beginning of the time period whenever possible.
- Any changes to the Federal, California or local laws on Daylight Savings Time, in either direction, will impact prayer times and schedule.

### Our Request to Pray the Dawn (Fajr) Prayer

We are requesting clarification of the CUP to provide a time before which services would not be allowed and that it be set at a time that allows usage of our facility for dawn (Fajr) indoor congregation prayers and services. The following extract from the 2025 [WVMA Los Gatos & Saratoga prayer schedule](#) shows the prayer time range for the dawn (Fajr) prayer specific to Los Gatos and Saratoga locations. The last column shows how far before sunrise the congregational prayer is typically scheduled. (PST shown in blue, PDT shown in green).

Sample Date	Dawn (Fajr) Prayer Time Begins	Congregational (Jamah) Prayer Time	Sunrise / Dawn (Fajr) Prayer Time Ends	Scheduled Prayer Time Before Sunrise
January 15	6:04 a.m.	6:30 a.m.	7:21 a.m.	0:51
February 15	5:44 a.m.	6:20 a.m.	6:56 a.m.	0:36
March 1 (PST)	5:27 a.m.	6:10 a.m.	6:38 a.m.	0:28
March 15 (PDT)	6:07 a.m.	6:30 a.m.	7:18 a.m.	0:48
April 15	5:17 a.m.	5:50 a.m.	6:33 a.m.	0:43
May 15	4:35 a.m.	5:10 a.m.	5:59 a.m.	0:49
June 15	4:16 a.m.	5:00 a.m.	5:47 a.m.	0:47

July 15	4:32 a.m.	5:00 a.m.	6:00 a.m.	1:00
August 15	5:06 a.m.	5:30 a.m.	6:25 a.m.	0:55
September 15	5:38 a.m.	6:10 a.m.	6:50 a.m.	0:40
October 15	6:05 a.m.	6:30 a.m.	7:16 a.m.	0:46
November 1 (PDT)	6:20 a.m.	6:30 a.m.	7:33 a.m.	1:03
November 15 (PST)	5:33 a.m.	6:00 a.m.	6:47 a.m.	0:47
December 15	5:57 a.m.	6:30 a.m.	7:15 a.m.	0:45

As can be seen from the table above, the dawn (Fajr) prayer time ends before 8 a.m. throughout the year. We are requesting usage of the facility for dawn prayers and services, starting an hour and half before sunrise, as mandated by our faith.

Note: Any changes to the Federal, California or local laws on Daylight Savings Time, in either direction, will impact prayer times and schedule.

**Our Request to Pray the Night (Isha) Prayer**

We are requesting clarification of the CUP to explicitly allow usage of our facility until 10:30 p.m. for night (Isha) indoor congregation prayers. The following extract from the 2025 [WVMA Los Gatos & Saratoga prayer schedule](#) shows the prayer time range for the night (Isha) prayer, including the proposed scheduled congregational prayer time at the Mosque. (PST shown in blue, PDT shown in green, late timings shown in red).

Sample Date	Sunset (Maghrib) Prayer Time Begins	Night (Isha) Prayer Time	Night Prayer Congregational (Jamah) Prayer Time
January 15	5:18 p.m.	6:31 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
February 15	5:51 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
March 1 (PST)	6:05 p.m.	7:14 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
March 15 (PDT)	7:19 p.m.	8:27 p.m.	9:00 p.m.
April 15	7:46 p.m.	8:59 p.m.	9:10 p.m.
May 15	8:13 p.m.	9:34 p.m.	9:40 p.m.
June 15	8:33 p.m.	10:01 p.m.	10:10 p.m.
July 15	8:31 p.m.	9:55 p.m.	10:10 p.m.
August 15	8:02 p.m.	9:17 p.m.	9:30 p.m.
September 15	7:18 p.m.	8:27 p.m.	8:40 p.m.
October 15	6:33 p.m.	7:42 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
November 1 (PDT)	6:13 p.m.	7:23 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
November 15 (PST)	5:00 p.m.	6:12 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
December 15	4:55 p.m.	6:09 p.m.	8:00 p.m.

As can be seen from the table above, from approximately mid-May to mid-August, the night prayer time begins at 9:30 p.m. or later (shown in red), which would require the departure from the facility to be after 10 p.m. We are requesting a 10:30 p.m. end time throughout the year to make it consistent and easier to administer.

Note: Any changes to the Federal, California or local laws on Daylight Savings Time, in either direction, will impact prayer times and schedule.

