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Rising Interest
Rates Affecting
Home Buyer Plans

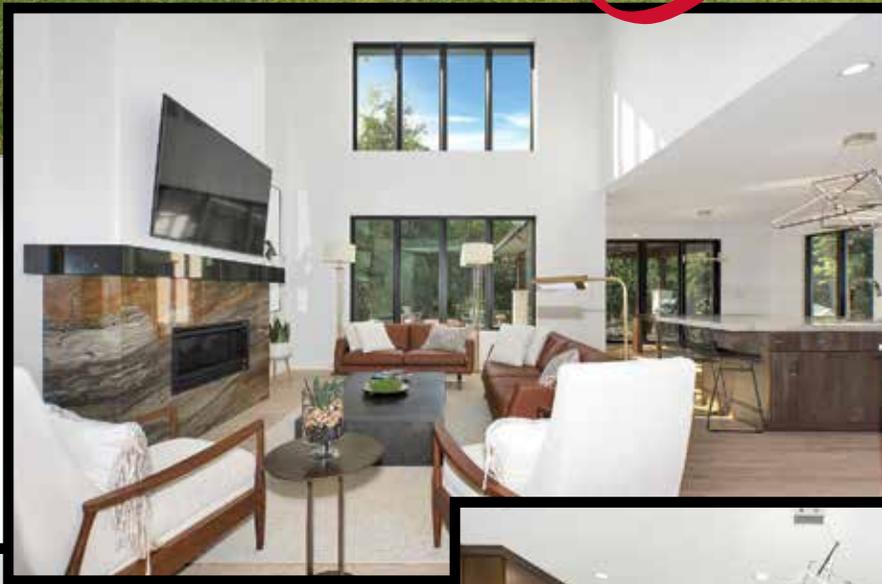
Residential Supply Chain
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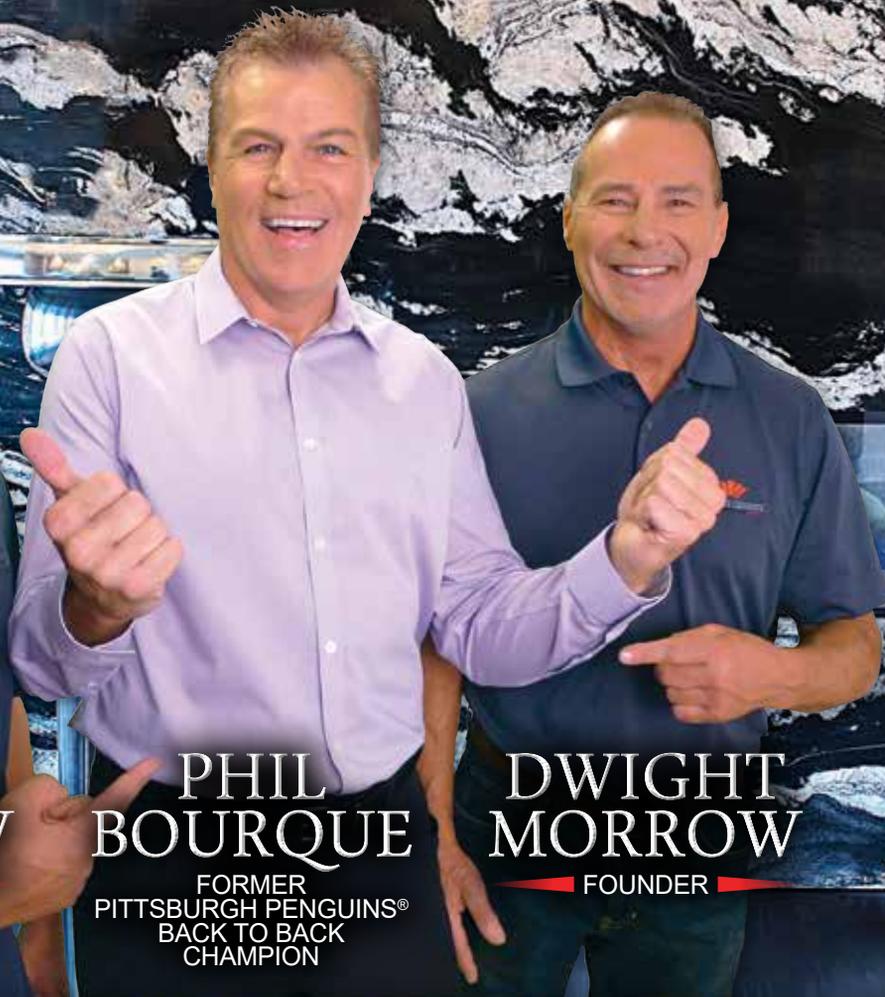
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About the cover:

A Module Housing energy-efficient product in the East Liberty section of Pittsburgh.

Have Building Material Prices Peaked?

In just the past year, prices for materials used in residential construction have climbed nearly 20%. But that was also a period of intense demand and insufficient supply — a reliable recipe for sky-high prices.

So, with interest rates rising at their fastest pace in decades, housing demand is already beginning to ease. But will that mean material prices are on their way down as well?

Extremely volatile lumber prices during the past year have caused the average price of a new single-family home to increase by more than \$18,600. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) has been relentlessly working on all fronts with government officials to develop long-term solutions to lumber and supply-chain challenges that threaten housing affordability across the nation. If the sudden fall in framing lumber prices in recent months is any indication (currently down 48% compared to one year ago), other materials are also likely to see prices flatten and drop as demand slows.

Steel mill products and ready-mix concrete are prime examples: Steel mill products have increased 105.6% since January 2021, but have declined 3.1% thus far in 2022. And prices for ready-mix concrete are up 12% from the start of 2021, but have only increased 3.2% since the beginning of 2022.

However, NAHB asserts that broader and more significant price declines for building materials will require more beyond the Federal Reserve's strategy of rising interest rates. The Fed should acknowledge the role fiscal, trade and regulatory policy is having on the economy and inflation.

Higher interest rates will not produce more lumber, and smaller balance sheets will not increase the production of appliances and materials. In short, while the Fed can cool the demand-side of the economy (reducing inflation and growth), additional output on the supply-side is required in order to tame the growth in costs that we see in housing and other sectors of the economy.

Thus far, any price-growth declines in building materials have been predominantly the result of a drop in buyer demand. Further evidence of this has continually appeared throughout 2022 within each reading of the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI) of builder sentiment. The HMI declined for the sixth straight month in June, falling to a level of 67 and indicating a growing number of builders are either experiencing or anticipating a slowdown in prospective buyer traffic.

On the demand side of the market, the increase for mortgage rates for the first half of 2022 has priced out a significant number of prospective home buyers. Consequently, the market has now passed an inflection point whereby single-family home building is weakening, and we should expect further declines in the months ahead.

This issue of NEW HOME discusses the improving residential supply chain as well as how rising interest rates are affecting home buyer plans. You'll also learn about a new type of housing product in town! Module homes were created for homeowners who care about a sustainability-built home – one that is designed and tailored to city living.

Remember, before you buy, build or remodel, Greater Pittsburgh's New Home is a must read.

Enjoy!

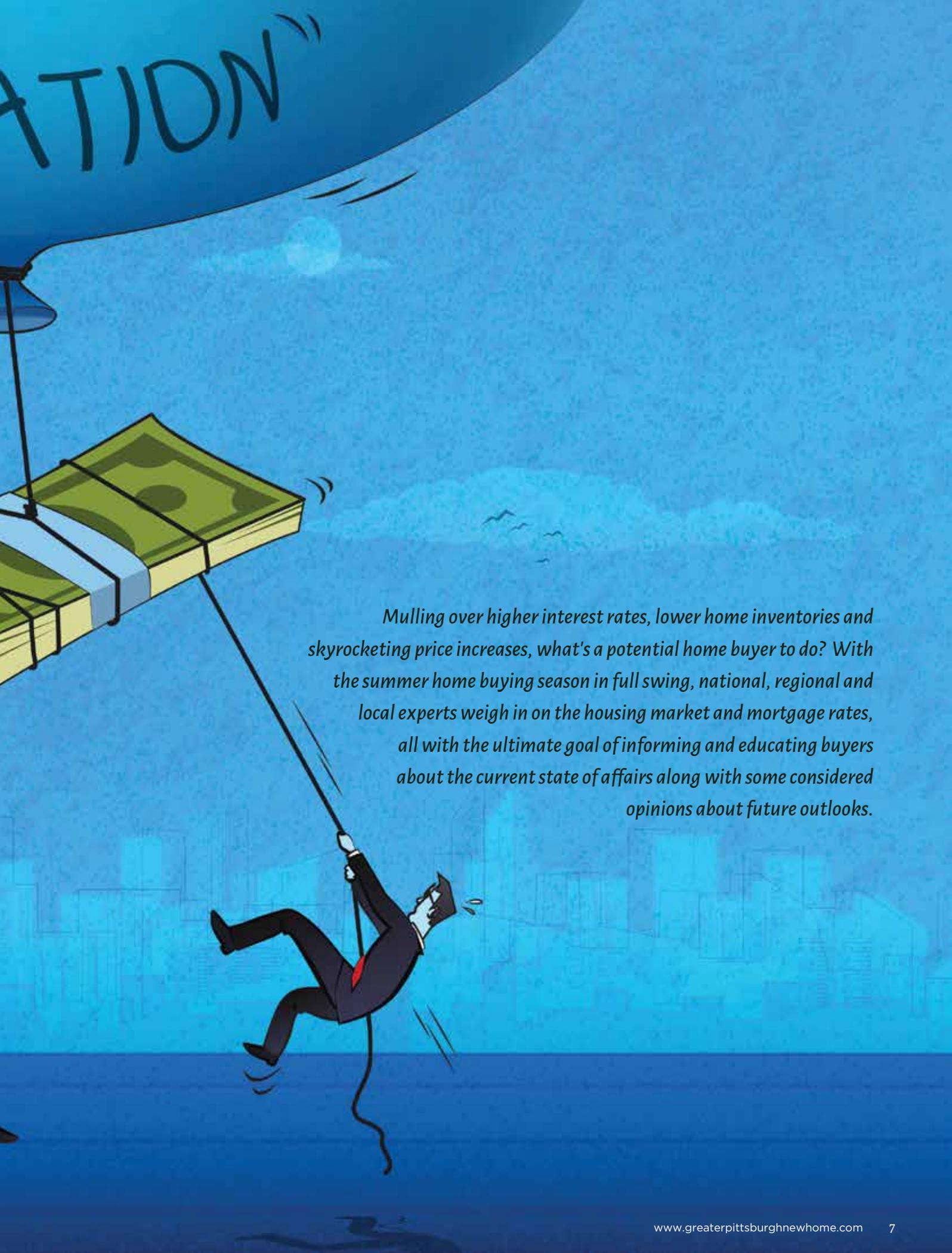
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INFLA

↑
ARE RISING RATES
ADVERSELY AFFECTING
HOME BUYER PLANS?





Mulling over higher interest rates, lower home inventories and skyrocketing price increases, what's a potential home buyer to do? With the summer home buying season in full swing, national, regional and local experts weigh in on the housing market and mortgage rates, all with the ultimate goal of informing and educating buyers about the current state of affairs along with some considered opinions about future outlooks.

In order to understand some of the impetus behind the home buying conundrum, a quick examination of the recent past can help to unravel any confusion. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, new home sales were down 12.6 percent in March 2022 compared to March 2021. Further, the National Association of Realtors (NAR) noted that

existing home sales were down 4.5 percent in the same period and pending sales, those signed contracts pending settlement, declined by 8.2 percent in March 2022 when compared to March 2021. A May 3, 2022, article titled "Rising Mortgage Rates Starting to Affect Residential Housing Market" (Michele Lerner, Washington Post) stated "The combination of the

limited number of homes for sale, continuing double-digit price increases, and the sharp rise in mortgage rates is taking a toll on home sales across the United States." Some good news came earlier in 2022 with a slight gain in housing affordability referenced by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Opportunity Index (HOI) according to an NAHB article penned by Elizabeth Thompson, May 12, 2022: "Home Builders Warn of Significant Affordability Declines." The NAHB/HOI saw that "56.7 percent of new and existing homes sold between the beginning of January and the end of March were affordable to families earning the U.S. median income of \$90,000. While this is up from the 54.2 percent of homes sold in the fourth quarter of 2021, current market indicators point to worsening affordability conditions." And, as hikes in mortgage rates rise, more buyers may drop



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from the ranks through lack of affordability. "Looking at current market conditions, affordability woes continue to mount as rising interest rates and home building material costs that are up 20 percent year-over-year are causing housing costs to rise much faster than wages," said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. "The HOI falling below 50 percent using these real time estimates is an indication of significant housing affordability burdens, particularly for frustrated, prospective first-time buyers." He continues by suggesting policy makers may ease these challenges by addressing ongoing supply chain disruption, thereby allowing builders to build more affordable homes. While the home selling/buying landscape still favors the seller, that scenario

is cooling somewhat, given the higher interest rates and a slightly dwindling number of buyers. With inflation rising, the Federal Reserve is responding by raising short-term interest rates. "What's happened over the last couple months is that inflation has persisted longer than people expected and at a higher rate than people expected," said Danielle Hale, Chief Economist with Realtor.com. That's raising concerns and the Fed, as a result, is raising short-term interest rates faster than expected even a couple of weeks ago." Many, however, believe home affordability can still be accomplished, among them, Ralph McLaughlin, Chief Economist at Kukun, an AI-powered property technology platform for home owners and real estate investors offering unique access to home

data analytics. He believes rising rates may not necessarily have to derail a home buyers plan. Acknowledging that while there is a "psychological barrier" when one sees mortgage rates that are nearly doubled from a short period prior, "in the grand scheme of things, 5 percent still isn't that high of a rate." Michael Henry, Senior Vice President, Residential Lending, Dollar Bank, echoes that sentiment, professing that a 5 percent rate, historically, is still a low rate. "Rate increases since January moved at a faster pace than anyone anticipated, which ultimately helps with inflation," he said. He continued that rates are already backing off from 5.25 percent to 4.75 percent, "but that doesn't mean they can't increase again." He has seen somewhat



