

Plans for new library under way

By Lisa Faught
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SIERRA MADRE — Plans for a new library are moving forward, with the city proposing a 20,500-square-foot facility to replace the 8,762-square-foot one tucked in a residential neighborhood on Sierra Madre Boulevard.

The cost is estimated at about \$5 million, which the city hopes to partially fund through the state Library Bond Act of 2000.

The bond covers 65 percent of the cost, with the city

Sierra Madre facility too small, officials say

expected to cover the remaining 35 percent.

The application is due in March.

The library is simply too small to serve the entire city, said Toni Buckner, director of library services.

She said people often end up reading on the floor, computers are scattered in odd nooks and the children's book section is right next to the reference books with no walls to separate them.

"We'd like the children to have a place to call their own and not interrupt people who need to research or study," Buckner said.

The library was built in 1955 to replace the old clapboard house that had served as the city library since 1887.

Under the plan, the library would be demolished to make way for the new one, and two landmark palm trees would likely be moved.

The new library will be two

stories high to accommodate a community room, a separate children's book room and a section for computers.

"With all the older libraries, they just plop down computers wherever they have space," Buckner said.

In the next month, PBWS Architects will be working on a floor plan for the library, and next week, library officials will visit libraries in Mill Valley and Oakland to get ideas for the design.

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*Toni Buckner,
director of library services*

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