

Library presents new design concept

By Regan Tuttle EDITOR | Posted: Wednesday, March 2, 2016 12:00 am

Norwood Public Library has shown no signs of slowing down. In fact, Director Carrie Andrew said that usage in all aspects of library services continues to increase.

In the last year, free Internet usage has increased by 100 percent.

Andrew said that while the library can't feasibly increase its hours, the Wi-Fi is available at all hours daily to serve those who need it—a testament to the town's need for broadband services, she said.

The library has seen more traffic on site, as well as an increase in circulation of books and other materials. The number of patrons has increased by 300 in the last two years.

Last year, the library hired two part-time employees to help meet the rising demands. Janet Glockson Spor is assisting with customer service. Dawn Bruce is the library's program director.

The library has recently seen a 57 percent increase in programming, and attendance for library-sponsored events continues to build.

Andrew updated both county officials and the Town of Norwood in February with this information. All of it, she said, indicates the library's need to build a new space on the 12 acres it owns off San Miguel Street in Norwood.

The library board recently released its new design concept. The plans are not exactly final, but Andrew said they show the community what is possible.

She wants the building to look like it belongs in Norwood, and she feels the exterior, the materials and overall feel accomplish that.

“We want it to fit the community and the personality of the town,” she said.

The library board would like the design concept to include solar gain — solar panels or passive solar — and energy efficiency is a priority, Andrew said.

Along with public walking trails and benches, an outdoor amphitheater is in the plans. The amphitheater could host summer music events, movies or even weddings.

Norwood Chamber of Commerce will partner with the new library to establish a visitor space.

One section of the new library will be dedicated to Colorado Supreme Court law. Andrew said the law section is unique and that only a few libraries in Colorado feature something similar. Norwood's will be the first on the Western Slope to be purposefully built and will contain databases and other resources. The access to state Supreme Court law would only be possible otherwise through state bar membership. Andrew said the law library will be a valuable asset.

Through sources like the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the library board is working on obtaining grants to fund the new library, but is considering going to the ballot in November with a mill levy question.

“We want people to know we are moving forward, and working on funding,” Andrew said. “You can get involved if you’re interested, and you’re always welcome to contact me with comments and feedback.”

The existing library building is owned by the Town of Norwood and will remain standing in some capacity. Because of its historic nature, no real expansion is possible there.