Local News Stories

Garfield County Education Center to Include Space for Cooking, Shooting, Robotics and More

KDNK
Published February 20, 2020 at 7:30 AM MST

LISTEN • 2:58



Land+Shelter

Colorado State University and Garfield County are partnering to create a new 12,000 square-foot 'education center' in Rifle. The two-story building will feature a shooting range, and spaces for the community and 4H members to explore woodworking, metal fabrication, cooking, gardening, quilting, sewing, robotics, and more.

Andi Korber is the owner of Carbondale Based Land + Shelter, the architectural and planning firm that has been designing the space. She describes it as a "maker space."

> KORBER: In this space will have kitchens, sewing, robotics, a woodshop, a metal shop. There will be the ability to create things using digital means, your hands, industrial equipment, and things like a stove. So it's really varied, but I think of it as a place where you can just generate things with your body in mind.



Credit Garfield County

The education center is being planned inside of an existing building at 937 Railroad Avenue in Rifle, near the Fairgrounds. Garfield County purchased the location for just under $2 million last summer. The County is also contributing funding for architectural planning and has budgeted $400,000 for renovations. The rest of the funding will come from grants and contributions made to the CSU Foundation.

Andi Doroux is an Architect for Land + Planning and the Job Captain for this project. She's also a former member of 4H. She spoke about the challenge of designing a space with so many different uses.

> DOROUX: We had to try to manage all of these different programmatic asks, put them in a kind of logical position so that people can easily flow between them and make sure they all fit. Which was really the biggest challenge, is each of them wants a certain amount of elbow room and trying to tetris everything together has been an exciting challenge.

Andrea Dourox says she grew up in 4H, and mostly did indoor projects. She says this kind of space creates more opportunities for young people to explore their interests.

> DOROUX: I think I probably would have branched out more into archery and woodworking if I had that option. It's so cool that they're going to include both of those. And then there's cooking as well. They also are doing robotics, so that would be a super neat project to get into. The other great thing about this place is that it's so multi-purpose. I'm not exactly sure what all they're going to do in it. So I think that there's the excitement of: What do I want to learn, and knowing that this space can probably accommodate it.

The building will also utilize a high-efficiency mechanical system and could have a solar array built-in. Designers say the goal is to get the project as close to net-zero energy as possible.

CSU's county extension director Carla Farrand says that establishing a space for science, technology, engineering and mathematics in Garfield County is a dream come true.