

Advanced Carbon Products Innovation Center moves closer to reality

The Campbell County Commissioners Tuesday approved the subdivision plat for the Fort Union Industrial Park.

Approval of the plat clears the way for Energy Capital Economic Development to purchase 9.5 acres of land in the park, which will be used to build the Advanced Carbon Products Innovation Center (ACPIC “Ice Pick”). Funding for the land purchase and building comes from a \$1.5 million Wyoming Business Council grant.

ACPIC will be a center where lab research on refining coal into products can be taken from the lab and proven to be commercially viable.

“There is an incredible amount of lab research that demonstrates refining coal into products such as carbon fiber, asphalt, fuels of all types, activated carbon, char for agricultural use and much more are very practical,” Phil Christopherson, CEO of Energy Capital Economic Development, said. “In most cases, the research has stayed in the lab and has never developed into marketable commercial products. Times are changing, and there are opportunities to take existing research and commercialize it for new and profitable products.”

Energy Capital Economic Development is partnering with the University of Wyoming School of Energy Resources on the project. The School will use ACPIC for commercialization of some of its research, and private businesses will also be able to lease space in the building.

Construction on the building is expected to begin in late 2019, and the center should be operational spring of 2020.

“ACPIC will provide a new market for Powder River coal,” Christopherson said. “The amount of coal used initially will be small, but as products are developed, the next step would be commercial industrial manufacturing plants to make those products. Over time, and with many different products, the amount of coal used could be significant. This would have a very positive impact on the local economy.”