

## Walkertown makes renovations to old fire station for deputies

### *Downtown office will provide more room and visibility*

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#### WALKERTOWN

Town officials are fixing up an old fire station downtown to provide office space for sheriff's deputies working in the Walkertown area.

As many as six officers of the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office may work out of the old fire station on Main Street near the town hall. The town bought the property in April for about \$240,000.

The town also plans to store maintenance equipment in the building.

Sheriff's deputies work out of a room in town hall, but the new location will give them more room and better exposure, town officials said. The current office only has two desks.

At a recent meeting of the Walkertown Town Council, Mayor Doc Davis said that having the deputies more visible on Main Street could be a deterrent to crime and make them easier for residents to reach them.

In July, the town rejected a proposal to have a deputy dedicated to patrolling Walkertown specifically. Under that program, the town would have paid a portion of the deputy's salary and equipment, with the proportion paid for by the town increasing each year until the position was supported totally by the town.

The deputy's main job would have been traffic enforcement. The town council had initially approved the idea in 2006, but later changed course.

The council voted 3-1 in July to decline participation in the grant program. The council's majority said that costs were too high. Council member Sarah Welch dissented.

The deputies using the old fire station will patrol Walkertown and will use the new offices when carrying out their duties.

Lynn McKinnie, the interim town manager, said that work is proceeding on fixing up the old fire station. The interior will be painted and repaired, but the sheriff's office will be responsible for putting in office equipment and other items the deputies need.

Town officials said they should have the old fire station ready for the deputies by late September or early October.

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