### **Our Request to Pray the Ramadan Taraweeh Prayers and Practical Challenges**

Ramadan is the ninth month in the Islamic lunar calendar and holds great significance for Muslims. During this holy month, able-bodied Muslims fast from pre-dawn until sunset. During Ramadan, Muslims abstain, during the daylight hours, from what is generally allowed (eating, drinking, etc.), so they can learn the self-discipline to avoid acts that are immoral or not permitted. In addition to fasting, other acts of worship such as additional prayer, reading the Quran, and charity are viewed as divinely favored. This includes daily additional Taraweeh prayers that start immediately after the night (Isha) prayer. Normally, in Ramadan Taraweeh prayers, Muslims recite about one chapter of the Quran each night, and complete recitation of all 30 chapters by the end of Ramadan. The total time taken for the night (Isha) prayer and Ramadan Taraweeh prayers is approximately 2.5 hours, with another half hour to depart the facility as shown below:

- Pray night (Isha) prayer: 15 min + short break
- Pray Ramadan Taraweeh prayer: about 2 hours including short breaks
- Clear the facility: 30 minutes
- Total: ~3 hours

Ramadan is far more than a month of fasting and restraint; it is a season of vibrant fellowship, intergenerational connection, and lasting memories. Every evening, friends who have not crossed paths all year greet one another, and newcomers are welcomed as if they have always belonged. Our congregation brings an extraordinary mosaic of Ramadan customs and foods, offering a rare chance for families to share and learn from one another's traditions under one roof. Some of our community's happiest childhood recollections come from gathering at the mosque during Ramadan, praying with family and friends, and feeling the warmth of a community united in worship and goodwill. By curtailing the full program of nightly prayers, we risk denying today's youth those same formative experiences.

In 2025, we obtained a special exception from our religious leaders and shortened our offering to only do about half a chapter of the Quran, so we can exit and clear the facility by 11 p.m. based on the current CUP in effect.

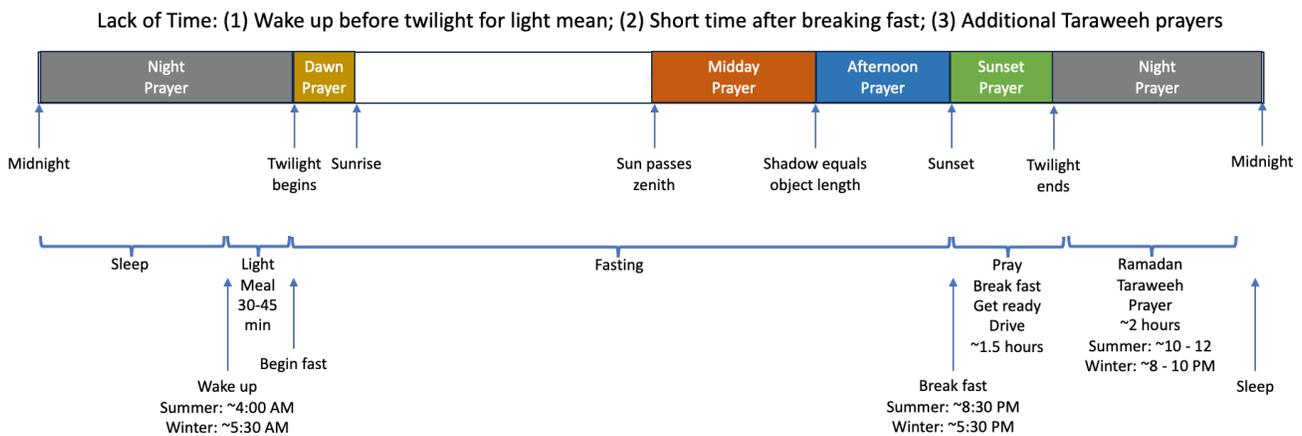
We do understand that not every family or individual is able to spend the entire ~3 hours every night (see practical challenges below), because of their job or school schedules, or their health and ability reasons, and some attendees may leave earlier. Typically, we find that in the second half of the nightly prayers, the attendance dwindles down to about 25%. This is especially true if Ramadan falls in summer months when the end time is later. This also results in a gradual departure. As a Mosque however, we are obligated to provide the full Ramadan Taraweeh experience.

**The biggest challenge for Muslims in Ramadan is lack of time**, because of additional prayers, waking up before twilight to eat a light meal, and compressing dinner time to join congregational prayers, as explained below:

1. **Wake up early to eat a light meal:** Muslims fast with no food or drink from when twilight begins to sunset. This can range from about 11 hours in winter to about 16 ½ hours in summer months. To be able to fast for long hours, Muslims wake up 30 to 45 minutes before twilight, around 4 to 5 a.m., to eat a small meal called Suhoor before beginning their fast, and then pray the dawn (Fajr) prayer. This results in breaking their sleep cycle, and when done over 30 days, adds to the fatigue Muslims feel during Ramadan.

