

## The Planning Center wins Building from the Best award

Tucson, AZ.  
March 8, 2007

The Sonoran Institute has named seven design, development and building projects in Pima County as its 2008 Building from the Best award winners. The honors are presented biennially to celebrate and encourage projects that respect the natural environment and the character of the area's communities.

Superior living and working environments, efficient uses of resources, and preservation of the Sonoran Desert's natural and cultural heritage are among qualities the award categories recognize. Category winners represent a variety of business, public and private projects in Tucson and surrounding communities.

"Building from the Best Awards salute innovative and responsible architects, builders, owners and developers who are making our community a better place to live," said Luther Propst, executive director of the Sonoran Institute. "The awards are intended to encourage a higher level of quality development by showcasing creative and inspirational projects."

Category: Natural Open Space  
Integration in a Development

Award-Winning Project: Sky Ranch,  
Marana, by Stellar Homes

Award Criteria:

- Integration of natural and built environments
- Preservation of natural undisturbed open space within the project
- Integrated accessibility to natural open space



The plan and design for this project incorporated the suggested guidelines of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for disturbance in federally designated critical habitat for the ferruginous pygmy owl. The first project of this size in Arizona to address this entirely on-site, Sky Ranch has about 412 acres of contiguous open space to provide habitat that will always remain undisturbed. The project features "modified cluster" development, with the goal that each lot has a large area of open space.

The Planning Center was involved in two other award-winning projects this year: Main Gate Square, a mixed-used development, and the Curley School, a redevelopment and rehabilitation project.