

Modular Home FAQ's

- 1) **What is modular construction?** “Modular “simply refers to the method of assembly. Modular is a construction method that involves constructing sections away from the building site, then delivering to the intended site. During the modular process, the same high-quality materials traditionally used to build a home are simply used in a climate-controlled (thereby reducing the chance of weather-related delays, mold, etc.) factory. The construction savings are passed along to the consumer and the delivery times are significantly reduced. The result is a faster delivery of a high-quality affordable home.
- 2) **What are the benefits of modular construction?** The benefits to modular construction include:
 - *A higher quality structure* due to the amount of detailed shop drawings required of modular homes prior to assembly.
 - Modular homes can be *completed in about 25% of the time needed for traditional construction* due to the concurrence of site work and assembly.
 - The *rigorous inspection process* and accompanying regulation dictate approval and compliance of building plans before construction commences.
 - *Acoustics* of modular homes is much better than houses traditionally built because each module is constructed separately. The modules connected together in the house have a high level of protection against noise transference.
 - Quality engineering and the latest construction techniques significantly increase the *energy-efficiency* of modular homes. This ensures the home will be economical to own and comfortable to live in irrespective of weather conditions. In addition, most modular homes use two-by-six (2 x 6) framing for the walls. This allows more insulation to be placed in the wall, thereby ensuring greater energy efficiency. Finally, modular homes have much less air infiltration, which is one of the largest causes of heat loss in a home. The fact that these homes are constructed in a factory allows the manufacturer to place more sealants, such as caulking, in problem areas to which site builders have no access. For example, a manufacturer is able to create a better seal around the electrical outlets and fixtures because they can access the walls behind, above and underneath these areas.
 - After construction in the factory, the modules are loaded for transport. *To deal with the rigors of shipping, each modular home is constructed with a stronger structure, i.e. roughly twenty to thirty percent more material than a traditional stick-built home* (for example, drywall is typically glued with a special adhesive and then screwed to the framing). This greatly increases the structural strength of the home.
 - *Modular home construction is more environmentally friendly than its site-built counterpart.* Engineered construction materials are utilized, and effective in-plant recycling is in place at most modular home manufacturing facilities. This means that all the excess materials are able to be recycled. This is important because according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Research Center, the “typical” waste for a new 2,000 square foot site-built home is eight thousand (8,000) pounds or fifty (50) cubic yards. Consequently, while waste from a site built home typically goes in a landfill, waste from a modular home is recycled.

- *Cost overruns are virtually unheard of in the modular industry.* As mentioned, climate-controlled factories ensure there are no weather-related construction delays. In addition, there are no cost overruns from “no-show subs” (as may often be the case with a site-built home).
 - One of the problems today’s site builders have is finding skilled subcontractors. Because modular homes are built in factories, the *subcontractors are already employed at the factory. Skilled craftspeople construct each home to exact specifications.* In addition, the homes are built with brand name building products. Both in-house personnel and an independent agency inspect all homes during and after construction to ensure that every home meets high standards and code requirements.
- 3) **Is modular construction cheaper than other methods?** Generally, the savings is approximately 25% due to the benefits incurred based upon the benefits outlined in Question #2.
 - 4) **Are modular homes a good idea?** After extensive research, we certainly think so! And given our commitment to bringing high quality affordable housing to the Oakland City community, we are excited to explain the many reasons above in Question #2.
 - 5) **What alternatives, if any, exist for this project?** Traditional construction represents the alternative. Careful evaluation of the options led to our team’s decision to develop 1091 Tucker Ave using modular construction.
 - 6) **Will the homes look much different from others in the neighborhood?** Oakland City was [designated a historic district on November 10, 2004](#), thus the Tucker Ave homes cannot deviate from the existing standards and must comply with those set forth by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission (UDC.) And please note these standards are also commensurate with our intent to deliver a high-quality product to the residents of Oakland City which is fully respectful of the area’s rich history.
 - 7) **Is the resale value of modular homes different from that of traditional construction?** The resale value should not be different from that of traditional construction, especially given the benefits to modular construction outlined herein. However, the development team cannot speculate on market trends which will ultimately affect value. Finally, please note that due to the homes being built on ALT land to preserve affordability in perpetuity, the future sales proceeds to the homeowner are stipulated by the ALT. For more details, please refer to the guidelines [here](#):
 - 8) **Is modular construction simply another name for manufactured homes? What is the difference?** The difference between *modular* and *manufactured* homes is found in their respective permanence. Modular homes are placed on a permanent foundation, whereas trailers, or manufactured homes are built on a steel chassis with wheels attached, so as to be more easily moved or towed.
 - 9) **What materials are used in modular construction? How do they compare to traditional construction?** The modular process does not indicate a difference in materials from traditional construction, rather an assembly which is done in a factory vs onsite. Thus, the same materials used in traditional construction are found in modular construction.
 - 10) **Is modular construction more environmentally friendly? Will I save money on utilities?** Please see Question #2.