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ARE RISING RATES ADVERSELY AFFECTING HOME BUYER PLANS?

of a decrease in mortgage loans but says people are still looking to buy new homes in and around the Pittsburgh area. “The overall volume of homes for the year has realized fits and starts, but new home construction has been fairly strong,” he added. “New construction has addressed the home inventory shortage, but it’s hard to keep up with the demand.” He has also recognized lumber cost decreases due to some supply chain normalization along with numerous contracts coming in for new builds. Where he has seen significant declines has been with refinancing. “With the interest rates rising, it obviously doesn’t make good financial sense to refinance and these have virtually come to a halt.” He has also observed that

some are waiting to see if the rates will drop further but “for a number of home buyers, when they find the right house, they jump into it.” Rates at Dollar Bank currently range from 4.75 percent for a 30-year fixed mortgage to 3.99 percent for a 15-year fixed mortgage but Henry cautioned that the 30-year rate could move into the 5 percent range for the next year or so. Joseph Cartellone, Executive Vice president, Director of Mortgage Services for First National Bank, the largest subsidiary of F.N.B. Corporation, also views refinancing as trending downward in light of increased rates. “When rates were at historic lows, FNB’s mortgage team saw significant levels of refinancing activity. Those customers who are looking to refinance in the current

environment tend to be more interested in ‘cash-out’ refinancing, where homeowners pay off their existing mortgage and take out a new one for more than was owed on the previous loan. The borrower may keep the difference in cash that can be used for home improvements, to consolidate debt, or pay for other expenses.”

Rick Shrum, Vice President, West Penn Financial, is forecasting rates cresting just over 6 percent for the remainder of 2022 and expects to finish the year with his current rates of 5.75 to 6.25 percent, believing that “we are in a somewhat stabilization phase.” He has also noted a slowdown of loan applications at the start of 2022, but with the beginning of summer real estate activity, mortgage inquiries and



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applications are on the rise. “Inquiries for new construction and resale homes seem to parallel years past,” he explained. “But with the increase for housing on the rise, new construction is always looked at favorably.” The mix of buyers he sees consists of 40 percent first time buyers, 50 percent move-up/second time buyers, and 10 percent downsizing buyers. Helene Nseir, Real Estate Agent, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services The Preferred Realty, has discerned that interest in new construction has stayed steady. Most are move-up buyers looking to build or people who are downsizing and moving into one of the many patio home communities she sees dotting the area. “These are usually not first-time buyers, more likely move-up buyers, so they already have equity in their homes in order to buy a new one,” she stated. “Our biggest issue now is inventory of homes to sell, and these buyers are also confident in the sale of their own home.” She continued that it has not been

unusual to write multiple offers for people who are looking for a home, and many times, they are outbid. As for land availability, she views it as a disappearing asset, with value rarely decreasing. “There is land available, but many people want to be in an established neighborhood with public utilities,” she added. Shrum noted that land purchasing inquiries are stable and comparable to years past. “Many buyers are looking for vacant land as an opportunity to build a customized home,” he said. “The affordability factor for land acquisition has not substantially ‘priced out’ buyers by the increase in value.”

Rising rates, low inventory levels, and higher home price continue to be top concerns for those seeking home financing according to Cartellone. “These issues, which are further exacerbated by concerns about inflation

and economic volatility, can be particularly challenging for first time home buyers or families with less money to spend, which is another reason why affordable solutions and consultation continue to be priorities for F.N.B.,” he stated. He believes that home buyers could do themselves a disservice if they wait for rates or home prices to come down. “First, it’s important to remember that rates are rising from historic lows, so the environment is still



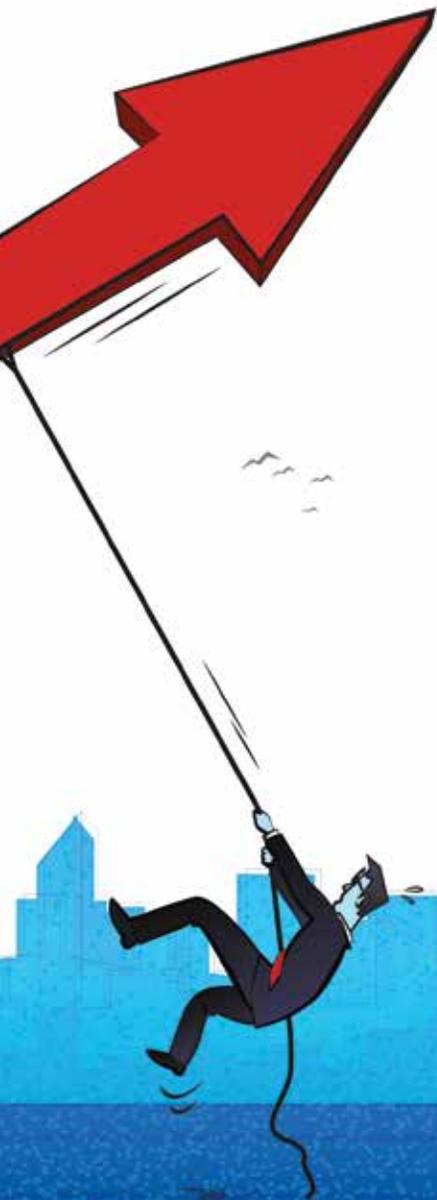
HOME BUYER PLANS?

positive from that perspective,” he remarked. “Delaying could put potential buyers at risk to experience further increased costs. This is still a competitive market and it is critical for prospective buyers to evaluate their priorities and goals and be prepared with prequalified or preapproval paperwork.” He highly recommends that buyers speak with a mortgage expert who can help provide clarity on what a buyer can afford and connect them with potential

solutions so they can have a plan in place to act quickly. Despite the lack of available existing homes for sale, he finds there is still more demand for mortgages for existing homes than for new construction. “However, low inventory has driven higher demand on the new construction side with significantly increased activity compared to what was typical for the past 10 to 15 years when housing starts were very slow following the financial crisis,” he concluded. Jason Stauffer in his NextAdvisor.com article posits that “buyers may still face bidding wars, but they aren’t likely to be as intense or as frequent. That means sellers may not be as selective when choosing between offers.” The article cautions that buyers should make a purchase when the time is right for them, not timing the rate market.

Builders, too, are realizing the fallout of rate increases and inflation, but are weathering the storm. One such custom home builder is Kacin Homes, founded by Richard Kacin and headquartered in Murrysville, just east of Pittsburgh. Building custom homes since 1960, Kacin’s current builds include Hillstone Village in Murrysville, featuring

one and two story carriage homes starting in the high \$400,000s, and single-family homes starting in the low \$600,000s, all highly customizable, low maintenance and replete with high end finishes and materials, and North Meadow, Washington Township, noted for its low maintenance, well-appointed patio and single-family homes just off Route 356, also in Westmoreland County. Jason C. Corna, Kacin Company’s Vice President/Residential Division, shared that rising interest rates are pushing some buyers out of the market with primary concerns revolving around monthly payments and affordability. “The homes we are currently building are attracting empty nesters who are less reliant on large mortgages or mortgages in general,” he explained. “The interest in our current communities has continued to stay strong through the first part of 2022.” He finds that many people applying for mortgages are doing so as soon as possible to lock in current rates, but “certain restraints hold many back from applying for a loan including, but not limited to, home completion/closing dates.” He added further that “It’s difficult to determine how high interest rates



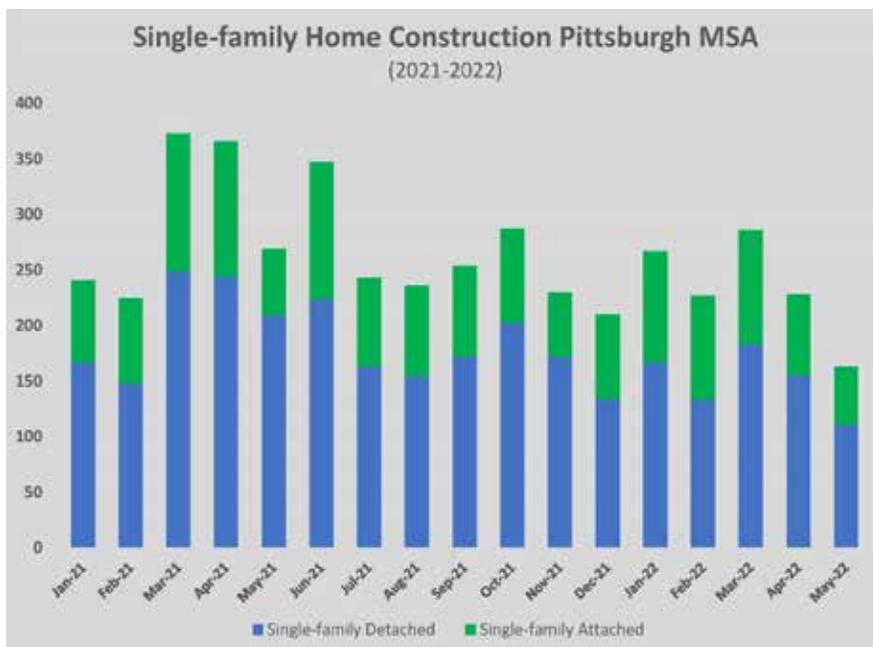
ARE RISING RATES ADVERSELY AFFECTING

will climb. We are being told they will continue to climb in 2022. No matter what the rates do, people of all ages will continue to build homes. There is no doubt that higher interest rates will push some out of the new construction market while others may choose to build smaller, less expensive homes.” Josephine Nesbit, a writer specializing in real estate and personal finance reported that

in the Pittsburgh area was about \$220,000, so, if the rate increased from 2.87 to 5.25 percent, that would translate to a \$250 payment increase each month, which could discourage some buyers from a home purchase.

Paul and Lisa Scarmazzi founded their namesake company, Scarmazzi Homes, more than 20 years ago to build luxury

Chartiers Township, starting in the \$400,000s; Highland Village, Union Township, and Villas of South Park, South Park Township, both starting in the upper \$300,000s. All homes can be personalized with interior design in their Design Center, conveniently located in Canonsburg next to their corporate headquarters. Scarmazzi noted a double digit decline in mortgage applications during the month of May and a similar decline in home sales for the month of April. “It really has to do with affordability – as interest rates rise, it takes buyers out of the market due to increased monthly payments,” he said. “Unfortunately, with cost increases, fewer home sales do not necessarily result in lower prices at this point.” On the plus side, Scarmazzi continues to experience good traffic and solid sales in their plans given that many of their home owners are an older demographic and cash buyers. He also acknowledged that rising rates tend to dampen demand for first-time and move-up buyers, resulting in softening sales in these segments over the past 45 days due to rising rates, inflation and the stock market. “Simply put, people are seeing that they can’t qualify for the amount of mortgage for the homes they are looking to buy. Rates have doubled in a short time period and buyers are still processing what that means for them and their housing search,” he added. “I don’t think they’re ‘waiting’ to see if rates drop, but rather now processing what this means to them or understanding that the home they could afford six months ago, based on their



The trend for single-family home starts has been steadily lower as inflation and mortgage rates have risen. Source: Pittsburgh Homebuilding Report.

buyers who signed contracts for new homes in 2021 and early 2022 expected rates around 3 percent. With the average rate growing to 5.3 percent (as reported by Freddie Mac and the Wall Street Journal), monthly payments can increase by nearly one-third (“How Buyers with Homes Under Construction Could Face Even Higher Interest Rates Before They Can Close”, May 17, 2022, Bankrate.com). For example, Michael Henry, Dollar Bank, explained that their average loan

patio homes for people looking to simplify and right size. The company is consistently one of Pittsburgh’s top home builders and, as a builder partner with Epcon Homes and Communities, Scarmazzi Homes boast unrivaled feel, flow and function coupled with exterior services and innovative exterior courtyard areas for an outdoor living room. Current Scarmazzi plans include Aiken Landings in Robinson Township and Belmont Park in

HOME BUYER PLANS?

monthly payment, might be out of reach at this point.” Scarmazzi does offer help to customers with the prequalification and mortgage processes through Princeton Financial, their preferred lender, to provide people with an exceptional level of service and expertise.

