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Tucson recognized nationally for sustainability

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Posted by Jackie Kent - [email](#)

By Angeline Carbajal, Tucson News Now intern

TUCSON, AZ (Tucson News Now) - The city of Tucson has been awarded a four-star rating for leadership in sustainability by STAR Communities.

Tucson is now the fifth city in the country to earn four out of five stars, which shows the community is committed to quality of life, prosperity and equity, according to a city of Tucson news release.

"The STAR rating reflects the sustainability actions and ethic of our entire community," said Leslie Ethen, Tucson's sustainability manager. "Achieving a 4-STAR rating was made possible through the contributions of approximately 150 individuals from different agencies, nonprofits, and business and community groups, who provided information about their organization's efforts to make Tucson more sustainable."

The STAR Community Ratings System is a local sustainability certification program. The ratings system revolves around economic, environmental and social performance measures for local governments and the community.

"Tucson is focused on sustainability," said Mayor Jonathan Rothschild. "The reduction in per capita water use, the participation in my 10,000 Trees Campaign, the enthusiasm for solar, rainwater harvesting and multi-modal options – all this and more reflects Tucsonans' concern for the environment and quality of life."

STAR Communities gave Tucson a perfect score in six categories: Community Water Systems, Water in the Environment, Natural Resource Protection, Outdoor Air Quality, Industrial Sector Resource Efficiency and Business Retention and Development.

"We applaud Tucson's ongoing work to make smart decisions that ensure the health, safety and well-being of current residents and future generations," said Hilari Varnadore, executive director for STAR Communities. "The data Tucson submitted made a compelling case that the city is making smart investment decisions to protect scarce resources, grow and retain business and attract a rich diversity of new residents."

Tucson's voter-approved General and Sustainability Plan, known as Plan Tucson, also received high scores in STAR's comprehensive planning and public transportation categories.

"When a city receives an award, it's the result of the collective efforts of staff and residents," said Rothschild. "I'm very proud of this recognition and I trust Tucsonans are, too."

Those interested in viewing STAR Communities' full report on Tucson can visit <http://www.starcommunities.org/communities/7-tucson-arizona>.

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