2. **Lack of time before nightly prayers:** The time between sunset and when night prayer begins is sometimes less than 1 ½ hours. This is barely enough time to break the fast, pray the Sunset (Maghrib) prayer, eat dinner, get the family ready, drive over to the Mosque, park, and arrive at the facility to find a place to pray. Families with young children face even more challenges to get children ready, get them in and out of car seats, and get them checked into babysitting before prayers. Seniors and disabled attendees also find the time insufficient to make their way to prayers with the limited time.
3. **Lack of sleep:** In summer months, in Los Gatos, Muslims wake up as early as 4:00 a.m., and in winter months, around 5:00 to 5:30 a.m. for Suhoor. After the nightly Ramadan Taraweeh prayer, by the time they return home, it may be 11:30 p.m. or even past midnight, especially in summer months. This leaves 4 to 5 hours of sleep per night. Doing this over the entire month takes its toll on Muslim families.

These practical challenges faced by Muslims in Ramadan are important to understand when evaluating our request for Taraweeh prayers.



### Suggested Alternatives for Ramadan Taraweeh Prayers

As mentioned earlier, Ramadan prayers resemble the intensity and community focus of Holy Week, or High Holy Days prayers of other faith traditions. These are integral services that we offer to our community that are spread over several days/nights annually. There have been suggestions made to hold these services at alternate locations, use park and ride, or limit them in other ways. Not only do some of these suggestions go against the foundational principles of why a religious facility exists in the first place if it cannot be used for the most important religious services in a faith, but we also find these suggestions to be impractical because of the lack of time for Muslims in Ramadan, and they would create a substantial burden on our ability to practice our faith. However, we still wanted to address the impracticability of these suggestions directly, with our reasons, for a better understanding for everyone.

#### **Use Alternate Facilities**

We described our use of Saratoga Prospect Center above, and its similarities to our Farley Road facility. We already use Saratoga Prospect Center for the nightly prayers during Ramadan. We offer both facilities to our community, and about half of our congregation prays Ramadan Taraweeh prayer in each facility. We believe the distributed attendance is already optimized as best as it can.

We have sought alternative rental facilities before, but scheduling conflicts, daily setup challenges, cost factors, and other challenges make it impractical for us to move Ramadan Taraweeh prayer to another location other than our Los Gatos Farley Road facility. A mosque would not be considered a mosque if it does not provide services for one of its foundational pillars.

## **Park and Ride**

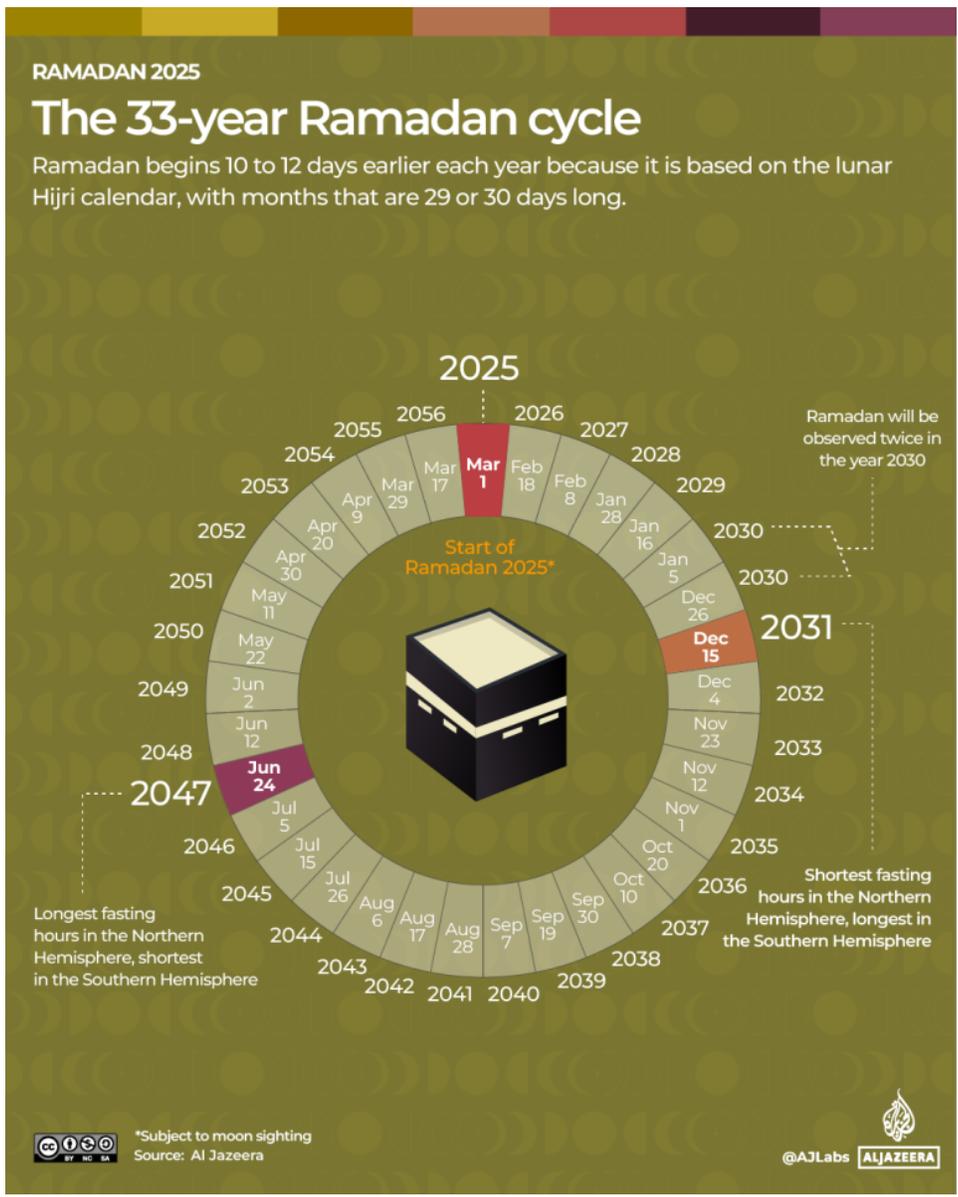
There are many practical challenges with park and ride to be used for Ramadan Taraweeh prayers, especially because of the lack of available time for Muslims in Ramadan, such as:

- **Substantial burden:** In Ramadan, we fast the entire day, and only break our fast at sunset, and we get up prior to twilight to eat a short meal before beginning the fast. We offer extended prayers (2+ hours) for the entire month. Adding yet another logistical requirement to park at one place and travel back and forth to another location for prayers is a substantial burden for our community.
- **Insufficient time:** The Ramadan Taraweeh starts 1.5 hours after sunset, that is barely enough time to break our fast, pray the sunset prayer, eat dinner, perform ablution, get family and children ready, and come over to the nightly prayer. For the elderly, and families with young children, this becomes even more difficult. Practically, to support a ride and park shuttle service, we would need to start the night prayer 30 to 60 minutes later to bring attendees over from a parking lot, and require yet another 30 to 60 minutes after the end of the prayer to clear the facility, further extending end times. This has the domino effect of pushing everything even later, and will be even more pronounced in summer months when sunset is later. This is not just impractical, but will have the opposite effect of trying to clear the facility after prayers as early as possible.
- **Shuttle swarm:** The start and end times of Ramadan Taraweeh prayers are fixed and cannot be staggered due to their length (2.5 hours). This means that we need to move a large number of people within a short period of time (15 to 30 minutes), prior to start or at the end, from the parking lot to our facility and vice versa. This means that we cannot just operate one or two shuttles or rotate a few for multiple trips, but would need many shuttles or buses to operate simultaneously. For example, if a typical shuttle has a capacity of 18 individuals, it would take 25 shuttle buses to move 450 people within a period of 15 to 20 minutes. If we use larger buses that can accommodate 40, we would need about 12 buses.
- **Noise from shuttles:** Section 16.20.055 of the Town of Los Gatos Municipal Code may limit our ability to operate shuttle buses over 6,000 lbs, or larger buses over 10,000 lbs especially if they have to idle. We also believe this will have the opposite effect of what we are trying to achieve in terms of noise, as shuttles and buses are much louder compared to EV's and cars.
- **Available parking lots:** We do not know if we can even find a parking lot nearby that would enable us to use that as a parking station for the hours from 8 p.m. to midnight, as many parking areas have limited hours of use. Additionally, as properties are being redeveloped, any solution would also likely be a short-term solution.
- **Elderly, disabled, or children:** Moving people with special needs requires facilitation and special equipment (ramps, wheelchair access), and takes additional time.
- **Exception handling:** There are always emergencies and exceptions when someone has to leave early, or has forgotten something, and this requires us to have shuttles ready to handle exceptions to go back and forth.

In addition to being impractical as outlined above, the park and ride shuttle service would not only create a substantial burden on our community, but would create considerable administrative, logistical and financial challenges for our non-profit religious organization, especially as we are completely dependent on donations to fund all of our expenses.