Joseph Cartellone, First National Bank, sums it up this way: “While interest rates are top of mind

for many given recent actions taken by the Federal Reserve, it is important to remember that mortgage rates do not necessarily move in tandem with the Fed’s rate decisions. Mortgage rates are set by the market, and many elements can impact mortgage rates such as inflation, job creation, and how the economy is growing or shrinking. Although mortgage rates have been climbing from

near historic lows, as of the end of May 2022, they have actually stabilized, even as the Fed has announced new, short-term rate hikes. This is good news for qualified, prospective buyers who should not let headlines about rates stall their home buying plans. Lenders are ready to work with clients to navigate the current climate and provide financing to meet their needs.” **NH**

Borrowing costs have already risen sharply across much of the U.S. economy in response to the Fed’s moves, with the average 30-year fixed mortgage rate topping 6%, its highest level since before the 2008 financial crisis, up from just 3% at the start of the year. The yield on the 2-year Treasury note, a benchmark for corporate borrowing, has jumped to 3.3%, its highest level since 2007.

Even if a recession can be avoided, economists say it’s almost inevitable that the Fed will have to inflict some pain — most likely in the form of higher unemployment — as the price of defeating chronically high inflation.

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The Residential Supply Chain Improves (Slightly)

When the COVID-19 pandemic began spreading widely in spring 2020, there were many dark predictions about the impact on the economy. Even after the initial lockdowns were lifted and Congress passed the CARES Act to assist consumers and businesses, there were few forecasts that were rosy about 2021 and beyond. But the rollout of effective vaccines unleashed an unexpected boom in demand in 2021, boosting the economy and easing worries that the pandemic would wreak long-term financial pain.



The unintended consequence of the surprise boom was a different sort of short-term pain. As Americans re-opened their collective wallets in spring 2021, they found that little of what they wanted to buy was available.

The housing market was way ahead of the curve, having seen a boom in home improvements beginning in summer of 2020 when homeowners were spending most of their time at home. By the end of 2020, building product prices were beginning to rise quickly and had become scarce. Lead times on materials, products, and equipment for residential construction lengthened to four or five times normal. Some items were backordered for periods of time that were longer than the time it took to build the house.

Then came the Delta and Omicron variants, throwing monkey wrenches into what small recovery was underway in the global supply chain. In short, 2021 was a mess for suppliers.

At the midpoint of 2022, it is clear that the supply chain still has a long way to go before looking anything like “normal.” There are signs that manufacturing and transportation are beginning to increase, however, and most distributors have figured out ways to fill the gaps that exist in their long-time network of suppliers. The data on housing starts and existing home sales (which typically spur renovation projects) showed that both slowed significantly in May, with indications that the market could be 10 percent slower than in mid-

2021. As the Federal Reserve Bank raises rates to combat inflation, economic demand is slowing. While that could mean a recession later this year, a slowdown would accelerate the improvement in the supply chain. That would be welcome news for the home construction market.

The Downstream Effects

There are two key outcomes from the disruption of the supply chain: longer construction schedules and higher prices. Of the two, the former is more strongly correlated to the supply chain. Even the best homebuilder cannot manage what is outside its control. Construction will take longer today than five years ago because there are fewer skilled workers; however, builders can manage labor issues. It is the long lead times associated with

IMPROVES (SLIGHTLY)

the broken supply chain that are wrecking schedules.

Short supply certainly has an impact on price. Distributors readily agree that the demand for materials far outstrips what they have to sell. But escalating home prices have much more to do with the imbalance in the supply and demand of existing homes to sell than the cost of new construction. Roughly six times as many existing homes are sold each year compared to new construction. In fact, were the inventory of homes for sale to swell suddenly – it is currently just above two months' supply – the price of new construction would have to react accordingly, regardless of what material costs were doing. This unusually tight supply of homes for sale, compared to the unusually high levels of demand, will not be undone soon. National Association of Realtors Chief Economist Lawrence Yun recently estimated that there were three-to-four million homes short of meeting demand. That is three years' worth of new construction at full capacity.

Where the supply chain disruption has impacted price most directly is in the home remodeling market. The pandemic sparked a dramatic increase in remodeling and additions to existing homes. Homeowners spent more time in their homes in 2020 and decided to invest in making those spaces more to their liking. This spike in demand made headlines by tripling the prices of soft from February to September 2020, when prices hit almost \$1,000 per thousand board feet. (The price subsequently topped \$1,500 again in May 2021 and 2022.) But lumber was hardly

the only material impacted. Prices for all products that are inputs to residential construction have been 25 percent higher year-over-year for nearly 18 months.

You can make the argument that inflation is less disruptive to residential construction than the long lead times that are a result of the same supply-demand imbalance. High inflation had most certainly caused some new construction buyers to walk away from deals, but builders have been so busy that the loss of future business has not yet been painful. The long lead times for most products, on the other hand, wreaks havoc on schedules. That makes customers unhappy. It also erodes the profit a builder expects to make on a new home.

Homebuilders are roughly categorized into two categories: custom and production. The latter type of builder, which is able to construct a higher volume of homes because of predictability and repetition, has the higher market share in metropolitan Pittsburgh. As might be expected, the unpredictability of a fractured supply chain can play havoc on the production-oriented builder, especially since those builders typically deliver a new home in six months or less.

The region's biggest builder is NVR, led by its Ryan Homes brand. As demand began surging in mid-2021, Ryan Homes added 30 days to its delivery times on new sales and accelerated the deadline for decisions on materials and finishes by its customers by 30 days. That decision-making period could coincide with the time needed to complete the financing

arrangements, adding about two months to the construction schedule without the homebuyer feeling any delays.

"We learned to manage it after a painful lesson. What happened last year caused delays in projects. I made customers unhappy," recalls Jeff Costa, founder of Costa Homebuilders. "When we started new projects after that, we shifted gears and have ordered everything sooner. As soon as someone signs a contract, we are ordering windows and garage doors. Those are things that we wouldn't have ordered until much further into the project. We became better organized but there was a time last year when we felt the pain. It's not improving so much as it is changing. There are different shortages."

Regardless of the strategies employed to manage the supply chain uncertainty, builders are still ultimately captive to the suppliers. Depending upon the product or material, lead times expanded dramatically from winter to spring 2021. The booming economy and continued surges of COVID-19 kept those lead times extended well into the 2022 building season. As the first half of 2022 ends, distributors are seeing some signs of easing but little sign that normal is approaching.

"For the majority of products, lead times have come down and some of them significantly. It depends on if the manufacturer is struggling to find a vendor for one component or another," says David Jones, president of Brookside Lumber Company. "For example, we had Andersen Windows in one of their categories that was out

a year a few months ago. Now they are down closer to three or four months, which is still a long time relatively speaking. I think they were heavy-handed on the lead times because they didn't know whether or not they would get some of these components and materials they needed to manufacture."

Tom Baney, president of Standard Air and Lite, believes that same dynamic was the reason that lead times had improved dramatically for residential HVAC equipment. Standard Air and Lite is an exclusive distributor for Carrier Corporation, which extended its lead times from two weeks to over 100 days very early in the 2021 recovery that followed widespread vaccination.

"Two steps forward and two steps back is a good way to describe

it. It depends upon the segment you're talking about," he says. "For example, on the residential side, where things were really bad last year, Carrier still has us at 120-day lead times, but they have shipped so much earlier that we now are flooded with inventory. I know they are better than the published lead times, but they are not committing to shorter times yet. It's now 90 degrees so the full inventory is beautiful. Heat pumps are becoming difficult to get but that's a national problem."

Candice Brown, co-owner of Thomas V. Giel Corporation, is less sanguine about conditions. She says that what would typically take two or three weeks to deliver in 2019 is now taking as long as six months, with the average manufacturer taking 15 to 35

weeks for delivery. It is worth remembering that garage doors are manufactured as components that the distributor, like Thomas V. Giel, assembles and installs at the home.

"I don't see an end in sight, unfortunately. It's not going to be something that goes away for at least a few years, according to our suppliers, Brown says. "The snags are with the door manufacturers. For the past two years, something would interfere with making the door itself. At first, they couldn't get raw steel from the port. Then they couldn't get staff. Then they couldn't get the urethane foam and adhesives. Every part that makes up a door was on backorder at some point, which held up the entire process. Our manufacturers have told us if no one placed an order for a year, it would take

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another year to get caught up.”

“Our lead times are pretty flat. They are the same lead times as they have been all year. I would say that the times are less on some raw materials like aluminum, but delays are still a factor,” says Rick Hanglitter, regional manager for Gunton Corporation, the largest independent distributor for Pella Windows in the U.S. “Pella is putting every conceivable resource into procurement and throughput but there is no end in sight for this.”

Hanglitter expressed frustration at having to tell homeowners and homebuilders news he would not have had to give three years ago. He knows that Gunton and Pella are losing opportunities because of the realities of the lead times. Hanglitter laughed when asked about what steps a distributor

can take to manage the situation, noting that buyers have begun to shop based upon where they can get the shortest lead time, which leaves the suppliers that get those orders so busy that their lead times lengthen again.

A sampling of lead times published by various multi-state distributors reveals how uneven the supply landscape is. Manufacturers of lower-quality standard windows are filling orders within four weeks, while makers of custom windows are anywhere from 12 to 60 weeks. Insulation, caulking, adhesives, and some types of siding are on allocation. Vinyl siding has become more available – many of the colors were off the market earlier in the year - but lead times vary wildly. Colored coil for siding and flashing is available from 45

days to three months, depending on color and gauge. Some manufacturers have adopted a strategy of focusing production assets on fewer products to increase what is available.

“Our roofing supplier shifted its inventory from 10 colors to five colors,” says Costa. “They focused on the five best-selling colors to have as much as possible.”

Hanglitter pointed to a trend in residential window architecture that is likely to help with capacity. Homeowners are demanding more natural light in their homes and builders have responded by designing much larger, fixed-glass windows in the front and rear. That has created a surge in demand for larger windows, for which glass manufacturers were unprepared. Hanglitter reports that one of the

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nation's largest residential glass manufacturer, Cardinal Industries is preparing to add an additional glass furnace to meet the demand.

"Window manufacturers buy glass from just a few manufacturers, so that would help add significant capacity to the industry at a critical time," he says.

The Light at the End of the Tunnel

For the time being, few of the distributors and builders expect to see a significant improvement in the residential building product supply chain this year, and most are not optimistic about a return to pre-pandemic normalcy in 2023. Those points of view are from professionals in the midst of the battle, so to speak. There are some factors to consider that would restore some optimism.

The first, conversely enough, is the likely recessionary outcome of the Federal Reserve Bank's belt tightening. Fed Chair Jerome Powell is unlikely to ever list a recession as the goal of the rate hiking and balance sheet reductions that have been ongoing since March; however, the Fed regional presidents have gently acknowledged that a slowdown in demand is the aim of the tighter policy, whether that results in a recession or not. The risk of the recession was made necessary by the delay in responding to the supply chain problems in 2021.

"I think it's going to be a combination of things settling because some of the kinks being worked out and the Federal Reserve slowing things down," says Jones. "I don't think that has had a lot of impact yet, but I believe it will. I fear the Fed will swing us

from one problem to another."

"I think interest rates are going to cool off new home construction fairly quickly, at least at the entry level," predicts Hanglitter. "The production type of builder is going to slow down quicker than a custom builder working for somebody who has money in the bank. But we're just not seeing any of that yet because there's enough in the pipeline."

The data from the past two months suggests that residential suppliers will be seeing a slowdown

in orders soon. New home construction slumped 14.4 percent nationwide in May from April. Permits for new housing units topped 1.8 million in April, following a surprising uptick in starts in March. Single-family starts were 1.05 million, with multi-family starts falling to 498,000 units. Sales of new homes plunged significantly in April, the fourth consecutive month of declines. Declining sales reflect concerns about rising mortgage rates and reflect a further decrease in affordability.

In metro Pittsburgh, permits for



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new homes slowed to an even greater degree in April and May. Construction starts for new single-family detached and attached homes was off by nearly six percent during the first quarter of 2022; by the end of May, the decline was 22.9 percent year-over-year. That is the kind of decline that accompanies a recession.

Recessions are never welcome, but they reflect an imbalance between supply and demand that requires correction. In most cases, recessions stem from an oversupply that did not anticipate cooling demand, which is 180 degrees from the current situation. For the supply chain, a significant slowdown in demand offers the chance for suppliers to catch up and build inventories. A recession would likely bring cancellations

of orders, a trend that would accelerate the re-balancing of supply and demand.

There are some indications that the pullback has begun. One of the world's freight-tracking metrics, the Baltos Freight Index reported in mid-June that freight rates for shipping from China to the U.S. had fallen 34 percent from the beginning of 2022 and were 50 percent lower than June 2021. Global shipping rates are closely linked to supply and demand, which has been disrupted by COVID-19 for two years. The surge in demand in 2021 outstripped the availability of both shipping containers and shipyard workers. Throughout the spring of 2022, demand has been slowing and importers have been cancelling orders from China.

One caveat to any measurement of global freight is that the impact of the shutdown of Shanghai, which is home to the second largest port in the world, from April into June has yet to be fully discovered. Likewise, the disruption caused by the war in Ukraine will create uncertainty about supply until the conflict ends.

Shipping and delivery costs have added significantly to the overall inflation in residential products and materials. Much of that increase can be attributed to the high cost of fuel, but a continued decline in freight costs will pare a few percentage points off the overall rate of residential construction inflation. Moreover, the drop in freight demand is an early sign that suppliers will get a chance to rebuild inventories.

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Jones shared that pricing for some of the highest volume materials, like lumber and steel shapes, have been pulling back recently, falling 20 to 30 percent. Building materials are cyclical, and lumber has been especially volatile since mid-2020; however, Jones notes that the softer pricing is likely an indicator of softer demand. It may be another canary in the coal mine, foretelling an easing of the extraordinary manufacturing backlogs.

