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HISPANIC ARCHITECTURAL FIRM IS TWICE RECOGNIZED FOR SUCCESSFULLY EFFICIENT & RECLAIMED LAND BUILDING

Firm Helps Owner Realize “Green” Dream

April 13, 2012—Hispanic-owned architectural firm RKZ Architects, Inc. of Tustin, California recently received two awards—Best Industrial Project from *The Los Angeles Business Journal* (2012 Commercial Real Estate Awards) and the 2012 Award of Excellence for Commercial Industrial Development from the California Redevelopment Agency—for their work in the environmentally responsible industrial design of Huy Fong Foods’ 655,000 square foot corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility in Irwindale, California.

“From the beginning, the client stipulated that environmentally responsible features be incorporated into the building”, says principal architect/owner Juan Zatarain, AIA/CSI of RKZ. “Our firm has worked previously with clients to obtain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification but even so, prior to this project we had not focused on incorporating green/sustainable features into a manufacturing project to this extent. Doing so was definitely more demanding, but ultimately more rewarding because it was more environmentally responsible.”

From the start, Huy Fong Foods (owner of the building) was determined to create a structure that was environmentally responsible. RKZ assisted them in implementing so many green/sustainable features into the building that it could easily qualify for LEED silver certification from the US Green Building Council had Huy Fong chosen to pursue it. Sustainable features (worth LEED points) that RKZ incorporated into the project were:

- **Natural ventilation of all warehouse and manufacturing areas**—This is quite unusual for a building of this size. RKZ designed an innovative passive ventilation system—4x8 foot skylights open on one side oriented away from the prevailing winds and fitted with washable air filters to avoid dust falling into the areas below—which takes advantage of the natural environment and requires no energy consumption, thus allowing for huge savings—both financially and environmentally.
- **Use of recycled and/or recyclable materials** in 80 percent of the building.
- **Reflective roof and pavement**—RKZ incorporated these two items to reflect heat back to the atmosphere: a white reflective cool roof over rigid insulation and exterior concrete paving. Together these features provide a more comfortable work environment—cooler in summer and warmer in winter, thus diminishing the need for a cooling/heating system.
- **Energy Star air conditioning and ventilation equipment**—Even though the client chose to use air conditioning for their 24,000 square foot corporate offices (which are approximately 5-24 times the usual size of corporate offices), RKZ managed resources responsibly by incorporating:
 - **Energy efficient HVAC units**—for lower electricity consumption than traditional units.
 - **A zero-chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) refrigerant**—does not release any ozone depleting elements into the atmosphere.

- **A sun-shaded office environment**—requires less air conditioning overall.
- **Motion-activated lighting**—Smart occupancy-sensing motion detectors were used throughout the office and warehouse areas, saving a projected 20 percent in lighting costs.
- **Skylights**—RKZ designed the building to client specs for seven percent skylights, far surpassing the 2.5 percent required by silver LEED specifications. These skylights provide daylight to manufacturing and warehouse areas throughout 97 percent of the building. Natural lighting is not only known to increase worker productivity but obviously it greatly diminishes the need for electricity use as well.
- **Low VOC paint**—Although mandated by the city of Irwindale and Los Angeles county, RKZ always recommends the use of low VOC paint in its projects since it reduces gas emitted into the atmosphere, thus resulting in improved air quality—both interior and exterior.
- **Drought-resistant landscape with reclaimed water**—uses 50 percent less water and does not draw on new water sources.

In presenting their award, the California Redevelopment Association stated, “This new facility sets the standard for future industrial projects with its green/sustainable features, architectural aesthetics, and creation of new jobs.” The *LA Business Journal* awarded the project because “it is a remarkable success story about the victorious redevelopment of a severely blighted, vacant and contaminated property into an enormous yet elegant, environmentally sustainable facility.”

RKZ was selected for this project through a design-bid process carried out by Seventh Street Development for Huy Fong Foods. After bids were narrowed to four architectural firms, RKZ was awarded the architectural, structural and landscape design portions of the project due to its experience and expertise in a combination of relevant design areas: the industrial food industry, large-scale buildings and tilt-up concrete panels.

“RKZ interpreted Huy Fong’s vision to a tee,” said Craig Furniss of Seventh Street Development, representative for Huy Fong Foods. “More than that, they provided alternate solutions during the design and construction phases to implement new technologies that we had not even considered, such as natural ventilation.”

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RKZ Architects, Inc. is an architectural firm whose niche is concrete tilt-up buildings for manufacturing, warehouses and offices. They are proficient in working with clients to ensure compliance with LEED green certification and have successfully designed the largest (1.3 million SF) LEED silver certified building in the world. RKZ is located at 3002 Dow Avenue, Suite 226, Tustin, CA 91780. Phone: (714) 813-5636. Website: www.rkzinc.com.

Project: Huy Fong Foods Inc., 4800 Azusa Canyon Road, Irwindale, CA 91706

655,308 SF concrete tilt-up building comprised of:

- 24,000 SF of corporate offices on two floors
- 83,900 SF of manufacturing area
- 547,408 SF of warehouse area