## **Ramadan in Future Years**

The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar (similar to Jewish and Chinese calendars). It is about 10 to 12 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar (353 to 355 days). The approximate start and end dates of Ramadan come back to the same time of the year 33 years later. For example, in 2025, Ramadan started on the night of February 28th. In 2057, Ramadan is expected to start on March 1st, coming back full circle to about the same time of the year.



Source: AlJazeera. [Ramadan 2025: Fasting hours and iftar times around the world](#)

The nightly (Isha) prayer time starts approximately 1 ½ hours after sunset in Los Gatos, CA. Whenever sunset is at or before 7:30 p.m., we would be able to complete the night (Isha) and Ramadan Taraweeh prayers and exit the facility before 11:30 p.m. if our request was granted. For the next 14 years, until Year 2039, assuming there are no changes to the Federal, State or local laws related to Daylight Savings Time, we expect to be able to clear the facility by 11:30 p.m.

When sunset occurs after 7:30 p.m., the start of the time period (twilight ends) for the night (Isha) prayer is delayed past 9:00 p.m., which results in us requiring additional time to complete the prayer, and hence we are requesting use until 12:00 a.m. We expect this to be in the years 2039 to 2054.

Year	Ramadan Start (night of)	Ramadan End	Daylight Savings Time	Sunset Time	~Night (Isha) / Ramadan Prayer Starts	~Ramadan Taraweeh Ends & Exit
------	--------------------------	-------------	-----------------------	-------------	---------------------------------------	-------------------------------

2025	Feb 28, 2025	Mar 29, 2025	PST→PDT	7:33 p.m.	8:50 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2026	Feb 17, 2026	Mar 19, 2026	PST→PDT	7:23 p.m.	8:40 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2027	Feb 7, 2027	Mar 8, 2027	PST	6:13 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2028	Jan 27, 2028	Feb 26, 2028	PST	5:53 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2029	Jan 15, 2029	Feb 14, 2029	PST	5:43 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2030	Jan 4, 2030	Feb 3, 2030	PST	5:33 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2030	Dec 25, 2030	Jan 23, 2031	PST	5:23 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2031	Dec 14, 2031	Jan 13, 2032	PST	5:13 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2032	Dec 3, 2032	Jan 1, 2033	PST	5:03 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2033	Nov 22, 2033	Dec 22, 2033	PST	5:03 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2034	Nov 11, 2034	Dec 11, 2034	PST	5:13 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2035	Oct 31, 2035	Nov 30, 2035	PDT→PST	6:13 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2036	Oct 19, 2036	Nov 18, 2036	PDT→PST	6:33 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2037	Oct 9, 2037	Nov 7, 2037	PDT→PST	6:43 p.m.	8:10 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2038	Sep 29, 2038	Oct 28, 2038	PDT	7:03 p.m.	8:30 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2039	Sep 18, 2039	Oct 18, 2039	PDT	7:13 p.m.	8:40 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2040	Sep 6, 2040	Oct 6, 2040	PDT	7:33 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2041	Aug 27, 2041	Sep 25, 2041	PDT	7:53 p.m.	9:20 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2042	Aug 16, 2042	Sep 14, 2042	PDT	8:03 p.m.	9:30 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2043	Aug 5, 2043	Sep 3, 2043	PDT	8:13 p.m.	9:40 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2044	Jul 25, 2044	Aug 23, 2044	PDT	8:23 p.m.	9:50 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2045	Jul 14, 2045	Aug 13, 2045	PDT	8:33 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2046	Jul 3, 2046	Aug 2, 2046	PDT	8:30 p.m.	9:50 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2047	Jun 22, 2047	Jul 22, 2047	PDT	8:35 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2048	Jun 10, 2048	Jul 10, 2048	PDT	8:40 p.m.	10:10 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2049	May 30, 2049	Jun 29, 2049	PDT	8:30 p.m.	9:50 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2050	May 19, 2050	Jun 18, 2050	PDT	8:20 p.m.	9:40 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2051	May 8, 2051	Jun 7, 2051	PDT	8:10 p.m.	9:30 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2052	Apr 26, 2052	May 26, 2052	PDT	8:00 p.m.	9:20 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2053	Apr 15, 2053	May 15, 2053	PDT	7:50 p.m.	9:10 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
2054	Apr 4, 2054	May 4, 2054	PDT	7:40 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	12:00 a.m.

2055	Mar 24, 2055	Apr 23, 2055	PST→PDT	7:30 p.m.	8:50 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2056	Mar 12, 2056	Apr 11, 2056	PST→PDT	7:20 p.m.	8:40 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2057	Mar 1, 2057	Mar 31, 2057	PST→PDT	7:10 p.m.	8:30 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2058	Feb 18, 2058	Mar 20, 2058	PST→PDT	7:00 p.m.	8:20 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2059	Feb 7, 2059	Mar 9, 2059	PST	6:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
2060	Jan 27, 2060	Feb 26, 2060	PST	5:50 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.

