

## New facility would keep Butte from losing drug treatment center

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The state hasn't yet decided whether to approve a new chemical dependency center in Uptown Butte, which would replace the more than decade-old facility on Continental Drive, according to the proposed developer.

Mike Thatcher, of Butte-based Community, Counseling and Correctional Services, said he hasn't heard back from the state Department of Public Health and Human Services yet. But CCCS is going before the zoning board next Thursday with a proposal to build a three-building, 32-bed residential chemical dependency facility at the corner of West Mercury and Oklahoma streets. "We're having to do everything kind of in parallel fashion," Thatcher said.

Thatcher added CCCS would not operate the facility; they would design, finance and lease the building to the state. The proposal includes a 10-year lease to the state with three 3-year renewals possible, for a total of up to 19 years for the chemical dependency center to remain in the facility.

A new drug treatment center would replace the Montana Chemical Dependency Center on Continental Drive, which doesn't meet current licensing requirements, Thatcher said. Without a new center, Butte could lose the facility.

Thatcher said the organization submitted its proposal to the state Aug. 3. It was the only proposal the state had received by the Aug. 31 deadline.

If the state approves the contract, about 40 jobs will remain in Butte, Thatcher said.

"We certainly can ill afford to lose jobs in Butte," Thatcher said.

Rona McOmber, administrator at the Continental Drive MCDC, didn't return a call for comment Friday.