- 11) Where are the homes constructed?** The homes are constructed in a factory. **How do they get to the neighborhood?** Upon completion, the homes are transported to the site. An example of how a single family modular home, built by Cecil Phillips at 621 James P Brawley, is assembled onsite is [here](#):
- 12) How are modular homes inspected?** Modular homes are subject to the same inspections as those built on-site. Before a modular home manufacturer begins construction, all building plans must be reviewed and approved in each state where the manufacturer intends to sell homes. Homes must be designed and built to the code for the state where the home will be shipped for final location. The manufacturers contract with state approved third party plan review agencies which in turn conduct plan reviews on behalf of the state. The modular manufacturer also contracts with a third-party inspection agency that is licensed by the states to perform the in-plant inspection while the home is in production. When the housing sections or modules are complete, the third party places a label on the home certifying that the home has been manufactured in conformance with the approved plans and complies with all provisions of the building code.
- 13) Does the construction of the home have any impact on my ability to obtain a mortgage or homeowners' insurance?** It does not. And we're here to help. In order to facilitate this process, our team has pre-qualified the realtors and lenders who will facilitate the homebuyer process. When the sales process commences, information will be available [here](#).
- 14) How does the aesthetic of the home differ from those that are constructed on-site?** As outlined herein, the modular process refers only to the method of assembly. **Will it look like a portable or container?** No, not only would such an aesthetic violate UDC standards as explained in Question #6, it's also not in keeping with our team's commitment to deliver high quality homes to the residents of Oakland City.
- 15) Will I be able to make enhancements to a modular home, like construct an add-on?** The zoning is based on the current site plan and accompanying structure remaining unmodified. Any changes will be subject to zoning review and UDC standards, thereby likely rendering the effort cost prohibitive, esp. given the affordable nature of the project. In addition, the Atlanta Land Trust will regulate any major modifications, including additions and renovations, on these homes. Thus, the development team strongly suggests prospective buyers select a unit which appears to be complementary and conducive to their lifestyle on a long-term basis.
- 16) What about the materials and finishes inside the home?** Please see Questions 1 & 2. **What kind of quality can I expect compared to traditional construction?** Please see Question #1. **Should I be concerned about making enhancements to the interior of a home constructed in this manner?** Please see Question #15. One caveat is that our team is evaluating the option to have differing front doors colors to individualize each unit.
- 17) Where will the larger pieces that are common in modular construction be stored during construction?** The project will be completed in a factory and then transported to the site. (Please see Question #11 for an example, albeit on a smaller scale as this represents the completion of a single-family home.) **Will they be stored on the street?** There may be a time when some element of the project is on the street as the assembly commences, but the development team will seek to minimize this. In addition, Tucker Ave has minimal traffic so the disruption to the community should not be impactful.

- 18) Will there be disturbances to traffic in the neighborhood when the building components are being delivered to the project site?** Any disturbances should be minimal as assembly will take place on Tucker Ave, a street that is mostly vacant at this time with minimal home frontages. For a similar situation on the minimal disturbances, please see the video in Question #11.
- 19) Can the historical district guidelines be followed utilizing modular construction?** Absolutely. As the site is located in a historic district, all applicable guidelines must, and will, be followed.
- 20) How will this affect surrounding property values?** This is unpredictable. However, 1091 Tucker Ave is a site that is currently not habitable but will be transformed into high-quality housing with responsible homeowners committed to the Oakland City community, so the expectation is generally positive.
- 21) Is this type of construction and development limited to the Westside? Do you think this choice creates further disparity between the east- and west-sides of the BeltLine?** Unfortunately, our team is unable to comment on the larger, city-wide initiatives to address equity and its accompanying disparities. Our goal is to simply do our part to ensure these 23 homes provide affordable and high-quality housing to the future residents of Oakland City for years to come!

We are appreciative of the opportunity to respond to these questions. Please don't hesitate to continue to reach out as needed to info@tuckeravehomes.com.