In the meantime, distributors continue to be creative to continue to have products and materials for their customers. That is especially true for residential service businesses, which require sufficient inventories of parts and consumable materials to keep homeowners happy. In the past, there have been shortages of parts or components

that helped drive sales of new equipment or products. If there was a shortage of replacement compressors, for example, homeowners would be inclined to replace the air-conditioning unit rather than swelter in the heat. But, in today's environment, there is no inventory of new product to replace the old. Candice Brown says she has broadened the base of parts suppliers.

"The shortages absolutely affect our service business. I can't get certain kinds of springs, track, garage door openers and components to complete the job," she says. "I used to have only four or five suppliers for springs and now I have over 20."

Baney is looking ahead to September already and is not waiting to see how well Carrier has

adjusted to meet the demand for furnaces when the cold weather hits.

"We're ordering furnaces now because I don't trust the situation to get better," he says.

Baney's caution is understandable given the unreliability of the supply chain since 2020. It seems more likely that economic conditions will ease some of the uncertainty about supply in the coming winter. Suppliers are rebuilding capacity. Pressure on oil and gas companies to build inventories will continue to grow through the busy summer vacation season, and that has historically been persuasive. Lower fuel and energy prices would help with inflation and make the costs associated with building manufacturing capacity less painful. And the path of the Federal Reserve Bank is set on stamping

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Short supply certainly has an impact on price. Distributors readily agree that the demand for materials far outstrips what they have to sell. But escalating home prices have much more to do with the imbalance in the supply and demand of existing homes to sell than the cost of new construction. Roughly six times as many existing homes are sold each year compared to new construction.

out inflation now, even if that means reversing growth for the short term.

The pandemic that started in spring 2020 turned the global economy upside down. It is easy to forget at this point that the U.S. economy was slowing dramatically at the start of 2020, and other parts of the world had already seen declining

growth. COVID-19 was an artificial economic stop that preceded an artificially induced economic boom. The supply chain froze. The labor market broke. Instead of slowly regaining momentum that would result in

increased job creation, the U.S. economy found itself needing twice as many workers as the number of people unemployed. That is a huge cushion against rising unemployment when the economy cools.

Conditions like this are literally unprecedented, at least for the past century. Setting aside the

emotional pain humanity has experienced over the past two years, the economic pain from the pandemic has been very limited, especially compared to what could have been experienced without the massive government intervention. One of the more painful effects of the pandemic has been the inability of businesses to get what they need, when they need it. As the worst of the public health crisis begins to fade in summer 2022, it is clear there will be some economic pain to come before we transition fully back to whatever will become "normal" again.

Whatever form that economic medicine takes, it is sure to cure what ails the supply chain too. For homeowners and the residential construction market, the cure cannot come too soon. **NH**

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KITCHEN AND BATHROOM TRENDS

From time spent together cooking, eating, doing homework, or just hanging out and talking, the kitchen is one of the most important rooms in a house: it is where the heart of the home beats the strongest. This was especially true during the height of the pandemic and even now, many homeowners want to transform their kitchen into a stylish one that is both functional and beautiful.

*Images supplied by Nicklas Supply /
Splash and Don's Appliances.*

The bathroom, particularly the master bath, has also gained elevated importance during the pandemic. Because people could not go to the gym or saunas, many viewed the bathroom as a respite from the day and wanted their bathrooms to reflect a spa-like experience.

“You’re investing in your home, but you’re also investing in your personal life. Because we haven’t been able to spend a whole lot of money out and about the past few years, a lot of people are investing in their homes,” said Matt Hillebrand, principal/partner with Don’s Appliances.

“If there is any place in a home where you should make a larger investment, it’s definitely kitchens, and then baths; those are the two biggest areas you will get the most bang for your buck in terms of a remodeling budget,” he added.

Trends in Kitchen Appliances

What defines today’s kitchen, according to Hillebrand, is “...a combination of technology, design and comfortability. I think people have to be comfortable in their kitchen, and today’s kitchens have got a vast array of appliances that make cooking as easy as it’s ever been.”

Because people have utilized their kitchens a great deal over the last few years, cooking more meals at home, they are seeking technology to make their lives easier—and manufacturers are meeting those demands. Some of the available kitchen technologies are not brand new, but the interest in them is increasing.

“Induction cookware is at the very, very top of my mind. That will give you instantaneous heat using a magnetic cookware, which gives you similar results to a gas cooking unit. There is instant on, instant off, and everything in between in terms of controllability,” said Hillebrand. It’s also a lot safer because you don’t have an exposed flame and are only transferring heat from the element to the cookware that is magnetic, and there is very little residual heat on top of the glass.

Hillebrand said that refrigerators are now being designed with better food preservation. “During the pandemic, you weren’t going out and shopping every day; customers were looking for the best possible food preservation systems in refrigerators,” he said. To this end, some manufacturers have refrigerators with two compressors: one for the refrigerator and one for the freezer. When you’re not moving air from one compartment to the other, that provides consistent temperatures and maintains humidity in the refrigerator to preserve the life of fruits and vegetables seven to ten days longer than average.

Another kitchen appliance trend is the built-in coffee system, which can either be placed on a countertop or slides into a cabinet. It is hooked up to the water line so it does not need to be continually filled. “It grinds individual cups of coffee to give you a perfect cup every time,” said Hillebrand.

Steam ovens are gaining in popularity, and these can also be used as a steam unit. “If you

wanted to steam vegetables, you can do that in your oven. You can also use a steam oven to reheat or you have the option to do a combination steam/convection. You can inject steam and cook at the same time to maintain that moisture in whatever it is you’re cooking,” he said.

Smart technology is becoming more popular in the kitchen as well. Many high-end manufacturers offer apps to control appliances, such as cameras in the ovens so you can look at your phone and see how your cookies look, all without getting off the couch. And if you’ve ever gone to the grocery store and realized you forgot to check to see whether or not you were out of milk, one refrigerator called The Hub by Samsung has a camera inside the fridge so you can peek inside and see what you need.

As people entertain more at home, warming drawers are becoming popular. They’re especially good when families with busy schedules are eating at different times. “You can hold food in a warming drawer for extended periods of time and keep it at a safe temperature; it does a great job because it doesn’t dry food out. If you have multiple side dishes, you can hold them in a warming drawer for extended periods of time; it’s great for holidays and parties,” said Hillebrand.

And while trash compactors are not a new technology, they are gaining in popularity; Hillebrand calls them an underrated appliance.

Beth Fay Lane, marketing director and hardware specialist with Splash, a kitchen and bath design showroom with locations



KITCHEN AND

in Cranberry, Glenshaw and Murrysville, said that people are putting in larder cabinets, similar to a pantry but has even more of a multifunctional purpose—tall cabinets with doors that can be folded back. A larder contains built-in nooks and drawers and is used for storing baking supplies or beverages or even your coffee maker. “It’s like getting a purse with compartments or pockets,” she said.

But perhaps one of the most significant kitchen trends this year is the sink that doubles as a work station, designed to minimize mess with built-in accessories; these sinks slide on tracks, converting your sink into a cutting board station, a drying rack, or a colander.

Another must-have is the prep sink, which can be built into a double kitchen island; it is both a hygienic and functional kitchen solution. For example, you can

use the prep sink to prepare raw meat and keep it away from other parts of the kitchen, reducing the chances of cross-contamination. And regardless of the type of sink you choose, Lane pointed out that hammered metal sinks with a metallic finish is a visually appealing trend.

Two other kitchen trends include touchless faucets and filtration systems. Hillebrand said some of these filtration systems not only filters the water but will dispense chilled water, heated water, as well as sparkling water.

Hillebrand said that depending on whether someone is building versus renovating is dictating the caliber of appliances. “If you’re going to be in a home longer than 7-8 years, we are seeing more luxury, high-end appliances,” he said. Conversely, for those doing remodels that are only going to be

enjoyed for a handful of years, they are choosing upper end or middle-of-the-road appliances.

Kitchen Design

The new, technology-infused appliances that are out there would impress even a professional chef, but there’s something to be said for the aesthetics of the kitchen. No matter your taste, there is something for everyone in kitchen designs, whether you prefer old world, contemporary, classically styled, or anything in between. The key word is simplicity. “No matter the style, people are still keeping things more simple, streamlined and uncluttered,” said Tracy Sherksnas, Kitchen and Bath Designer with Splash.

Peggy DeTillio, Design Consultant with Scarmazzi Homes, said that today’s kitchen is fresh, reflected in clean lines, and is airy and open.





“Open concept is still very much alive and well,” agreed Sherksnas. This is true, even though people are often using these spaces as a work space or a place for homework. “It’s more of a cohesive space for being together,” she said.

Color

DeTillio said that white is still popular as a kitchen base color. “It represents purity and cleanliness and freshness. You can always change your color themes by accessories and furniture, so white is a nice clean palate to start with,” she said.

For those who do incorporate color, the designers are seeing a lot of blues, either in the island or the perimeter or even the backsplash. Sherksnas said that people are mixing and matching blues or darker tones as well as choosing warmer hues, including for their wood species, like natural maple.

Lane added that she is seeing what she calls Scandinavian color palettes: heavy on the neutrals, natural woods, and creamier whites.

Finishes and Materials

“In hardware, definitely matte black remains very popular,” said DeTillio. She added that she’s done a lot of brush gold in cabinet hardware and plumbing fixtures. “I always encourage people to mix the metals; it’s nice to have that more eclectic look,” she said.

Sherksnas is also seeing a lot of black finishes, along with stainless steel finishes to coordinate with appliances. Matte gold as a finish is also trending, but black still dominates.

Lane is seeing a lot of British influence—painted cabinets and authentic golden hardware. “We have authentic premium products that look like they came out of an

old manor house. Some styling is contemporary but finishes look old and authentic, which is a British look. Sometimes they are paired with raw wood or painted cabinetry; that has been popular

For countertops, quartz is number one, said DeTillio, and people want the design to be a bit simpler and less busy.

Lane, however, said she is seeing the manmade quartzite as the number one choice in countertops, followed by marble and then quartz. “We are incorporating wooden butcher block-type countertops as well as edge treatments, which is a pretty way to incorporate more warmth into a space,” said Lane, adding that homeowners are also doing wooden tops on a certain section like on the island or the bar.

Sherksnas said that no matter

what people choose for materials, they are viewing their island as a focal point. “They are gravitating toward quartzes that have a marble look with waterfall edges.”

Backsplash design are numerous and as individual as the homeowner, but Lane said there is a lot of very intriguing and artistic designs these days in natural stone, with some people blending different colors of stone in a pattern, while others will feature metallic accents. “If you look at the same piece of tile, you can lay that out six different ways, depending on the pattern,” she said.

Trends in Bathroom Style, Design and Features

Many people want a fresh, clean

look, but something not sterile looking. “That is where you can have natural stone, or a lighter palette but still have dimensional tiles and veining for flooring and the countertop,” said Lane.

People start and end their days in the bathroom, so it makes sense that the bathroom be a low-maintenance, Zen-like space, and people have stepped up their bathroom designs to achieve those goals. “We are really seeing a boom in what would have considered high end luxury—people are loading master and guest bathrooms with these features,” said Lane.

When gyms and country clubs were closed, those who renovated their master baths opted for

steam showers. “The steam shower experience is fully customizable. There’s sound, light, and you can control the temperature, the duration of time, and you can add aromatherapy to it. That is something people really enjoy,” Lane said.

Sherksnas added that walk-in showers are very popular, featuring a no or low-threshold entry, which can accommodate a wheelchair if necessary. This is one example of universal design and are good for people living in multigenerational homes or those who intend to age in place.

Rain showers are still popular, though Lane said they are often paired with other shower heads, like a wall-mounted, hand-held





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shower on a slide bar (also known as a hand wand shower head). People are also incorporating benches into the shower.

While the shower may be a place to rejuvenate, the bathtub is a place to relax. For those who have the space, freestanding tubs are having a moment, said both Lane and Sherksnas. Freestanding tubs come in a variety of colors and styles, so they can blend in with virtually any bathroom design, and because they are not built-in, they can be placed anywhere, though often they are the focal point of the bathroom. People can choose to add heated backrests or air jets to create bubbles.

In keeping with the low-maintenance goals, DeTillio said that people like the matte tiles, which eliminates noticeable smudges and water marks. She said clients like marble and marble-like tile materials, which gives a luxurious look and feel to a bathroom.

Color-wise, the designers are seeing beige, taupe and earthy, warmer grays. Matte black and champagne gold is popular in the bathroom, but traditionalists are sticking with brushed nickel finishes.

Sherksnas said that people are painting their vanities and choosing rectangle sinks as opposed to oval. Three-dimensional tile designs in the bathroom along with large format tiles have been very popular, as well as back painted mosaic glass.

Trends in Bathroom Technologies

Borrowing from our European neighbors, today's bathrooms are all about the bidet, or a washlet. "A washlet is a very, very intelligent bidet," said Hillebrand. A washlet has a lot of different features that can be operated via remote control, such as a heated seat and a fan. Regular toilets can also come with bidet seats, as an extension to your current toilet.

And like the kitchen, with its smart apps, there are also smart shower systems, with such functions as voice control, temperature control, shower duration control, etc.

Sherksnas pointed to LED lighted medicine cabinets that lift up and can be recessed or surface mounted as a new, high end option for the bathroom, as well as a grooming drawer complete with electric outlets in the back of the drawer.

