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CHP looking for new Ventura office

Ventura County Star (CA) - Sunday, October 6, 2013

Author: *Cindy Von Quednow*

The Ventura-area California Highway Patrol is looking for a new office after being at its current location for more than 35 years, officials said.

The CHP office on Valentine Road, built in 1976, can no longer accommodate the size of the workforce, said Officer Mike Harris, a CHP spokesman.

The CHP staff in Ventura has grown significantly. The 12,000-square-foot office houses 67 sworn officers, 22 dispatchers and nine civilian employees.

The state Department of General Services has determined the CHP office should be 28,000 square feet, based on the size of the staff. The current office also does not meet requirements of the federal Americans With Disabilities or state Essential Services Buildings Seismic Safety acts, Harris said.

He said the ability to remodel or update the building is limited because of asbestos and lead paint in the flooring and ceilings.

Officials are looking for a site between Telegraph Road, one mile south of Highway 101, Rose Avenue and Seaward Avenue.

According to an advertisement in The Star, the agency prefers vacant land with utilities but will consider properties with structures that can be demolished or sites that are part of a larger property.

The site must be easily accessible for large trucks and other vehicles.

Brian Ferguson, a spokesman for the Department of General Services, said the state is in the early stages of looking for a site. General Services is responsible for lining up contracts, and knowing how long the process will take is difficult, Ferguson said.

"Every project has its own tone and tenor," he said.

Jennifer Taylor, a CHP dispatcher for almost seven years, said she would like a revamping of the communications center, which covers all of Ventura County and parts of Santa Barbara County. Currently, dispatchers' lockers are outside, and the dispatchers don't have a proper break room, Taylor said.

Officer Steve Reid, Ventura CHP spokesman, said a new office will let all employees work better.

"The whole idea is to be effective and efficient in providing the highest level of service for the people in Ventura County," he said.

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