

Loan OK'd for Butte drug rehab center

Montana Standard, 10/26/12.

With funding plans getting straightened out, a local nonprofit is getting closer to building a replacement drug treatment center in Butte.

On Thursday, the Butte Local Development Corp. board approved a \$500,000 loan for Community Counseling and Correctional Services to create a new campus for the only state-run Montana Chemical Dependency Center, currently housed at 2500 Continental Drive.

The board unanimously approved the loan, which would cover a little more than one-tenth of the \$4.85 million project.

Andrew Zdinak, the BLDC's marketing director, said the loan would be paid back over 20 years at 5 percent interest.

Late in the summer, CCCS had submitted a proposal to the state for the creation of a 32-bed, three-building campus at Mercury and Oklahoma, which would be adjacent to the CCCS administrative building in East Butte. CCCS would build the campus and lease it to the state, which runs the chemical dependency center. Zdinak said CCCS has received preliminary approval for the project from the state, and now it's a matter of getting funding set.

"They're all ready to go," he said. "They're just trying to get their finances in place."

Zdinak stressed that keeping jobs in Butte is an important imperative to give CCCS the loan. He said if CCCS secures money to build the campus, the 46 jobs at the current facility would be saved. He said the jobs pay well and offer benefits.

At the meeting, Zdinak said the chemical dependency center has been at its Continental Drive location since 1993.

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"If this facility isn't built, we're looking at losing these jobs" from Butte and possibly from everywhere in Montana, Zdinak said.

Other pros to authorizing the loan include further development of the East Butte area and work for local contractors.

CCCS is looking to get loans from other financial institutions as well, the nonprofit's CEO Mike Thatcher told the board.

Zdinak said the loan will be administered with other commercial financing CCCS is working on