

# **LEWISTON SITE EYED FOR TREATMENT FACILITY**

## **LCSC could play role in creation of work force and education of inmates**

**Jan 13, 2008 - Dean Ferguson - LEWISTON TRIBUNE**

**BOISE** -- A Florida-based company will scout Lewiston within the next two weeks as a possible site for a 400-bed drug treatment prison.

The company also is looking at sites in Pocatello, the Rupert-Burley area, Idaho Falls and Twin Falls, said a lobbyist for the company.

State Rep. Mike Mitchell, D-Lewiston, is helping line up the visit to Port of Lewiston property for CentraCore Properties Trust, a real estate investment trust.

"I was approached by the company about visiting Lewiston," Mitchell said.

He stresses the governor's proposed prison is more a "residential treatment facility," and he likes the 100 high-wage jobs it would create.

CentraCore has been in Idaho evaluating its options for about eight months, said Roy Eiguren, a Boise lawyer and lobbyist who is representing the company.

"We've indicated we are willing to go to various locations of the state," Eiguren said.

The company has proposed a couple of ideas for building the prison.

For one, the company would be willing to build the prison and transfer it to state ownership by a lease-purchase agreement, Eiguren said.

Also, the company proposes it be responsible for the construction while another company, Community Education Centers based in New Jersey, take care of education, treatment and counseling programs.

"The state would repay both the capital lease as well as the cost for the treatment program," Eiguren said.

Like Mitchell, Eiguren rejects the notion of a traditional bars and guards prison.

"This is anything but a prison," Eiguren said. "It's a substance abuse treatment program for minimal security prisoners."

"The overwhelming number of people working there are counselors, psychologists and school teachers," Eiguren said.

The GEO Group, a prison management company from Boca Raton, Fla., also is interested in building the proposed drug center.

Eiguren said CentraCore would have the prison built in six to 12 months. Prison management companies will present their proposals to lawmakers Thursday.