

How does the community help to guide the design?



DESIGN

Good design is the cornerstone of the highlighted projects presented here. They bear witness to a transformation of tribal housing around the country through community engagement, innovative thinking, thoughtful design, creative financing, partnership-building, and a connection to heritage, culture, and nature. Because many of them have incorporated various checklists, rating systems, internal reviews, and building commissioning through the green building process, their design and construction have been tested for appropriateness and durability; for instance, tight building envelopes, properly installed flashing so water sheds properly, appropriate R-values based on the climate, and properly sized and installed heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems. Many of these projects incorporated a dialogue with the community to discuss specific family, cultural, and heritage needs that housing can and should address. The most successful projects involved a high level of collaboration among many different partners, including housing authorities, architects and engineers, community members, tribal leaders, funding agencies, and contractors. This type of collaborative effort, known as “integrated design,” ensures that long-term goals and the project vision are established collectively at the onset and can be tested through many lenses. This effort results in more thoughtfully designed and built projects, which typically have fewer change orders during construction. Because of the integrated design approach, each project is uniquely realized and built specifically for its community and place. For example, it is clear from the photographs that the Kumuhau Subdivision is in Hawai’i, the Place of Hidden Waters is in the Northwest, the Guadalupe and Nageezi homes are located in the Southwest desert, and the Ysleta del Sur and Owe’neh Bupingeh homes are in Pueblo communities. Many of these projects are also beautiful, serving as beacons of community hope and pride.