**Ramadan 2025 Experience**

This Ramadan (March 2025), we had higher attendance on weekends, and the odd-numbered nights in the last 10 days of Ramadan. Our busiest night was on the night of March 26, 2025, which was the 27th night of Ramadan. All prayers were held indoors in the three auditoriums, and there were no outdoor prayers or activities, except for arrival and departure.

We made a number of adjustments this Ramadan to ensure a smooth flow.

1. **Shortened prayers this year**, with special permission by religious leaders, to about half a chapter of the Quran instead of one chapter per night. After DST came into effect, we started at 9 p.m., ended by 10:30 p.m., and cleared the facility by 11 p.m.
2. **Used both driveways** for exit to distribute traffic in both directions of Farley Road.
3. **Traffic guards** were placed at entrances, exits, and inside the parking lot to allow smooth and safe flow of traffic at arrival and departure.
4. **Volunteers** reminded attendees to be quiet and respectful of our neighbors.
5. **Lowered lights** in the parking lot to minimize light pollution.
6. **A speed radar sign** was placed on Farley Road at our request by the Los Gatos Police Department.
7. **Increased patrols** around our facility at our request by the Los Gatos Police Department.
8. **Multiple, daily announcements** reminding attendees to be mindful of neighbors, to be quiet and exit safely.
9. **Coned off driveways** and parking spots at the request of some of our neighbors, so that there are no vehicles parked in front of their homes.
10. **Drive smaller and quieter** vehicles including EVs to reduce noise.
11. **Everything was indoors** and there were no outside activities except for arrivals and departures.
12. **Mid-Ramadan neighbor check-in** with neighbors to ask them about their experience, and if they had any concerns or complaints. We heard positive feedback from almost everyone we were able to reach and have documented this in the neighbor outreach document that we are submitting with this response.
13. **Multiple reach outs** to Los Gatos Police during the month to seek feedback and identify any areas of improvements.
14. **Published Ramadan Guidelines** See Exhibit A lists our communication and reminders to our community to be respectful to our neighbors, park responsibly, and adhere to all safety guidelines.

One unintended consequence of forcing the exit to occur in a very short amount of time, is that we were forced to have everyone exit at essentially the same time, as opposed to spreading out the exit time.

The busiest night in Ramadan was on March 26th, corresponding to the 27th night of Ramadan, considered the holiest night. We recorded a [video](#) showing the traffic exiting the facility on Farley Road and heading in the Westerly direction.

- Approximately 850 attendees prayed together, spread over the three auditoriums that night.
- The video is 26 min long starting at 10:32 p.m. and ending at 10:58 p.m. showing almost the entirety of the orderly departure from the facility.
- The video shows a total of 84 vehicles left the parking lot (47%, our parking lot capacity is 180 spots). Most of the vehicles depart in 17 minutes between 10:35 p.m. (3 min mark) and 10:52 p.m. (20 min mark). In the last 7 minutes between 10:52 p.m. (20 min mark) and 10:59 p.m. (end), only 5 vehicles left the parking lot. Note: We also used the entry driveway for exit, and vehicles turned left on Farley Road and headed in the Easterly direction. About half the vehicles left from each driveway.
- Pedestrians left the facility quietly, with the vast majority of them leaving within 7 minutes between 10:37 p.m. (5 min mark) and 10:44 p.m. (12 min mark). Pedestrians were directed to cross the road and walk on the south side of the street to ensure a smooth departure from the facility.
- There was no noise except for small conversation and vehicles departing.
- There was no speeding of the vehicles after exiting.
- The video also shows a traffic guard directing traffic for a safe exit.
- Officer Ben from Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Department arrives at 10:39 p.m. and is situated outside of our exit to observe traffic and noise. We sought his advice and feedback at the end, and he commended us for managing the situation well. He commented on how quiet the departure was when people were walking to their cars, and informed us that he did not observe any violation or enforceable action. He commented that he did not see any speeding either.