Other high-end features popular in high-end bathrooms are towel warmers and heated floors.

"It is one thing to treat yourself to a massage every month or two, but it is another thing to have quality wind-down time, anytime. That is where the cost-benefit comes in when you invest in more luxury-type features," said Lane. **NH**



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The field of robotics and its collective, perpetual advancements in technology offer the potential and promise to transform operations across industries. Pittsburgh is uniquely positioned to chart this path forward, as the region's robotics and autonomous mobile systems industries flourish. Autonomous systems relate to a machine's ability to move and make decisions without human intervention, an ability that's integral to and intertwined with robotics. Autonomous automobiles along with robots that work in warehouses, disinfect interior spaces, and even explore outer space are all examples of existing autonomous mobile systems technology.

Currently, the Pittsburgh region is home to over 100 existing robotics companies spanning 18 industry verticals. The robotics industry experiences robust support from accelerators, educational institutions, and industry leaders. Venture capital and private equity investment in regional robotics has totaled more than \$3.3 billion since 2012.

Even with these successes, there's further transformative potential on Pittsburgh's horizon. The autonomous mobile systems market is predicted to grow

globally to \$1 trillion by 2026, according to a recent study led by the Regional Industrial Development Corporation of Southwestern Pennsylvania (RIDC), the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, and other leading regional organizations.

While numerous cities and regions will share in the autonomous system industry's growing success, if Pittsburgh can capture just 1 percent of the market, that translates to a \$10 billion impact and adding some 5,000 jobs to the region, according to the study. So, how can Pittsburgh maximize the benefits from these projected gains? The region's momentum in autonomous systems, diversity of leading robotics companies, and capacity for research, development, and commercialization will continue to accelerate this sector and move Pittsburgh forward.

Challenges Amid Progress

Pittsburgh has accrued an impressive record of federal funding to support robotics and fields pertinent to autonomous systems. From 2015 to early 2021, combined grant funding received from the U.S. Department of Defense, National Science Foundation, Department of Energy, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) totaled \$162.9 million.

Beyond funding and investment dollars, autonomous system development in Pittsburgh thrives because of the region's research and development capacity. Ultimately, autonomous systems stem from technological gains, and

Pittsburgh researchers continue to create and develop the technological advancements that push the field forward.

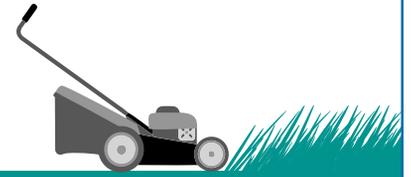
Research originating at regional institutions such as Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh has spun out to create startup companies based on these innovations, which in turn attract venture funding and corporate investment. Carnegie Mellon has long been an international leader in robotics education and research, ranked as the top university worldwide for robotics engineering by many platforms and outlets.

Similarly, Pittsburgh fosters a symbiotic relationship between industries and universities, whereby both stand to benefit from shared advancements and a distinct fluidity between corporate and academic R&D departments. Momentum behind the autonomous systems industry in Pittsburgh stands to propel technologies, companies, and the regional economy forward. But even with such promise, the challenges and obstacles are formidable.

The competitive landscape is gaining steam. Pittsburgh isn't the only region on the forefront of autonomous system development, as other states and regions sport impressive funding, technological advancements, and clear intent for future growth.

Major cities like Boston, Detroit, San Francisco, and others continue to leverage their well-established industry bases and funding sources to advance and further test autonomous systems and related technology.

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As the autonomous systems industry expands nationally, some states and regions are adopting economic development and policy actions favorable to the continued attraction and growth of the autonomous industry.

What's more, programmatic efforts comprehensively support autonomous systems' growth and development in some regions. For example, effective new partnerships and coalitions among tech companies, universities, and even state agencies have helped groups combine resources and knowledge to gain competitive advantage.

For Pittsburgh, one challenge will be to translate its research and development capacity into companies, jobs, and innovations that attract further funding. If Pittsburgh maintains its market share of the autonomous

systems industry but does not grow as both a headquarters and hub for related companies and industries that can leverage such technologies, the region could miss out on the highly anticipated job growth in this sector. Currently, Pittsburgh's Innovation ecosystem supports a robust and capable research and development sector. Pittsburgh's ability to move beyond R&D and secure the jobs and companies borne of such innovations could define its long-term success in this space.

In Pittsburgh, Robots Abound

Even in a competitive landscape, Pittsburgh sports visible advantages. In Pittsburgh, compared to any other city, we already likely have the highest concentration of robots out there performing tasks and working and operating alongside their human

counterparts. In Pittsburgh, robots are already working to pave roads. They're working in warehouses, making deliveries in streets, and disinfecting rooms in hospitals. "We have in our region these robots that are changing the way that we live, the way we move, the way we work," says Joel Reed, executive director of the Pittsburgh Robotics Network, an organization that represents the companies and leaders who make up the Pittsburgh robotics ecosystem. "I think Pittsburgh is a very unique city in the world where you really can come and take a look at this wide range of ways that these machines are going to impact our lives," he says.

In Pittsburgh and other regions, undoubtedly, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the need for autonomous systems and integration of robotics into





our various environments, Reed says. Because the pandemic sent so many workers home across industries, the need to start adopting automated technologies in logistics, transportation, cleaning and disinfection, security, and other areas became apparent. “The pandemic has accelerated the need for automation and autonomous systems and has also increased the adoption,” Reed says.

The increasing visibility of and adoption of robots highlights the breadth of robotics and autonomous systems work and research taking place in Pittsburgh. “We obviously are well-known for autonomous vehicles and self-driving cars,” Reed says. “But just as exciting and equally important are the companies that are developing solutions for warehousing and

logistics, for agricultural solutions and technologies, or inspection and maintenance capabilities, and for cleaning and health care applications.”

Just as people in the internet technology sector might travel to the Bay Area once a year to meet companies and make investments, Reed believes that people involved in autonomous systems and robotics should be coming to Pittsburgh once a year for similar purposes. “We now claim we’re the robotics capital of the world, and we aim to be a commercial industry center for autonomous systems for generations to come,” Reed says.

Yet even with Pittsburgh’s autonomous systems R&D, there’s need for focus on commercial development and growing existing robotics companies. “We have a great base of engineering talent,

but what we’re working on is developing the commercial talent in helping our businesses be successful,” Reed says. “We need to grow these businesses that are here and see much larger commercial growth beyond just engineering teams. And that’s a big thing that the Pittsburgh Robotics Network is focused on doing.”

Next Steps for Autonomous Systems Amplification

With some 100 robotics companies in the region, it’s hard to deny Pittsburgh’s dominance in this sector. While the word is out about Pittsburgh and autonomous systems, further amplification could still be necessary to realize the potential and gains of such a still-young sector. “To a certain extent we’ve been flying under the radar,” says Don Smith, president of the RIDC, a Pittsburgh-based



organization supporting economic growth through real estate development, job creation, and financing of projects. “I think we’re getting the message out so that the workers, the entrepreneurs, and the investors can really understand the scope of the opportunity here.”

Pittsburgh has seen incredible gains and diversity in the breadth of autonomous systems technologies being developed here. But to capture greater economic gains of such wondrous technologies, companies within the autonomous systems industry will need to further relay their collective needs together. This way, civic leaders, policymakers, and economic development officials can better understand the industry’s needs, Smith says. Such action could also help align state-level resources to advance robotics, and further bolstering the

Pittsburgh Robotics Network will be only of benefit, he says.

In addition to these measures, new infrastructure should be well aligned with robotics companies’ needs, Smith adds. So, enhancing and implementing broadband wireless communication technologies, sensors and test beds, and similar infrastructure and technology in the region can also prove beneficial to the autonomous systems sector.

Even with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the many burdens that it’s placed on all industries, investment in robotics and autonomous systems remains robust. Smith says that, today, Pittsburgh attracts investors from areas like Chicago, Seattle, and Silicon Valley—he recalls when Pittsburghers had to really entice such investors to even visit the city; now, they come and invest on their own volition.

Further investment will continue to drive the success of the autonomous systems ecosystem and the creation of jobs within and related to the sector. “Strengthening the ecosystem with some investments in incubation or co-working space or seed funding or ways to just really support what is still largely early-stage commercialization is really the way that we can cement this advantage that we have and turn it into a perpetual jobs machine,” Smith says.

The pandemic, however, has underscored the need for autonomous technologies and the vital role that robots can play in the labor market, not to replace jobs but to fill vacancies, Smith says. For example, autonomous trucking technologies could offer one solution for the shortage of commercial trucking services.

Regardless of the pandemic’s

influence on labor and autonomous systems, the maturation of robotics companies and the deployment of their developed technologies can really bolster job growth, which will be key to maximizing economic impact. “Once you get to the deployment is where the real job creation gets pretty exciting from an economic development standpoint because then you’re not just talking about autonomy engineers or programmers or mechanical or electrical engineers,” Smith says. “You’re talking about service techs, you’re talking about maintenance techs, and others, and there can start to be bigger numbers of jobs accessible to a broad range of people.”

Looking forward, Smith says that he’s bullish about Pittsburgh’s future and its autonomous systems sector given the number of robotics companies established and growing in Pittsburgh, the region’s ability to attract and retain talent, encouraging investment figures, and more. Robotics and autonomous systems offer a rare and, in some ways, unmatched economic opportunity. “I’ve been in economic development and tech-based economic development for a very long time,” Smith says. “I’ve seen some pretty exciting opportunities come and develop. But I think, in some sense, this might have the broadest possible impact across any of the opportunities that I’ve seen.”

Driving Pittsburgh Forward

Robotics in Pittsburgh still hasn’t realized its full potential, and there’s even more great research, developments, and discoveries in

the works. But you don’t have to look far to find companies that have achieved commercial success while continuing to innovate.

Autonomous automobiles have been among the most visible autonomous mobile systems being developed in Pittsburgh, traversing the city’s streets as part of their testing grounds. Aurora, whose mission is to deliver the benefits of self-driving technology safely, quickly, and broadly, has become a leader in this space. As another leading company, Argo AI builds the software, hardware, maps, and cloud-support infrastructure to power self-driving vehicles.

These companies, which are both headquartered in Pittsburgh, are also driving major funding to the region. Argo AI, for example, finalized a joint investment with Ford and Volkswagen totaling \$2.6B in 2020. Additionally, Aurora acquired Uber’s self-driving ATG unit in December 2020 and announced its plans to go public with a pre-transaction equity value of \$11 billion.

As a Pittsburgh-based and Pittsburgh-bred company, Aurora is planning to launch autonomous trucking and ride-hailing products and services in the coming years. What won’t change is the company’s headquarters. “Aurora is Pittsburgh-built and Pittsburgh-based, and we believe our next-generation technology should benefit everyone in the city—from businesses who need fast, reliable freight options to seniors who need accessible transportation,” says Gerardo Interiano, Aurora’s vice president of government relations and public affairs, in an email. “As we commercialize our technology,

Pittsburgh will continue to be the cornerstone of our growing operations and impact.”

Argo AI operates in eight cities across the United States and Germany. Pittsburgh’s hills and admittedly circuitous streets have made for a uniquely challenging but important testing grounds for self-driving technology. “Pittsburgh poses a lot of challenges for our self-driving system in terms of geography, infrastructure, and local driving habits. It’s an extremely challenging environment between its steep and narrow streets, hills, railroad tracks, tunnels, and bridges,” says Catherine Johnsmeyer, senior communications manager at Argo AI, in an email. “By testing in multiple, diverse cities, we expose our technology to a wide range of real-world data that makes our self-driving system safer, smarter and more scalable.”

But not all autonomous vehicles need tires to be commercially viable. In Pittsburgh, robotics company Seegrid produces autonomous mobile robots for material handling purposes, with the goal of making facilities and warehouses safer and more productive. Seegrid’s automated robots can lift, carry, and move products and payloads, among other capabilities, helping entire supply chains operate more efficiently and enhancing safety.

Enabling safer and more efficient working environments is a big draw of autonomous systems technology, says Jeff Christensen, Seegrid’s vice president of product. “One of the things that people don’t think about is how dangerous the supply chain is. There’s an

injury related to a forklift accident by a manual driver about every five minutes in the US,” he says. “People are just not meant to do these kinds of repetitive tasks because we get bored, we improvise, and when we improvise, we do dangerous things.”

Robots, conversely, have a strong safety record. “Our safety record right now includes a little more than 6 million miles of production work done in customer sites and zero personnel safety incidents,” Christensen says.

Seegrid was founded in 2003, and today its customer base spans the nation. Suffice it to say, the company has moved past the research and

development phase (although it still conducts R&D) and is well into the commercialization phase.

Part of the company’s success, Christensen says, lies in its ability to meet a key market need, more precisely the ability to handle and move materials more safely and effectively. As other robotics and autonomous systems companies and innovators look toward commercialization, meeting the needs of the market and making sure new technologies solve a well-defined, real-world problem are critical requirements. “It’s fundamental to bringing technology to the market: focus on the problem that you are solving in the market and make

sure that it is of value to solve,” Christensen says.

As Pittsburgh’s autonomous systems companies continue to refine and introduce solutions and services that solve real-world problems across industries, Pittsburgh and robotics will become ever more synonymous, benefitting not just the region but the world beyond. As the RIDC’s Don Smith says, Pittsburgh is both ready and well equipped to capitalize on this unprecedented opportunity. “We’re on the upswing of what is going to be, I believe, an enormous industry space. And we’re incredibly well situated to compete in that space,” he says.

