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to four weeks, while the builder is preparing the site."

The company also saves on labor and travel costs, Martz said, by employing a skilled-labor staff instead of contracting a carpenter.

In addition to reducing the expense of housing, manufactured-home firms, such as Strattan Homes, offer a variety of floor plans.

Modular-sectional designs that Strattan creates, for example, are built the same as conventional housing. Manufactured homes, however, must be constructed in a controlled environment and must receive approval by the state.

"We submit entire sets of plans on how we intend to build each module," said Martz, who added that each plan needs a state seal indicating that the construction meets FHA, UA, HUB, UL, and BOCA building codes.

In addition to state inspections, the manufacturer is inspected daily by a private inspection company, that offers both internal and external control, Kaczorowski said.

Strattan Homes employs a consultant-engineering firm, P.F.S., from Bloomsburg, Columbia County, that assures the structural analysis.

According to Martz, the entire construction process moves through the plant on a dolly system that is perfectly level. The floor of the house is made first, then the outside walls and partitioned walls are put into place. The ceiling, wiring, insulation are next to be installed.

The roof is attached, but it lies flat for transportation purposes and is raised at the site, where the sheeting (siding) and windows are installed.



Pete Diana for The Pittsburgh Press

This home in the West End is a completed module unit by Strattan Homes

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