

CCCS looks to build facility

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ANACONDA — A Butte-based organization has applied for special use permits for two pieces of land in the county with the intent of using one of them for a new 144-bed corrections facility.

Community Counseling and Correctional Services has requested special use permits for the facility in two locations: Forty acres of ARCo-owned land at the northwest corner of Montana Highways 48 and 273 and its own property west of Highway 48 near Bowman Field.

Planning staff presented the applications to the county commission Tuesday; commissioners will vote on them at a future meeting. The county planning board unanimously recommended approval of the permits.

The ARCo-owned land is CCCS's preferred site; the land near Bowman Field is an alternate location in case Superfund issues threaten to hold up the project, said Connie Daniels, county planning director.

"Because CCCS is on a very tight timeline they wanted a backup," Daniels said.

CCCS officials were not at Tuesday's meeting, but recently announced plans to build a new \$14 million to \$20 million facility to house the START program, which offers short-term placement for minimum-security male offenders who have violated their probation terms.

START is currently an 88-bed, CCCS-run program housed in a building on the Montana State Hospital campus that is slated for closure. The state Department of Corrections has requested proposals for a new location for the program; CCCS is assembling a plan to submit to the state in August.

Initially, CCCS presented plans for a new 118-bed facility for the program, but the special use permit applications call for a new 144-bed facility. Designs submitted with the permit applications show a layout similar to the Reintegrating Youthful Offenders building near Galen, also a CCCS-run program.

Currently, START employs about 35 people. CCCS officials have said that if the new facility is built, the organization would retain existing jobs and add about 25 new positions.