Basic Steps in Planning for a New Library Building: A Checklist
Adapted from the New Jersey State Library—Library Development Bureau

I. PRELIMINARY STEPS
_____ Recognition of the need for a new building
_____ Alternative considerations
_____ Building an addition
_____ Purchasing a building to be used as a library
_____ Major renovation
_____ Building a new building
_____ Other (sharing space or other options)
_____ Appointment of a building committee
_____ Outline proposed program
_____ Investigate financial status
_____ Visit other libraries
_____ Plan for community input

II. DECISION TO BUILD
_____ Retain legal counsel
_____ Hire consultant to do library building program
_____ Undertake survey of community including focus groups
_____ Delegate specific responsibilities to individuals or groups
_____ Establish timeline

III. COMMUNITY ANALYSIS
_____ General characteristics of the population
_____ Projected population growth in ten years
_____ Review of demographics and analysis
_____ Relationship to academic community and school community
_____ Relationship to cultural community
_____ Relationship to recreational community
_____ Future needs and general trends
_____ Special emphasis on problems
_____ Economic profile
_____ Special community needs
_____ Relationship of community to general region

IV. WRITTEN BUILDING PROGRAM
_____ Library objectives
_____ Existing and projected services
_____ Future needs of the library
_____ Standards required (ADA)
_____ Interrelationships of spaces within the building, with reference to public use and staff use, utilizing flow charts and relationship charts and indicating priorities for contiguous location of spaces
Name of each space
Description of service function of each space and activities which take place
Number of occupants to be accommodated (patrons and staff)
Resources to be accommodated (books, tables, computers, etc)
Square footage requirements for each space
Current inadequacies
List of special features
Lists of movable furniture, equipment, and built in furniture and equipment
Community architectural preferences
Technology issues
Environmental considerations and special requirements if needed
Explanation of need for major renovation or expansion

V. HIRING OF THE ARCHITECT
Develop a philosophy of architecture
Become familiar with the architect's work
Check for New Jersey license
Check references and competence
Design process of input to architect
Sign contract

VI. DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN FOR FINANCING
Estimate project cost
Site
Site survey
Bond sale
Architect's fees
Consultant fees
Construction costs
Mechanical costs
Demolition
Furniture and equipment
Landscaping
Owner's representative
Clerk of the works
Test borings
Legal fees
Sources of funding
Operating budget
Bonds
Gifts
Mortgage
Funding campaign
VII. ACQUISITION OF SITE
_____ Accessibility of site
_____ Relationship to existing city plan
_____ Visual prominence
_____ Traffic patterns
_____ Soil conditions
_____ Zoning
_____ Parking
_____ Centralized location
_____ Clear title
_____ Fair price
_____ Site survey

VIII. SCHEMATIC DESIGN
_____ Floor plan
_____ Elevation
_____ Comparison with building program
_____ Approval by governing body

IX. PRELIMINARY DRAWINGS
_____ Advanced drawings, elevation, etc.
_____ Outline specifications for materials
_____ Comparison with building program
_____ Consult staff for suggestions
_____ Cost estimates
_____ Approval by governing body

X. WORKING DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS
_____ Detailed drawings
_____ Detailed specifications
_____ Preparation of construction documents

XI. FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT LIST
_____ Complete list
_____ Specifications