

## **CCCS plans new treatment center in old motel**

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A correctional services company is proposing to move a chemical dependency treatment program from the Montana State Hospital at Warm Springs campus to a former motel outside of town.

Community, Counseling and Correctional Services of Butte has applied for a special use permit to operate a 50-bed, 60-day treatment facility at the former Skyhaven Lodge, just off Montana Highway 43 between Anaconda and Warm Springs.

"This is conditional on the (state) Department of Corrections' needs," said Mike Thatcher, executive director of CCCS, which operates correctional and treatment programs for youth and adult offenders through government contracts.

County planning staff and planning board members have recommended approval of the permit; the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commission will make the final vote this month.

CCCS bought the Skyhaven Lodge and 37 surrounding acres, which are near a rural airport, about three years ago. The special use permit would allow CCCS to move Connections West — a drug and alcohol treatment program for adult males — from the Warm Springs campus to the 10-unit motel.

The company's plans call for a \$1.4 million renovation to the building.

CCCS likely needs to relocate the program because of a renovation project at Warm Springs, Thatcher said.

If all goes as planned, CCCS would expand its programs remaining at the Warm Springs campus to retain jobs there, and add about 25 new jobs at Connection West's new location, Thatcher said. CCCS employs 540 people in Montana, about 10 percent in the Anaconda area.

The program would accept people who have been court-mandated to receive treatment, and who following their stays at the facility would enter pre-release centers.

In addition to support from planning officials, the proposal has received a thumbs-up from members of the Airport Authority Board.

"The main interest for the board was security and the effect the center would have at the airport," John McKenna, board chairman, wrote in a

February 2007 letter to commissioners. "We feel that our questions were answered and the main concerns laid to rest." Thatcher emphasized that the project is reliant upon the long-term need to move the program and the Department of Corrections' demands for services.