

The Planning Center Receives Award for Solar Zone at the University of Arizona Tech Park

Tucson, AZ.
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The Planning Center has received the Arizona Planning Association Making Arizona Competitive for the 21st Century Honorable Mention Award for the Solar Zone at the University of Arizona Tech Park.

The Solar Zone at the UA Tech Park (Solar Zone) is designed to create an environment that supports all aspects of the solar energy continuum: generation, research and development; manufacturing and assembly, workforce development; and public awareness. The Solar Zone consists of 222 acres located within the UA Tech Park's northeastern property boundary. The conceptual site plan for the Solar Zone incorporates a solar garden, the solar gateway, solar energy development, assembly/manufacturing and research/development.

The Planning Center coordinated the day-to-day as well as long-range aspects into the Solar Zone's development standards and guidelines. "The Planning Center's concept plan was user friendly, informative and easy to implement," said Bruce Wright, the Associate Vice President for University Research Parks. Prepared by a team of planners, the Solar Zone includes a compendium of incentives, solar funding and initiatives, key solar industry organizations and employers to assist anyone having interest in making Arizona competitive for the 21st century.

Phase one of the Solar Zone development is a unique public/private collaboration between the University of Arizona and Tucson Electric Power (TEP). Construction of phase one, which includes six solar generation projects sited at the Solar Zone by TEP, is expected to be completed by 2012. Wright said, "The development plans have been instrumental in moving the Solar Zone from a concept to reality in less than a year. Site preparations are being accelerated so that the solar companies can qualify for available federal tax credits before they are extinguished."

Established in 1975, The Planning Center is a private consulting firm that provides a variety of multidisciplinary planning services including planning, economic market analysis, geospatial services and landscape architecture. For more information, call (520) 623-6146 or visit www.azplanningcenter.com.

