



THE V-SHAPED WOODEN COLUMNS ADD TO THE QUIET ELEGANCE OF THE SOUTHWEST LIBRARY

*Source: Perkins&Will; Credit: Jim Steinkamp Photography*

### CASE STUDY: SOUTHWEST LIBRARY DC

## MASS TIMBER TRANSFORMS A NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY INTO A CITY ICON

**PROJECT OWNER:** DC PUBLIC LIBRARY

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 900 WESLEY PLACE, WASHINGTON, DC 20037

**COMPLETION DATE:** MAY 11, 2022

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER:** PERKINS&WILL

**MASS TIMBER ENGINEER/MANUFACTURER:** STRUCTURECRAFT

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** TURNER CONSTRUCTION

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** STRUCTURECRAFT

**MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, AND PLUMBING:** INTERFACE ENGINEERING

**THE DESIGN CONCEPT** for the new Southwest Library is a “pavilion on the park.” It offers pathways that encourage the community to explore the library and embrace it as an intuitive part of their neighborhood experience.

The library incorporates biophilic design, promoting the user’s connection to nature and creating a calming and restorative feeling that promotes health and well-being. From a distance, the folded plate Dowel Laminated Timber (DLT) roof opens toward the park and invites the public to enter. The



**TOP — THE SOUTHWEST  
LIBRARY'S DESIGN  
PROMOTES PEOPLE'S  
CONNECTION TO NATURE**

**BOTTOM — THE  
DESIGN MAKES LIGHT  
A FEATURE OF THE  
SOUTHWEST LIBRARY'S  
READING ROOM**

*Source: Perkins&Will  
Credit: Jim Steinkamp  
Photography*



roof provides a compelling visual element evoking an open book and creates a sheltering canopy that is an extension of the trees outside of the building.

The V-shaped wooden columns supporting the roof further enhance the warm welcome and the quiet elegance of the building. Inside, expansive

windows offer sweeping views of nature and the beauty of the surrounding park while flooding the interior with natural light. More than 90 percent of the interior spaces have access to exterior views.

*This case study has not been fact-checked, but it has been edited for length, clarity, grammar, and style. 🌱*