

What innovative thinking is needed to help build sustainable and healthy neighborhoods?



-  Partnership
-  Training
-  Enterprise
-  Material

INNOVATION

Many of the project teams featured here were clearly determined to build new models of housing specific to their communities, exhibiting a high degree of innovation demonstrated in various ways, including new partnerships, innovative technologies, research, and creative financing. Some development teams reached out to establish partnerships and collaborations that became critical for their success. The Apsaalooke (Crow) Tribe partnered with the University of Colorado Boulder to develop and test an earth block house made with native earth and built by a tribal workforce. The Pinoleville Pomo Nation collaborated with many partners to achieve a prototype home and develop tribally based building codes. The Nageezi and Guadalupe homes, which the Arizona State University Stardust Center helped to design and build, are desert-appropriate homes using Navajo Flexcrete, a Navajo tribal enterprise. Many of these partnerships included a high level of analysis and research on new and appropriate materials. Straw bale homes at Northern Cheyenne are part of a larger Red Feather Development Group initiative, building super insulated housing through all volunteer builds. The Owe'neh Bupingeh Rehabilitation Project incorporates new technologies to preserve and stabilize ancient adobe homes, with an education and research component informed by cultural leaders and homeowners. Many of these projects were built using multiple funding sources –some as many as 13. They often utilized the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA) funding to creatively leverage additional resources. The Ysleta del Sur Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Pueblo Homes project was the first tribal LIHTC project in Texas, which required a high degree of partnership-building and tenacity. Penobscot succeeded in its their goal to design new financing products so young families could move back to tribal land and participate in their cultural heritage.