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Project Title: *Negotiating Direction: Qibla in Adaptively Reused Mosques*

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I remember the first time I understood that architecture could hold meaning past the walls that constrain it. When our mosque moved into a former municipality building in New Jersey, the qibla, the direction of prayer toward Mecca, cut across the room at a sharp angle. The misalignment itself became the architecture. My father was president of that mosque, and I watched him shepherd our community through a series of transformations, from a blue barn to a storefront to that municipal office and finally to a purpose-built mosque. When he passed in 2022, one month after I started college, I lost a living archive of how immigrant Muslim communities build and adapt. That loss shaped this work, not as nostalgia, but as urgent documentation.

. Through a typological study of all 155 mosques in New Jersey, I began analyzing how the qibla interacts with the inherited orientation of adaptive reuse buildings, former churches, warehouses, storefronts, and offices. But the deeper I went, the more I understood something I had only felt as a child: adaptive reuse is not the exception to the American mosque. It is its heart. Over 80% of New Jersey's mosques occupy buildings never designed for Muslim worship, and that pattern holds across the country. The improvised, negotiated, constraint-driven mosque is not a temporary condition on the way to something more permanent; it is the defining form of Muslim space in America. This research is an effort to document that reality and give architectural language to the ingenuity already embedded in it.