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There's a New Home in Town

“Everything you need. Nothing you don’t”—the intriguing tagline of Module housing—immediately grabs the attention of folks interested in a new type of housing product. Based in Pittsburgh, Module offers energy-efficient homes, built with respect to the re-use of land and lot. Their design successfully balances costs, quality and a contemporary aesthetic. Module homes are not traditional homes, nor are they meant to be. The type of housing was created for homeowners who care about a sustainably built home—one that is thoughtfully designed and tailored to city living.

Module homes are built in a factory using modular construction, which means the houses are more precisely constructed. Currently, the factory partners are located in Northwestern and Central PA. Building homes to specifications—in advance—translates into higher quality control, no weather delays, and less waste.

In the pre-construction phase, Module produces final drawings, secures building permits, and locks in prices for the factory-built components. During construction, Module builds the homes in the factory, delivers and installs them with a crane. Module partners with local Pittsburgh-based general contractors to complete the foundation, sitework and interior finishes. In the post-construction phase, Module monitors utility performance of the home and occupant comfort, secures any certifications, and coordinates any warranty-related items.

The concept is fresh. Module currently offers ten models, which

are outlined on their web site. These particular layouts tend to entice new buyers searching for affordable smart homes. All-electric, sustainable housing is the way of the future since the design relies on low carbon emissions. Single-family homes range from 1 bedroom/1 bathroom to those with 1,800 sq. feet with 4 bedrooms/3.5 bathrooms—and several options and combinations in between.

Redesigning Home Ownership for the 21st Century

Module homes are exciting for several reasons. First, Module can build a beautiful house on a challenging site. Secondly, they can deliver a finished product at a faster rate than a traditional build, saving up to 130 days on average of construction time. (For those who don’t do math quickly, that’s over 4 months). Third, and probably most convincing as a reason to buy, is that Module homes are zero energy ready homes, all electric and rely on absolutely no fossil fuels. All the homes are designed to the “zero-energy ready home standard” by the Department of Energy.

Module touts the theory that a well-designed space that is right-sized is better than a big space that is not well designed. They also emphasize quality over quantity of space.

The homes are all electric. There is extra insulation in the walls, and high-quality windows and doors are used. All the homes rely on a low energy HVAC system.

Energy efficiency is a very attractive aspect, as the utility bills will be very affordable. In

one particular development in a Pittsburgh city neighborhood, the average electric bills are cited as \$119 per month, with water bills at an average of \$56 per month. There are zero gas lines installed, which means gas bills are non-existent. Solar panels can be added to further reduce monthly energy consumption. The cost-savings were part of the original design since the company’s mission is to support people’s health and wellbeing in a well-designed, energy-efficient, highly functional home that will last 100 years.

One Man’s Vision

Brian Gaudio is the CEO who founded the company in 2016 after he moved back to Pittsburgh from the Dominican Republic. He earned his degree in Architecture from North Carolina State University, and furthered his education as a Fulbright Scholar, conducting community and urban planning research. Brian interned at Walt Disney Imagineering and continued working in the industry with a disaster rebuilding firm in both Mississippi and then in the Dominican Republic, which taught him sustainable architecture practices.

Brian is motivated by one simple principle: to provide good design to more people. He can give the most sincere endorsement, since he himself lives in a Module home. He has been living in a 1,100 square foot model (that serves as the model home) since the fall of 2020.

Says Brian, “Well, it’s definitely the nicest house I’ve ever lived in. Despite being on a busy street, it’s pretty quiet. The same things that we use to make our homes



energy-efficient double as sound insulation.” He lives next door to other Module houses and loves the fact that he lives next to neighbors who appreciate Module’s function and design.

A Unique Perspective

Lu Zhu has the unique distinction of working for both Module as the Director of Real Estate Development and Howard Hanna as an agent. His background is in urban planning and design, receiving an M.A. in Urban Design from Carnegie Mellon University. Lu believes that a Module home is an excellent choice for many types of buyers. He’s in a rare position to understand all angles of the production/construction and buying/selling processes. Says Lu, “There is a huge demand for quality new construction housing products. I would say Module’s product is fulfilling a niche trend for urbanists for a very good reason. The quality of construction is excellent and the lifestyle it represents is fresh.”

At Module, Lu identifies new

properties, coordinates the closings and develops real estate strategies. At Howard Hanna, he helps streamline the new build buying process for clients and believes that Module and Howard Hanna are collectively providing an excellent experience. Lu knows that there is an overwhelming amount of communication between the builder and the client, and he is there to make sure nothing gets lost in translation.

Lu explains who Module housing is for: “We target a 21st century, new generation homeowner, who is looking to leave a minimal carbon footprint. These are people who are looking for cleanliness of design, who want to be able to bike or walk places, and people who don’t want to spend time maintaining a big yard.” Lu says that his clients range from single young professionals and downsizers to smaller-sized families.

Module homes fit the current market environment well. Some common denominators in the type of buyer Lu sees are people looking for efficiency, who do not mind a

smaller lot size, and who prioritize easy access to amenities.

Walking Buyers Through the Process

Many buyers are interested but somewhat apprehensive only because the process is new and non-traditional. Brian breaks down the steps for a client and makes the process easy to understand. He explains, “We build homes on spec. We buy land and then we select one of our standard models to build on the property. We then get our building permits, and zoning approvals in order and secure final pricing from our factory partner and our local contractor. Once we have those in place, we start construction. Once we reach significant completion, we then list the homes on the MLS and through our website. Homeowners can come in and purchase just like any other home on the market.”

From a Seller’s Perspective

Tom Yargo, Manager of the Howard Hanna Shadyside Office, believes that a Module home

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is not restrictive at all when it relates to buyers. “They work great for first-time buyers or retirees. Multi-family condominiums are also available.” While Tom sees interest in buyers from all ages, the number one quality he recognizes is an eco-conscious buyer. He also notes, “High-end amenities can be incorporated, and the solar panels are definitely a draw.”

Tom frequently deals with the many misconceptions people have with this type of construction. Understanding this potential confusion, he feels it is his job to not only educate potential buyers, but also educate the real estate agent community at large. Tom points out that Module homes are engineered homes: “A Module home is not a mobile home, and it is not necessarily less expensive than traditional-built homes. You will pay for quality, and you will get a great product in the end.”

Module homes are ideal for clients

who want a new home on a 25 or 30 foot wide lot and who don't want to renovate. They are not designed for clients who desire a custom home, but that doesn't mean that the quality of materials used is compromised. The cost of a new modular home ranges between \$400K-\$700K.

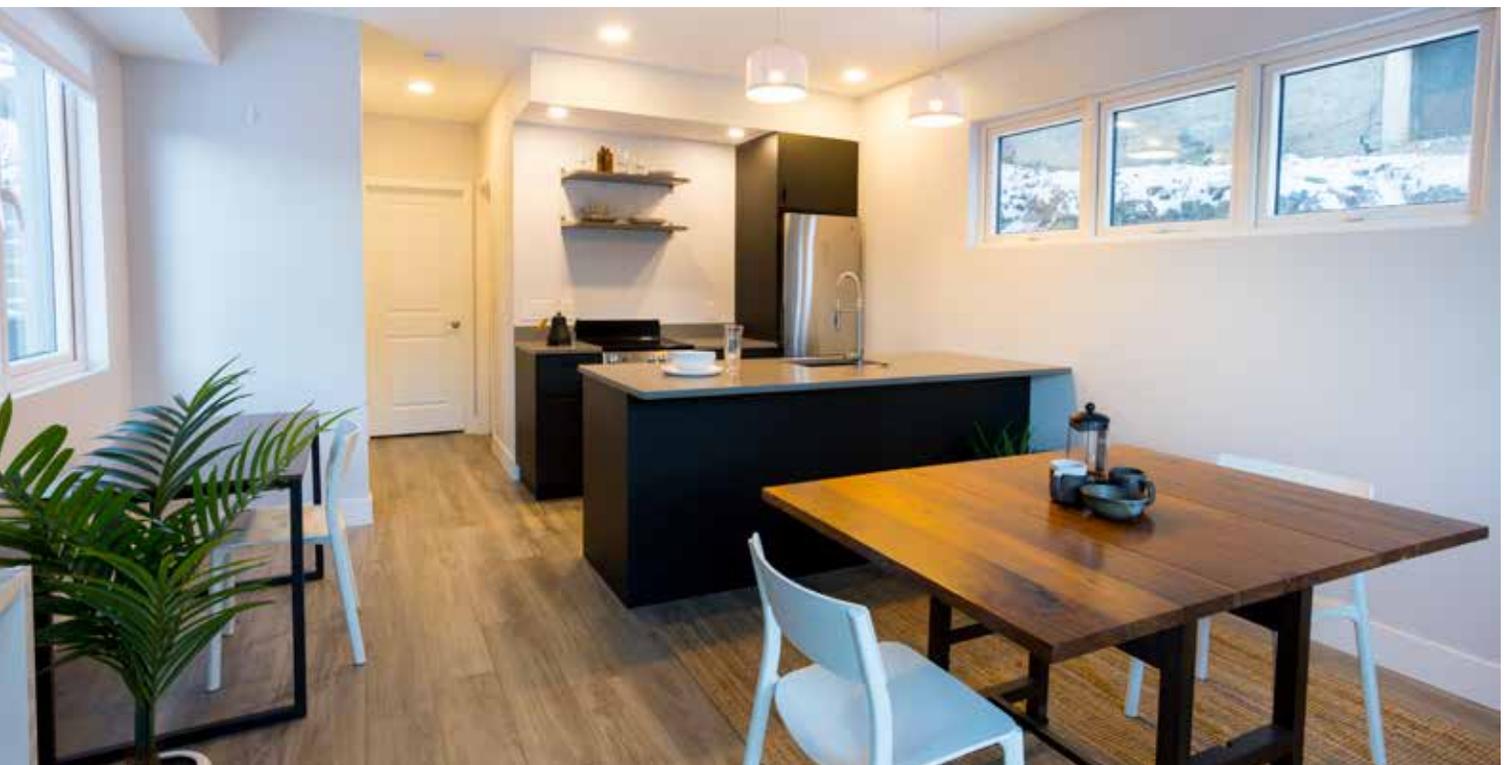
Homeowner Testimonials

Homeowners rave about the features of this type of housing. Tausha, who bought a Module home in the East Liberty neighborhood of Pittsburgh, loves the feature of the home's fresh air intake most. “There's always fresh air in the house. You don't have to open the doors and windows. When I first toured the home, I immediately noticed the fresh air. I then saw how the house was made and the love and care that was put into it. It's a beautiful house. I love it and I am so happy to be here. Probably the best part of my day is coming home.”

Sid, another Module homeowner, says his favorite aspect of his Module home is the natural light. “There's tons of light. There are no dark, cavernous rooms. All the rooms have a great vibe. And it's not too big, and it's not too small. It's just right for me. Like a Goldilocks home.”

Market Ready

Module sells 2 and 3 story homes, but also duplexes (small, multi-family). They also are in a planning phase with a townhome development. For Pittsburgh buyers looking to live in the city, the North Side is becoming increasingly attractive. Soon, two properties on Boyle Street will be made available. Both properties have 3 bedrooms, and 2.5 bathrooms, with 1,680 sq. feet floor plans. Rear parking is offered. These houses provide a valuable urban escape without sacrificing the proximity of urban amenities. The home includes a



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warm and well-crafted interior design with options to upgrade. An open floor plan creates a light-filled space where homeowners can enjoy cooking while chatting with family or friends. Outdoor amenities include a rear deck for summer entertaining and the right amount of yard space for pets. The finished basement is purposely flexible where homeowners can set up a home gym or private office. The home was built with low maintenance materials and a low carbon footprint lifestyle in mind.

Big Picture Thinking

Module was one of three winners R.K. Mellon Foundation's "Social Impact Pitch Competition," held in 2022. They received a \$250,000 grant being given to for-profit companies who operate with a public purpose. Grantmakers were impressed with Module, stating, "There is a need for more modular construction capacity in this region and the team here has successfully brought that here."

In addition to developing a sustainable, better-designed housing product, Module was also lauded for enhancing the quality of life for the residents living in them, the workers building them, and for the neighborhoods surrounding them.

With the R.K. Mellon funding, Module is launching the Last Mile Lab, their workforce training program which promotes innovation in the homebuilding industry. They will open a larger production facility (location to be determined) and scale up their production, with the logic of retaining a physical facility in the region that also provides good-paying jobs.

Their workforce initiatives highlight their two-pronged goal of promoting innovation while creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive way to build new housing. In partnership with the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh, Module teaches skills specific to offsite construction. They are

increasing access to construction jobs and working to alleviate the labor shortage with a focus on jobs for women and minorities.

What's on the Module Horizon?

With a supply chain in place, Module is thinking of expanding in the New Jersey and Philadelphia regions, and also in the D.C. and Maryland markets. At some point, they would like to build a larger production facility in the Southwestern PA region.

