



Barrio Metalico

Tucson, AZ

Architect: Rob Paulus Architect, Tucson

General Contractor: Caliber West LLC, Tucson

Metal Building Mfr.: American Steel Buildings Co., Houston, TX

Metal Roofing And Wall Panel Mfr.: MBCI, Houston

Metal Roofing/Wall Panel Installer/Erector: Fast Fab Erectors, Tucson

Barrio Metalico is a small residential community among an overwhelmingly industrial neighborhood. As such, Rob Paulus Architect decided to embrace the industrial nature of its surround-

ings, rather than shy away from it. He chose a steel frame from American Steel Buildings Co. and corrugated metal siding and roofing from MBCI. As an alternative to the single-story wood frame and stucco housing that is prominent in the west, these units give residents a chance to experience loft living.

The design of the interior addresses the needs of loft living while alluding to the industrial aspect of the exterior. The sloped-roof spatial volumes of the units provide natural light throughout the day. A floor-to-ceiling window provides ground floor views to courtyards and upper-floor views of the Catalina Mountains. Interior finishes include polished and sealed concrete floors, mill finished steel stairs and guardrails, maple cabinetry, and exposed ductwork.

The exterior enclosure is constructed with R-48+ "blown-in-blanket" insulated walls and also uses high performance aluminum window frames with 1" insulated glass and integral Low-E coating. As a result, each unit exceeds the local energy code.

All nine units have identical structural systems and configurations. 10,000 sq. ft of MBCI PDI profile 26-gauge corrugated metal D-Panel siding with a Galvalume finish was used on the roof, while 19,600 sq. ft. of the same product was used on the walls. One mill-finish steel stair occupies each unit. Guardrail infill panels are McNichols 3/4" #9 standard 10-gauge expanded metal.

A 12'-tall by 4' rainwater harvesting tank collects rainwater at each unit for future re-use in watering the landscape. Fencing around the facility is made from recycled corrugated metal and distressed wood from a demolished shed on an adjacent site. Graffiti dating back to 1945 decorates the fencing. The project was completed in February 2005.

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Photos by Bradley Wheeler