



**Main Library
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Plans finalized for Sherrills Ford library

The Catawba County Board of Commissioners has approved architectural plans for the new Sherrills Ford Branch Library.

The 10,000-sq.-ft. facility to be erected on 2.5 acres near the intersection of Highway 150 and Sherrills Ford Road, is expected to be completed in 2014. The Board of Commissioners has set aside \$2.9 million over multiple fiscal years to make it happen.

The brick-clad structure, designed by Jenkins-Peer Architects, features an atrium entrance and ample public areas to provide quality library services to one of the fastest-growing populations in the county. Special attention has been paid to a children's corner and outside area, public meeting space and adequate shelving to accommodate a growing population.

Library Director Karen Foss said the new library has been designed to meet public service needs of local residents, such as an area to obtain building permits.

Census figures show that the Sherrills Ford area is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the county, a fact that figured prominently in the planning process.

"Jenkins-Peer, an architect firm with library design and construction experience, worked with us to gather public input and adapt the building plans to address the needs of the community," Foss said.

“We considered results from a library survey developed by Providence Associates, an independent consulting firm. A total of 477 citizens responded to the survey. We also held two focus group sessions and a community meeting to gather information to determine the size and other services desired by the public,” Foss said.

Input was gathered from the Library Board of Trustees, the Sherrills Ford Friends of the Library, county staff and others to best determine how the new branch should appear and how it should function.

Some adaptations included space for art displays, a meeting room to seat 80 people, a larger computer lab, book sale space, a dedicated teen area and comfortable seating for reading.

The building design makes the best use of the site both environmentally and economically to make the building as efficient as possible to operate and maintain. The aesthetic design, including attention to landscaping, will help to encourage quality development in the area.

The next step will be a bidding process to determine the contractor. Groundbreaking is expected mid-year.