Brian and his team are constantly working towards providing solutions to the complex problem of America's housing shortage. Brian is passionate about this challenge: "You got to take this on because the problem is so huge. We're short 4 to 5 million homes in the United States. If we can't build more new housing, then the problem of (current) prices will continue. We're trying to alleviate that shortage." **NH**



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Scarmazzi Homes is Pittsburgh's premier patio home builder. Our beautiful communities feature single-level, luxury patio homes coupled with exterior lawn services and a variety of recreational amenities. For more than two decades, Scarmazzi Homes has been building lifestyle-rich homes and vibrant neighborhoods throughout the Pittsburgh region. By providing superior quality homes, unsurpassed customer service and a low-maintenance lifestyle, Scarmazzi Homes has grown to be one of Pittsburgh's top homebuilders. All Scarmazzi Homes neighborhoods are designed to deliver healthy, happier living and a true sense of community. If you're looking to simplify your life and have more time to do the things you want to do, not have to do, then contact us about one of our patio home communities today!



Pitell Homes

3413 Babcock Blvd.,
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
T: 412-364-9411
www.PitellHomes.com
Lisa Barnett
info@pitellhomes.com

For more than three decades, Pitell Homes has truly partnered with homebuyers to make their dreams of building a new home an affordable reality! Through constant refinement of our floor plans, process, building materials, and available options, our buyers now take advantage of the deep relationships we have cultivated with our trusted vendors and suppliers, forged over many years of working together. At Pitell Homes, we connect with you before, during, and after the build process. We are a hands-on private company, offering solutions through our experience, and always maintaining superior craftsmanship. Our homes are built to last. We invite you to explore why so many people have trusted Pitell Homes to build their dream. Welcome Home!



Ryan Homes

One Penn Center West, Suite 220
Pittsburgh, PA 15276
T: 412-275-4551
www.RyanHomes.com
Kristen Gray
PittsburghTeam@nvrinc.com

Since 1948, we've grown from a small, family-run business to become one of the top five homebuilders in the country. While there are many reasons for our success, they all revolve around three key factors: our commitment to customers, our consistent quality, and our personalized approach. At Ryan Homes, building a better home means continuously raising the bar. That's why 98% of our buyers say they would recommend us to family and friends. With over 60 years of experience, trust us to make your dreams come true. Building new home communities in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Washington & Westmoreland Counties.



R. A. Snoznik Construction, Inc.

4455 Old William Penn Highway
Murrysville, PA 15668
T: 724-433-7736
www.rasnoznikcustomhomes.com
Kelly Snoznik, Sales Manager/New Home Concierge
info@rasnoznik.net

"Open Concept Floor Plans With Fresh, Innovative Designs"

Building a custom home calls for many decisions. With personable service, Ray Snoznik works closely with each of his clients, providing extensive guidance throughout construction. Ray believes in client satisfaction and quality craftsmanship, ensuring that each step throughout the building process exceeds the client's expectations. Efficient systems are in place to make selections easy for the client and to expedite construction time. Accolades include 11 BAMP Housing Excellence Awards, Pittsburgh Business Times Largest Pittsburgh-Area Home Builders for 14 straight years, and features in Housetrends, Greater Pittsburgh New Home and Whirl magazines.



Spagnolo Custom Homes, Inc.

109 Gateway Avenue, Suite 202
 Wexford, Pa 15090
 T: 724-935-7010
 Angelo Spagnolo
 Spagnolochi@zoominternet.net

The Spagnolo Family has proudly been in the quality home building/ land developing business since 1955. Originally started by Carl J. Spagnolo and now headed by sons Angelo and Frank, we continue to strive to make our clients experience in homebuilding a very memorable one. 66 YEARS and still going strong! You can find our fine communities in Allegheny, Butler & Westmoreland Counties.



Weaver Homes

PO Box 449,
 Mars, PA 16046
 T: 724-625-7800
 www.weaverhomes.com
 Kelly Dunn
 kdunn@WeaverHomes.com

With more than 35 years of design and building experience, Weaver Homes is the premier home builder and developer of lifestyle communities in the Northern Pittsburgh region. Our goal as a builder is to help make your dream home a reality through allowing you to tailor and expand upon our floor plans to suit your unique needs and desires. By working with only the best professional contractors, we offer the quality, integrity, service, attention to details, craftsmanship, and value you deserve in your forever home. Family-owned and operated, we take a very hands-on approach to our construction process. Building a truly personalized home is one of the most emotional experiences you will ever have, and we take that to heart. We think of our homeowners as family; we believe it's impossible to build someone their dream home without truly getting to know who they are as individuals, as a family member.



Phillip Wentzel Custom Homes

109 Zeta Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15238
 T: 412-406-8469
 phillipwentzel.com
 Dante Fusaro
 dante.fusaro@pwcampbell.com

Builders all sounding the same? If they all sound the same, maybe they build the same too. You've worked too hard to settle for status quo. If you are looking for an experience unsurpassed by the others, a truly one-of-a-kind home that matches your one-of-a-kind family and lifestyle, then choose Phillip Wentzel. Our quality craftsmanship, strict attention to detail, and strong commitment to deadlines are shadowed only by our dedicated, experienced team of professionals. You've worked hard to be the best, now it's time to have the best. Phillip Wentzel.



Suncrest Homes, Inc.

3819 Old William Penn Highway, Suite 500
 Murrysville PA 15668
 724-327-1844
 www.suncresthomespa.com
 Founded in 1987
 Builder, Remodeler, Developer
 Housing Excellence Award Winner
 Member of Bamp, PBA, NAHB

Suncrest Homes is a boutique home builder, proudly building Custom and Semi-Custom Homes for 35 years. Suncrest has always been on the leading edge of new and innovative building concepts and designs. Whether open floor plans, carriage homes, Craftsman style homes or traditional living, you can be assured your dreams will be fulfilled by our team of experienced trend setting professionals. Housing Excellence Award winner and members of NAHB, PBA and BAMP. Suncrest Homes builds communities in Westmoreland County and Eastern Allegheny County.

RESIDENTIAL NEW CONSTRUCTION

Custom single-family homes, carriage homes, townhomes, condominiums, new locations and new homesites.

S P O N S O R E D B Y



City of Pittsburgh - 52
Allegheny County - 52
Beaver County - 54
Butler County - 54
Washington County - 55
Westmoreland County - 55

CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Burrows Street Townhomes

Oakland
Townhomes
Priced from: \$599,000
School district: City of Pittsburgh
Agency: Coldwell Banker Realty
412-363-4000
burrowsth.com

Industrial Commons

Lawrenceville
Condominiums
Priced from: \$299,000
School district: City of Pittsburgh
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
724-737-4481
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Summerset at Frick Park

City of Pittsburgh/ Squirrel Hill
Traditional Neighborhood
Development
Single-family homes, townhomes,
condominiums, and paired homes.
Priced from: \$460,000
School district: City of Pittsburgh
Agency: KACIN Development
Associates
724-327-6694
kacin.com

ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Aiken Landings

Robinson Township
Luxury Patio Homes
Priced from: \$400,000
School District: Montour
Agency: Scarmazzi Homes
724-223-1844
scarmazzihomes.com

Allman Acres

Marshall Township
School District: North Allegheny
Agency: Eddy Homes
412-536-4040
EddyHomes.com

The Bliss

Franklin Park
Single-family homes
School district: North Allegheny
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
724-316-8556
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Bonnie Dell Acres

South Park
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: Mid \$600,000
School district: South Park
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
costahomebuilders.com

The Cascades

O'Hara Township
School district: Fox Chapel
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
412-963-6300
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Castors' Farm

Jefferson Hills
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: High \$600,000
School district: West Jefferson Hills
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
www.costahomebuilders.com

Chamberlin Ridge

Jefferson Hills
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: Mid \$600,000
School district: West Jefferson Hills
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
www.costahomebuilders.com

Chapel Harbor at the Water

Fox Chapel
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: Mid \$800,000
School district: Fox Chapel
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
costahomebuilders.com

Chapel Harbor Townhomes

Fox Chapel
Townhomes
Priced from: Low \$700,000
School district: Fox Chapel
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
costahomebuilders.com

Copper Creek

West Deer Township
Patio homes
Priced from: \$339,900
School district: Hampton
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
724-449-9900
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Deerfield Ridge

South Fayette Township
Custom Single Family Homes
\$500,000 and up
South Fayette
Paragon Homes
412 787 8807
www.VisitParagonHomes.com

Emerald Fields

Pine Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: mid \$800,000's
School district: Pine Richland
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
724-772-8822
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Estates of Lion Ridge

South Fayette
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$750,000
School district: South Fayette
Agency: Coldwell Banker Realty
724-942-1200

Fair Acres

Upper St. Clair
Custom single-family homes
Prices from: Lots \$750,000
School District: Upper St. Clair
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
412-833-7700
thepreferredd Realty.com

Falconhurst Forest

Fox Chapel
Single-family homes
School district: Fox Chapel Area
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
412-963-6300
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Fayette Farms

North Fayette
Single-family homes
Priced from: Upper \$300's
School district: West Allegheny
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
ryanhomes.com

Fields of Nicholson

Franklin Park Borough
Custom carriage-homes and villas
Priced from: \$550's and up
School District: North Allegheny
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
412-367-8000
thepreferredrealty.com

Field Brook Farms

Richland Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: mid \$700's
School district: Pine-Richland
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-772-8822
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Freeport Greene

Marshall Township
Townhomes
Priced from: High \$400's
School district: North Allegheny
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
724-553-1008
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Hastings

South Fayette Township
Single-family, first-floor carriage &
townhomes
Priced from: \$300's
School district: South Fayette
Agency: Charter Homes &
Neighborhoods
LifeAtHastings.com

Hidden Grove

O'Hara Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: Low \$500,000's
School district: Fox Chapel
Agency: Pitell Homes
412-364-9411
PitellHomes.com

Imperial Ridge

Imperial
Single-family homes
Priced from: Low 300's
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Inglefield Estates

Pleasant Hills
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: Mid \$700,000
School district: West Jefferson Hills
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
costahomebuilders.com

LaFayette Meadow

South Fayette Township
Priced from: Mid \$400s
School district: South Fayette
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
ryanhomes.com

Lake MacLeod

Pine Township, Gibsonia
Custom Homes-Only 2 Developer
Lots Left
Price from \$1,000,000
School District: Pine-Richland
Agency: Coldwell Banker Realty
412-487-0500

Laurel Grove

Pine Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: High \$700's
School district: Pine-Richland
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
724-553-1008
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Laurel Grove

Pine Township
Ranch-style homes
Priced from: Upper \$500's
School district: Pine-Richland
Agency: Heartland Homes
412-275-4465
HeartlandLuxuryHomes.com

Laurel Grove

Pine Township
Priced from: Mid \$300's
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Mallard Pond

Marshall Township
Single family homes
Priced from: mid \$900,000's
School district: North Allegheny
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
412-260-5854
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Maplecrest

Monroeville
Ranch style homes
Priced from: low \$300's
School district: Gateway
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

The Meadows at Hampton

Hampton Township
Custom single-family and ranches
Priced from: \$575,000
School district: Hampton
Agency: RE/MAX Select Realty
724-933-6300 x657
madiahomes.com

Miramar Landings

O'Hara Township
Luxury townhomes
School district: Fox Chapel
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
412-427-0654
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Parkwood Pointe

Crescent Township
Priced from: \$300,000+
School District: Moon Township
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
724-776-3686
thepreferredrealty.com

Private Acreage

South Fayette
Custom single family homes
\$450,000 and up
South Fayette
Paragon Homes
412 787 8807
www.VisitParagonHomes.com

The Ridge at Manor

Pine Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: mid \$900,000
School district: Pine-Richland
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-772-8822
newhomes.howardhanna.com

The Rivers Edge at Oakmont

Oakmont
Single-family, duplexes,
condominiums and apartments
Starting at: High \$900,000's
School district: Riverview
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
412-427-0654
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Rolling Hills

Moon Township Townhomes
Priced from: \$300s
School district: Moon Area
Agency: Dan Ryan Builders
412-218-2384
danryanbuilders.com

Settlers Pointe

Collier Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$600,000
School district: Chartiers Valley
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-941-8800
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Sewickley Crossing Townhomes

Ohio Township
Priced from: Mid \$300s
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Shadwell Estate

Jefferson Hills
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: Mid \$700,000
School district: West Jefferson Hills
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
costahomebuilders.com

Siena at St. Clair

Upper St. Clair
Townhomes
Priced from: \$729,900
School district: Upper St. Clair
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-833-3600
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Summit Station

South Park
Single family and townhomes
Priced from: Upper \$200s
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Sunrise Junction

Collier Township
Priced from: Low \$400's
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Trinity Place

Pine Township
Single-family homes
School district: Pine Richland
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
412-855-2161
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Venango Trails

Marshall Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: mid \$850,000
School district: North Allegheny
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-772-8822
newhomes.howardhanna.com

The Villages at Marketplace

Moon Township
Townhomes
Priced from: Mid \$300's
School district: Moon Area
Agency: Heartland Homes
412-275-4465
HeartlandLuxuryHomes.com

Villas at South Park

South Park
Single Family Homes
Priced from: Upper \$300s
School district: South Park
Agency: Dan Ryan Builders
412-218-2384
danryanbuilders.com

Villas of South Park

South Park Township
Luxury Patio Homes
Priced from: \$300,000
School district: South Park
Agency: Scarmazzi Homes
724-223-1844
Scarmazzihomes.com

Walnut Court

McCandless Township
Townhomes
Priced from: Mid \$400,000's
School district: North Allegheny
Agency: Howard Hanna
Real Estate Services
724-772-8822
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Wexford Station

