

New UniSource Energy Building Will Bring Employees Together in Solar-Powered, Energy-Efficient Addition to Downtown Tucson

TUCSON, Ariz., Mar 11, 2010 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- A new headquarters planned for UniSource Energy Corporation (NYSE: UNS) will allow the company to bring more employees together in a solar-powered, energy-efficient building in the heart of downtown Tucson.

UniSource Energy, the parent company of Tucson Electric Power (TEP) and sister utility UniSource Energy Services (UES), is planning to build a nine-story office building on a two-acre lot on East Broadway between Scott and Sixth Avenues. Construction crews will break ground later this year, and the building is scheduled to be complete before the end of 2011.

The building will provide 170,000 square feet of office space for more than 425 TEP employees - a significant increase from the 85 company employees who currently occupy leased space downtown. The additional downtown office space will allow TEP to organize the remainder of its approximately 1100 Tucson employees more efficiently in existing offices at the company's Irvington Road campus.

"We'll be able to bring our staff together and make other improvements to our working space that will help us do business more efficiently and effectively," said Paul Bonavia, Chairman, President and CEO of UniSource Energy and TEP.

The new building will include about 8,700 square feet of ground-floor retail space as well as a conference center, meeting rooms and nearly 600 parking spaces in a three-level subterranean parking garage and an integrated above-ground parking structure.

A photovoltaic solar array will help power a building that has been designed with energy efficiency in mind. UniSource Energy plans to secure a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification for the new building from the U.S. Green Building Council to ensure that it meets high standards for energy-efficient construction and environmentally sensitive design.

"We are committed to energy efficiency and environmental stewardship," Bonavia said, "and the construction of our new headquarters gives us an opportunity to lead by example."

The building's long, rectangular footprint minimizes its exposure to direct sunlight from the east and west, and an integrated shade structure will shield its western face. The building will be clad with high-efficiency glass and will feature energy-saving lights, HVAC units and other mechanical systems. A rainwater harvesting system will help ensure that all landscaping needs are met with recycled water.

"It is a privilege to work with a client that is focused on energy-efficient design," said Mike Davis, CEO and Director of Design for DAVIS, the principal design firm. "It has allowed our team the opportunity to incorporate unique solutions that will make this the greenest office building in Tucson."

Davis is a Tucson native and a graduate of the UA College of Architecture. His firm is being assisted by Tucson-based Swaim Associates, which has been active in the city's development and design community for more than four decades.

The building will be developed by Ryan Companies, a leading national commercial real estate firm with offices in Phoenix and six other cities. As the Developer and General Contractor, Ryan Companies will be utilizing its in-house design/build services in conjunction with subcontractors to build the shell and interiors; local companies will be given preference in the bidding for construction contracts.

"This project is a significant development not only for Ryan Companies but also for the City of Tucson," notes Todd Holzer, vice president of Ryan Companies' Southwest operation. "We look forward to building a lasting relationship with both the City of Tucson and UniSource Energy."

Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup said UniSource Energy's new headquarters building represents a significant step in downtown redevelopment.

"This is going to be a great building with a magnificent design that shows off the best of what we hope to accomplish downtown through strong partnerships with private investors," Walkup said. "The timely review and completion of this project will help us

show this community that downtown Tucson is open for business."

UniSource Energy's primary subsidiaries include Tucson Electric Power, which serves more than 400,000 customers in southern Arizona, and UniSource Energy Services, provider of natural gas and electric service for about 235,000 customers in northern and southern Arizona. For more information, visit uns.com.

SOURCE: UniSource Energy Corporation

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