



SOUTHEAST REGION

Durham County  
Public Library  
Durham, NC

Architect:  
The Freelon Group  
Durham, NC

Sustainability Consultant:  
Alicia Ravetto Architect  
Chapel Hill, NC

Builder:  
C.T. Wilson  
Construction Company  
Durham, NC

**LEED Silver**  
Rating: U.S.  
Green Building  
Council LEED – NC  
v. 2.1.  
Level: Silver  
(34 points)

Civil Engineer and  
Landscape Architect:  
Coulter Jewell Thames  
Durham, NC

Programming Consultant:  
The Design Collaborative  
Virginia Beach, VA

Structural Engineer:  
GKC Associates  
Raleigh, NC

Mechanical/Electrical  
and Plumbing Engineer:  
Engineered Designs, Inc.  
Raleigh, NC

# works



## New Library is Beacon of Safety and Sustainability

The new North Regional branch of the Durham County Public Library invites visitors to experience its open, airy reading areas and views of the surrounding landscape. Over 75 percent of occupied areas receive natural daylight, and over 90 percent have a view to perimeter windows. Less noticeable is that virtually every element of the project was designed to protect the health and safety of the environment as well as the visitors who pass under its illuminated glass lantern entrance.

The one-story, 25,000 square-foot structure is one of three prototype facilities designed to support the County's long range plan of providing

“Brick was the obvious choice because it provides enough visual substance and density to balance the library's openness.”

*Phil Freelon, President, The Freelon Group*





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## THE DETAIL FILE

Take a closer look at how the Architect detailed this section.

Of course, this depiction is not to be construed as an exact detailing recommendation by the Brick Industry.

the region with state-of-the-art lifelong learning and literacy resources. The design needed to be flexible enough to be executed for three separate branches with different surroundings. "We made it so that any side of the building would have enough presence and aesthetic quality to front a public area or street," says Phil Freelon, lead architect and president of The Freelon Group. "Also, the scale had to be appropriate in either a residential neighborhood or a light commercial area."

To "bring the outside in," the design utilizes a series of layers defined by heavy masonry walls and "saddle bags" constructed of wood siding. The main entry separates the meeting room and public restrooms from the staff work area and book return, allowing for after-hours meetings as well as group noise confined to the front of the building. From the lobby, visitors pass through main circulation, reading

areas, and periodicals before entering the dramatic double-height stack area. Rather than having tall stacks block natural light, the design team lifted the large shed roof, creating clerestory gazing above north and south masonry walls. East and west walls are full glass and provide views of reading courtyards and the surrounding landscape. "The color of the brick provided a nice contrast between the blue sky beyond and the maple book stacks and casework," Freelon says.

The library earned Silver LEED Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council because it exemplifies careful stewardship of the land and natural resources. Brick was chosen for its environmental and aesthetic benefits, contributing toward LEED Material and Resource credits by meeting the overall goal of building with recycled content, as well as building with regional materials located within 500 miles

of the building site. Brick's minimal packaging waste and high thermal mass also contribute toward the sustainability goals of the project, which uses 35 percent less energy and 30 percent less water than typical buildings of similar design. Drought-resistant landscaping eliminates the need for irrigation. Over 75 percent of construction was waste-recycled. The project also incorporates Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles consistent with the County's goal of providing safer environments for the public.

Since its opening in February 2007, the North Regional branch of the Durham County Public Library has experienced an increase in visitors and received praise from community leaders and the public. "What I like about this project the most is the openness of the stack area," Freelon says. "It doesn't feel like a traditional library. It is a great space to experience."