Prior to this Ramadan, we had also implemented the following changes:

15. **Gate track changes:** To minimize noise from the gate track when exiting the parking lot, WVMA has temporarily removed the track/guide to the gate, rendering its \$50,000 commercial gate inoperable.
16. **Fences:** WVMA has added or replaced the following fences to increase privacy and reduce light disturbance:
  - a. 110-feet of fence between the neighbor to the left at 16,793 Farley Road: Paid the total cost for replacing 6-foot fence and adding a 2-foot lattice.
  - b. Shared cost to replace 115-feet of fence shared with a neighbor fronting Corcel Court, including adding a 2-foot lattice.
  - c. Shared cost to replace 60-feet of chain link fence with a good neighbor wood fence and 2-foot lattice at the back of the property shared with a home on Chirco Drive.
17. **Tree planting:** To reduce light disturbance and noise, and increase privacy, WVMA has planted 10 trees on its campus, and trees were carefully selected so as to not cause issues with leaves falling into a neighbor's swimming pool.

### **Alternate Facility Used for Eid-ul-Fitr**

This year, at the end of Ramadan, we celebrated Eid-ul Fitr, one of the two most important holidays for Muslims at an **offsite location at Vallco Parking Garage**. Instead of using our own facility, we inconvenienced ourselves and our community, in rain and cold weather, to pray in an open garage, where we set up prayer mats, sound system, food stalls, and play areas for our children, at a substantial cost and burden.

### **Summary**

In conclusion, we hope this submission gives the Town the detail it needs to approve our requested clarification of permitted hours for the West Valley Muslim Association in the Town of Los Gatos. If further information would be helpful, we stand ready to provide it. Our faith teaches that outstanding neighborliness is a paramount virtue, and we are committed to exemplifying it - balancing Town ordinances, our neighbors' concerns, and our religious obligations.

We look forward to partnering with you so that Farley Road remains both a peaceful home for worship and a place where generations of families can create joyful memories. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

**Exhibit A - Ramadan 2025 Guidelines**

We published the following guidelines in our [Ramadan Booklet](#), and also posted these prominently in multiple locations throughout the facility. We also emailed these to members, and posted in social media groups regularly.



# RAMADAN GUIDELINES

RESPECT • SAFETY • COMMUNITY

**Exit on Time**  
Everyone must leave LGIC by 10:50 PM.  
No lingering in the parking lot.

**Carpool and Arrive Early**  
Avoid traffic congestion and secure parking by coming on time.

**Quiet Departure**  
Keep noise to a minimum while walking to vehicles.

**Use LGIC Parking**  
Street parking is discouraged.  
Do not block driveways or park in front of neighboring houses.

**Follow Traffic Rules**  
No U-turns or drop-offs on Farley Road.  
Right turns only into LGIC.

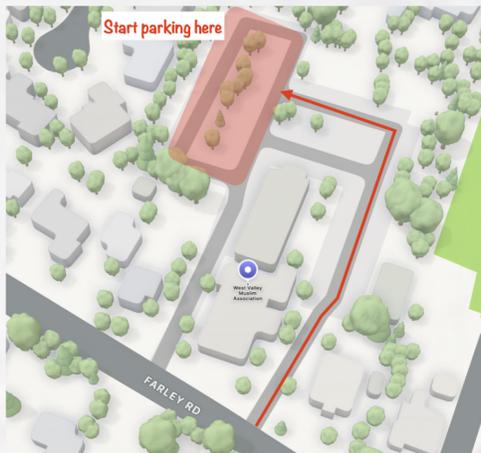
**Drive Carefully**  
Below speed limits, avoid honking, and turn off loud car alarms.

**Supervise Children**  
Kids must remain with a parent/guardian  
or in designated childcare.

**Respect Prayer Etiquette**  
Keep silence in the prayer hall, observe capacity limits,  
prayer will only be held indoors.

# MASJID ENTRY & EXIT GUIDELINES

- **Entry:** Always enter through Gate A.
- **During Prayer:** Use Gate B only for exiting.
- **After Taraweeh:** You may exit through both Gate A and Gate B.
- Follow the designated exit flow based on your destination.



- If you arrive early, park in the areas toward the end of the parking lot (shaded in red on the map below).
- Walk to the masjid to earn more rewards.
- Leave spots near the masjid for the elderly.
- Drive under 5 mph—the slower, the better.

# WVMA RAMADAN EXIT FLOW

## HOW TO SAFELY EXIT WVMA

- For North Exit onto Los Gatos Blvd:  
**Follow the Red Path.**
- For South Exit onto Los Gatos Blvd:  
**Follow the Green Path.**
- **Drive Safely:** You're in a residential area—please drive slowly.
- Some areas have a **10 mph speed limit.** You will get ticketed by officers for speeding.
- Maintain a **slow speed** in the WVMA parking lot.

