

**The Surrey Jamea Masjid:**  
**Surrey, British Columbia, Canada**

**Responding to a Fast Growing Community**

**By**

**Dr. Mohammed Saleh**  
**Educational Consultant**

**Stage 1: Before 1980**



The activities of our community during this stage were centered in Br. Hasmat's home (7960 132nd street) for some 16 year, from 1974 to 1980. This was the central point for holding the Friday Congregational and Taraweeh Prayers. The number of Muslims who attended these prayers in Br' Hasmat's home ranged from 15 to 20 who parked their cars in the vicinity causing neighbors to complain about parking and increasing activities in the area.

**Stage 2: Moving to a Salvation Army Church**

The Muslim community decided to search for a place to pray. We, with the guidance of Allah, managed to buy a Salvation Army Church at the intersection of 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and 124<sup>th</sup> street for a sum of 64,00.00 CDN. The property needed a lot of work in roofing, electrical work and plumbing.



Every thing was run down. The community put their hearts, heads and hands together and renovated the roof (both sides), built a stucco wall, put a kitchen downstairs in addition to four bathrooms. The cost of renovation was 30,000.00 CDN collected from outside sources and solicited donations.

### **Stage 3: Hiring Qari Abdul Wahhab (1980)**

In 1980 we had a total of 32 families in Delta and Surrey combined. A year later, the community began to grow; Muslims from BC and the rest of Canada moved in. To satisfy the community increasing need for spirituality, the BCMA hired Qari Abdul Wahhab in October 1980. For the first time in the history of the area, the entire Qur'an was recited in Taraweeh prayer of 1980. We shared Qari Abdul Wahhab with Vancouver. Hiring Qari Abdul Wahhab was a bold and significant event. It was a proof that the Muslim community is serious about its commitment to Islam.

### **Stage 4: Unexpected Growth of the Community (1990 – 2000)**

After Eid-ul-fitr, the community organized classes for children and BCMA bought a five-acre piece of land (12573 72nd Avenue) with the intention of accommodating the planned programs in addition to other community needs. Unfortunately the property was not approved by the City of Surrey and we had to sell it. To meet the continuing growth of the community, we bought a neighboring property for 260, 00.00 CDN by public donations. In 1990's the fourth property was bought to increase our total property to one acre. As Muslims keep increasing, we are responding by buying more and more. In 2000, a fifth property (7234-124<sup>th</sup>) was bought. The reader is reminded of the tremendous amount of energy and effort needed to carry out the growth-project.

### **Stage 5: Masjid Destroyed by fire (November 24, 2000 at 2:00 am)**

Unfortunately the community experienced a mishap in the year 2001 when the old Masjid was



burnt down. This painful event took place on November 24, 2001 exactly three days before the month of Ramadan and only a few hours before Fajr prayer. Difficult times test the strength of the challenging stage of growth.

## Stage 6: Explosion of Muslim Population

If you wish to experience the tremendous growth of Muslims, all you have to do is to watch Br. Mohammad Saeed running around on Fridays covering the floors downstairs with plastic sheets trying to cope with the overflow of worshippers. The community put their hearts, heads, and hands together and built the present Masjid; the cost is shown in the Table below.



<b>Amounts</b>	<b>Sources</b>
170,000.00	Starting Amount from Local Sources
1,530,000.00	Donations
1,800,000.00	Qard Hassan – <b><u>A good loan</u></b> (no interest)
<b>3,500,000.00</b>	<b>Total</b>

The latest fund raising dinner held at this Masajid on Saturday March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 was a success. It will definitely help reduce that good loan we owe.

Br. Hasmat, the BCMA Chairperson for the surrey-delta branch thank this great community for their generosity and ask Allah to bless them and reward them abundantly for their support to this Masjid and its activities.

The writer wishes to thank Br. Hasmat and Br. Qari Abdul Wahhab for their valuable comments and the corrections they made in the early stage of article preparation.