Prioritizing energy efficiency, culturally-responsive forms and circular economics.

GRIC is a community of approximately 13,000 members located adjacent to the city of Phoenix. In 2016, the Governor and his leadership team entered into discussions with the Del E. Webb School of Construction at ASU regarding the development of a sustainable housing prototype. The prototype was to become an exemplar of energy efficiency and cultural responsiveness, with the potential to develop jobs, training and entrepreneurship in sustainable construction.

Reducing Energy Consumption

Arizona experiences temperatures up to 118 F (47 C). According to Climate Change Central, Phoenix is the second fastest-warming city in the USA. With 30% higher electricity consumption here than in the rest of USA, electricity costs can be a financial burden for low income residents in the region.

Designing in Place, with the People of the Place

Since 2016, ASU faculty and students have completed multiple activities toward understanding cultural responsiveness of homes for GRIC. Activities included two community design engagement sessions, the construction of a traditional shade structure (vato) at GRIC, a survey on sustainable housing and a mobile design lab with residents. The next phase is co-building a prototype.

Circular Economics: Sustainable Construction Workforce Development

To further GRIC’s circular economics goals, we are currently fundraising to develop a Sustainable Workforce Development Plan, a Sustainable Housing Construction Implementation Plan and a Culturally-Responsive Housing Policy Paper.