Pine Township
Single-family homes
School District: Pine Richland
Agency: Eddy Homes
412-536-4040
EddyHomes.com

Woodwind of Hampton

Hampton Township
Single Family Homes
Priced from \$750,000 including lot
School District: Hampton
Agency: Coldwell Banker Realty
412-487-0500

BEAVER COUNTY

Chippewa Trails

Chippewa
Ranch style homes and Townhomes
Priced from: Mid \$200's
School district: Blackhawk
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Deerfield Preserve

Beaver
Single Family Homes
Priced from: Upper \$300s
School district: Beaver Area
Agency: Dan Ryan Builders
412-218-2384
danryanbuilders.com

Evergreen Heights

Brighton Township
Patio Homes
Priced from: high \$399,900
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
412-551-1161
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Goldenrod Meadows

North Sewickley Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$400,000
School district: Riverside
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
7224-775-5700
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Pinehurst Village

Ohioville
First floor living villas
Priced from: \$345,000
School district: Beaver
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-775-5700
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Seven Oaks

Ohiosville
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$500,000
School district: Western Beaver
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-775-5700
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Villas of Economy

Baden
Priced from: \$250,000
School District: Ambridge
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
724-776-3686
thepreferreddrealty.com

BUTLER COUNTY

Arden Wood

Harmony
Ranch style and single family homes
Priced from: Upper \$200's
School district: Seneca Valley
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Blackthorne Estates

Penn Township
Priced from: Upper \$400's
School district: Penn Trafford
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Townhomes at Blackthorne Estates

Penn Township
Priced from: Upper \$200's
School district: Penn Trafford
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Brookhaven

Mars
Single-family homes
Priced from: Upper \$500's
School district: Mars
Agency: Heartland Homes
412-275-4465
HeartlandLuxuryHomes.com

Chatham Court

Adams Township
Luxury paired villas
Priced from: Mid \$700's
School District: Mars Area
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
724-776-3686
thepreferreddrealty.com

Cypress Fields

Mars Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: Upper \$600's
School District: Mars
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
888-424-9424
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Eagle Ridge

Cranberry Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: mid \$900,000's
School district: Seneca Valley
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-772-8822
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Enclave at Highpointe

Seven Fields
Town homes
Priced from: Low \$500's
School district: Seneca Valley
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
724-553-1008
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Forest Edge

Cranberry Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: Mid \$800's
School District: Seneca Valley
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
724-553-1008
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Foxwood Trail

Zelienople
Single Family Homes
Priced from: Mid \$400's
School district: Seneca Valley
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Gabriel's Crest

Adams Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: Mid \$600's
School district: Mars
Agency: Heartland Homes
412-275-4465
HeartlandLuxuryHomes.com

Heritage Crossings

Sarver
Patio homes
Priced from: \$390's
School district: Freedom Area
Agency: Weaver Homes
412-609-5261
weaverhomes..com

Hickory Glen

Adams Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$650's
School district: Mars
Agency: Weaver Homes
412-609-5261
weaverhomes.com/hickory-glen

Hidden Springs

Connoquenessing Borough
Priced from \$400,000
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
724-776-9705
thepreferreddrealty.com

John Quincy Adams

Adams Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$550,000
School District: Mars Area
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
412-367-8000
thepreferreddrealty.com

Laurel Pointe

Cranberry Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: High \$700's
Low Maintenance Homes
Priced from: Low \$700's
School district: Seneca Valley
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
724-553-1008
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Meadow Point

Mars Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: Mid \$800's
School district: Mars Area
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
724-553-1008
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Meeder

Cranberry Township
Single-family homes, first-floor
carriage and townhomes
Priced from: \$400,000
School district: Seneca Valley
Agency: Charter Homes &
Neighborhoods
800-325-3030
lifeatmeeder.com

Meredith Glenn Estates

Adams Township
Priced from: \$800,000
School District: Mars Area
Kim Maier
Cranberry Regional
724-776-3686

Park Place

Cranberry Township
Townhomes
Priced from: Mid \$300's
School district: Seneca Valley
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Plantation at Saxonburg

Saxonburg
Quad-patio homes
Priced from: Low \$300's
School district: South Butler
Agency: Pitell Homes
412-364-9411
PitellHomes.com

Shelton Place

Evans City
Quad Patio Homes
Priced from: Low \$300's
School district: Butler
Agency: Pitell Homes
412-364-9411
PitellHomes.com

Twin Oaks

Buffalo Township
Priced from: Mid \$300's
School district: Freeport
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
ryanhomes.com

The Village at Camp Trees

Adams Township/Pine Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$650's
School district: Mars and Pine Richland
Agency: Weaver Homes
412-609-5261
weaverhomes.com

The Villas at Forest Oaks

Butler
Patio homes
Priced from: \$360's
School district: Butler
Agency: Weaver Homes
412-609-5261
weaverhomes.com

Wakefield Estates

Cranberry Township
Custom single-family homes
Priced from: \$750,000
School District: Seneca Valley
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
724-776-3686
thepreferredd Realty.com

Whitetail Meadows Townhomes

Mars
Townhomes
Priced from: Mid \$300's
School district: Mars
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Woodland Trace

Adams Township
Custom single-family homes
Priced from: \$750,000
School District: Mars Area
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
724-776-3686
thepreferredd Realty.com

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Alto Piano

Cecil Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$800,000
School district: Canon-McMillan
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-417-1772
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Anthony Farms

Peters Township
Single-family homes
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-941-8800
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Arabian Meadows

Chartiers Township
Luxury Patio Homes
Unique 1 acre estate homesite
available now!
School district: Chartiers Houston
Agency: Scarmazzi Homes
724-223-1844
www.scarmazzihomes.com

Belmont Park

Chartiers Township
Luxury Patio Homes
Pricing coming soon!
School district: Chartiers Houston
Agency: Scarmazzi Homes
724-223-1844
Scarmazzihomes.com

Brookwood Brownstones

Peters Township
Townhomes
Priced from: Upper \$300's
School district: Peters Township
Agency: Infinity Custom Homes
724-553-1008
Buildinfinityhomes.com

Cherry Valley Lakeview Estates

McDonald
School District: Fort Cherry
Agency: Eddy Homes
412-536-4040
EddyHomes.com

Creekside Crossing

North Strabane Township
Single-Family Homes
Priced from: Upper \$300's
School District: Canon McMillan
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Fieldstone

Peters Township
Custom homes
Priced from: \$600,000-\$800,000
School district: Peters Township
Agency: Keller Williams Agency
thekarenmarshallgroup@gmail.com
724-941-9400 X126

Greenwood Village

Canonsburg
Townhomes
Priced from: Mid \$300's
School District: Canon McMillan
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Highland Village

Union Township
Luxury Patio Homes
Now selling from the \$300's
School district: Ringgold
Agency: Scarmazzi Homes
724-223-1844
Scarmazzihomes.com

Juniper Woods

Peters Township
School district: Peters Township
Agency: Karen Marshall – Keller
Williams Realty
724-941-9400 X126
thekarenmarshallgroup.com

Justabout Farms

Peters Township
School District: Peters Township
Agency: Eddy Homes
412-536-4040
EddyHomes.com

Laurel Landing

North Strabane
Ranch style homes
Priced from: Low \$500's
School district: Canon McMillan
Agency: Heartland Homes
412-275-4465
HeartlandLuxuryHomes.com

Majestic Pointe

Smith Township
Single Family Homes
Priced from \$290,000 – \$450,000
School District: Burgettstown
Agency: Coldwell Banker Realty
412-264-8300

McConnell Trails

Cecil Township
Single-family homes and Townhomes
Priced from: Low \$300's
School district: Cannon McMillan
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
ryanhomes.com

Meadow Ridge

Peters Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$655,900
School District: Peters Township
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices
412-833-7700
thepreferredd Realty.com

The Overlook at Peters

Peters Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$450,000
School district: Peters Township
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-941-8800
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Parkside Meadows

Collier Township
Priced from: \$500,000 and up
School district: Chartiers Valley
Agency: Paragon Homes
412-787-8807
www.VisitParagonHomes.com

Piatt Estates

Houston
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: \$700,000
School district: Chartiers-Houston
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
Costahomebuilders.com

Sherwood Pond

Peters Township
School District: Peters Township
Agency: Eddy Homes
412-536-4040
EddyHomes.com

Summerfield Woods

Chartiers Township
Priced from: Low \$300's
School district: Trinity
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
ryanhomes.com

Sycamore Reserve

North Franklin
Single-family detached
Priced from: \$550,000
School district: Trinity
Agency: MK Homes
724-206-9741
www.buildmkhomes.com

WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Abby Place

Penn Trafford
Single-family homes
Priced from: mid \$400,000
School district: Penn Trafford
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-327-5161
newhomes.howardhanna.com

The Acres

Murrysville
Single-family homes
Priced from: To come
School district: Franklin Regional
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
412-417-1772
howardhanna.com

Allegheny Woodlands

Allegheny Township
Custom single-family
and Detached patios
Priced from: \$400,000
School district: Kiski Area
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate
Services
724-941-8800
newhomes.howardhanna.com

Bella Molise

Murrysville
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: \$800,000
School district: Franklin Regional
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
costahomebuilders.com

Bella Molise

Murrysville
Single-family homes
School district: Franklin Regional
R.A. Snoznik Construction, Inc.
www.rasnoznikcustomhomes.com

Broadview Estates

Hempfield Township
Single Family Homes
Priced From: \$300s
School District: Hempfield Area
Agency: Dan Ryan Builders
412-218-2384
danryanbuilders.com

Cherry Wood Estates

Mt. Pleasant Township
Single-family homes and Villas
Priced from: Low \$300's
School district: Mount Pleasant Area
Agency: Coldwell Banker Realty
724-864-2121
liveatcherrywood.com

Clifton Vista

Murrysville
Single-family homes
School district: Franklin Regional
Agency: RE/MAX Heritage
724-396-0674
www.rasnoznikcustomhomes.com

Foxfield Knoll

Unity Township
Single-family homes
School district: Greater Latrobe
R.A. Snoznik Construction, Inc.
www.rasnoznikcustomhomes.com

Glenn Aire

Unity Township
Custom single-family homes
Priced from: \$375,000
School District: Greater Latrobe
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
724-838-3660
thepreferredd Realty.com

Grandview Estates

Hempfield Township
Villas
Pricing Coming Soon!
School district: Hempfield Area
Agency: Dan Ryan Builders
412-218-2384
danryanbuilders.com

Hillstone Village

Murrysville
Single family homes and Carriage homes
Priced from: \$469,900+
School district: Franklin Regional
Agency: KACIN
724-327-6694
www.KACIN.com

The Legends

North Huntingdon
Custom Single Family, Villas, Paired Villas
Priced from: mid \$400,000s
School District: Norwin
Agency: Scalise Real Estate Inc. 724-864-5500
scalisehomes.com

Northpointe

Hempfield Township
Single-family homes
Priced from: \$330,000
School District: Hempfield Area
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
724-838-3660
thepreferredd Realty.com

Palmer Place

Unity Township
Custom single-family
Priced from: \$700,000
School District: Greater Latrobe
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
724-838-3660
thepreferredd Realty.com

Sterling Oaks

Penn Township
Single-Family and carriage homes
School District: Penn Trafford
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
412-417-1772
newhomes.howardhanna.com

The Village on Kistler Ridge

Penn Township
Paired Villas and single-family homes
School district: Penn-Trafford
R. A. Snoznik Construction, Inc.
www.rasnoznikcustomhomes.com

Villages at Totteridge/ Banbury

Salem Township
Golf-course community with Patio homes, Single-family, and Custom homes
Priced from \$320,000
School District: Greensburg-Salem
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
724-838-3660
thepreferredd Realty.com

Tuscan Hills

North Huntingdon
Single-family homes
Priced from: Upper 300's
School district: Norwin
Agency: Ryan Homes
412-275-4465
Ryanhomes.com

Willow Estates

Irwin
Single-family luxury homes
Priced from: mid \$500,000
School district: Norwin
Agency: Willow Glenn Development
412-657-2840
reneebrain29@gmail.com

Villas of Willow Estates

North Huntingdon Twp.
Luxury custom patio homes
Priced from: \$380,000's
School district: Norwin
Agency: All Star Homes
412-877-2112
Allstarhomesinc.com



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Lindwood Crest

Hempfield Township
Over 55 Single-family homes
Start at: \$338,900
School District: Hempfield Area
Agency: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
724-838-3660
thepreferredd Realty.com

North Meadow

Patio Homes and single-family homes
Priced from: Mid \$300,000's
School District: Kiski Area
Agency: KACIN
724-327-6694
www.KACIN.com

Ravenwood

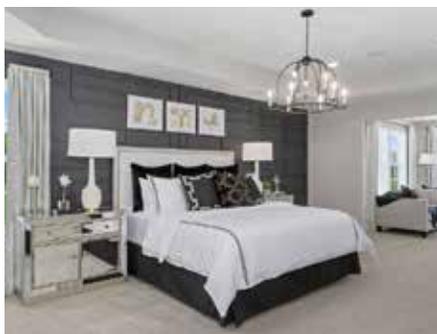
Greensburg
Single Family luxury homes
School District - Hempfield
Agency: Costa Homebuilders
412-384-8170
Costahomebuilders.com

Siena Ridge

Murrysville
Single-family homes
Priced from : \$750,000
School district: Franklin Regional
Agency: Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
724-327-5161
newhomes.howardhanna.com



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