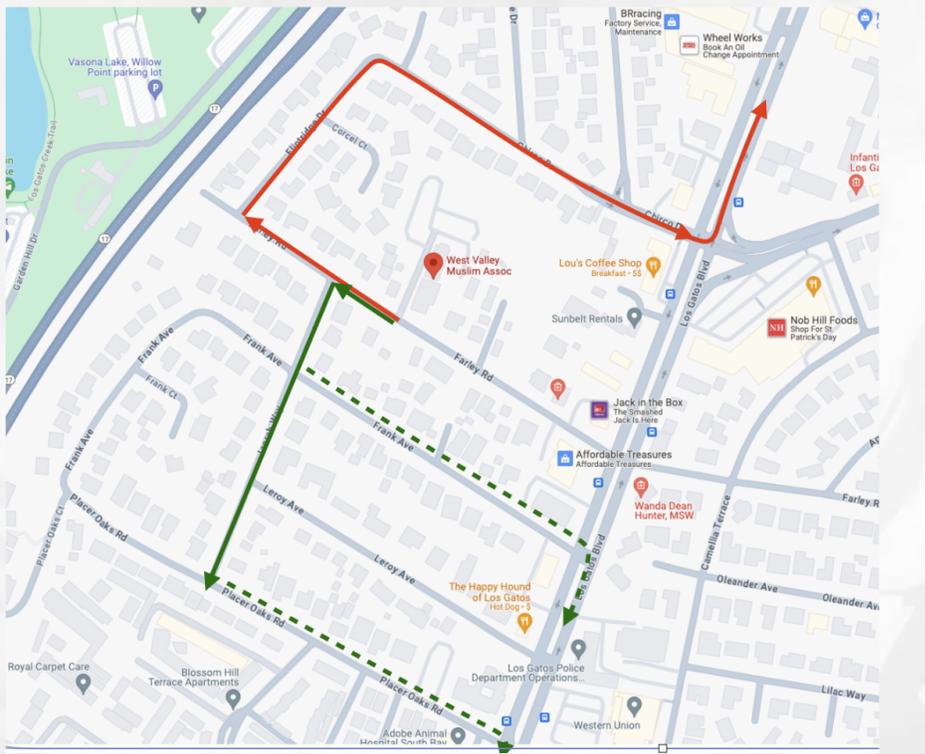


Exhibit B - Letter to Bishop Patrick McGrath, then Bishop of San Jose, The Diocese of San Jose



February 7, 2018

The Most Reverend Bishop Patrick J. McGrath  
Bishop of San Jose, The Diocese of San Jose  
1150 North First Street  
San Jose, CA 95112

Dear Bishop McGrath:

May God's peace and blessings be with you.

Thank you for your leadership, and especially your tireless efforts towards interfaith dialog with the Muslim community.

The West Valley Muslim community is a sister community to the South Bay Islamic Association in San Jose. We were formed in 2007 and serve 150 families in Saratoga, Cupertino and West San Jose. We provide religious and social activities with a special focus on youth. Our congregation is led by Sheikh Aladdin ElBakri, and he actively participates in the Saratoga Ministerial Association with Father Joe Galang of the Church of the Ascension and Father Gary Thomas of the Sacred Heart Parish. We have worked on joint programs in Saratoga with the Catholic Church, other Christian denominations and with Congregation Beth David, including feeding the poor, Thanksgiving interfaith events, and Living Room Conversations.

For the last several years, we have been operating out of a small 1,000 sq. ft. rental facility in Saratoga for daily use. For our Friday and Ramadan prayers, we rent the Saratoga Prospect Center to accommodate the 500 people that join us for these services. We have been searching for a permanent home that can accommodate our growing congregation and have been unable to do so given the lack of religiously zoned facilities in Saratoga, Cupertino and West San Jose.

We wanted to reach out to you in the hopes of determining if there are any facilities that might be available in these cities. We are especially interested in determining if a portion of the lands of Church of the Ascension in Saratoga could be acquired by us, and the parking lot shared with the church, Congregation Beth David and West Valley Muslim Association. It will be a great testament to demonstrate the common beliefs of the three monotheistic faiths, sharing a common area, and operating close to each other. One possible idea is shown below, and we are open to consider other options.

Page 1 of 3

We would be honored if you can consider our request, and would welcome an opportunity to discuss this with you or your representatives. I can be reached directly or through Imam Tahir Anwar or Sheikh Aladdin ElBakri.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Imtiaz Qureshi  
President, West Valley Muslim Association  
(650) 279-0556, [imtiazq@gmail.com](mailto:imtiazq@gmail.com)

cc:

Father Jon Pedigo

Imam Tahir Anwar: Cell: (408) 768-4661, [imamtahir@gmail.com](mailto:imamtahir@gmail.com)

Sheikh Aladdin ElBakri: Cell (559) 907-9136, [1elbakri1@gmail.com](mailto:1elbakri1@gmail.com)

One possible idea (shown in green):

