After years of hard work, most Americans look forward to a secure, comfortable retirement. For many senior citizens of Milwaukee, WI the dream has been realized because of a retirement community called Friendship Village.

Couples and individuals who must be 62 years of age or over, have their own apartments at an affordable price and enjoy the companionship, care and security of a well-planned retirement community. The development is locally owned and controlled by a 16 member board that is interested in providing safe, economical and sound housing facilities for its residents. As evidence of the need for such a community, the developers point out that 30 people signed up for apartments even before models were available.

The project contractors decided to use steel framing throughout because of its non-combustible rating (required by state law) and most of all for its potential for fast erection through panelization at the job site.

The steel components were shipped to the site cut to length—minimizing field cutting, material waste and clean-up time.

Several weeks prior to starting foundation work, the contractor began prefabricating the steel components into 8' × 15' panel sections (800 in all), complete, with door and window framing, diagonal wind bracing and bridging and 3.4 lb self-furring metal lath right on the job site in a temporary shelter. And, to further speed erection, the framed sections received an exterior facing of cement plaster finished with a hand trowel. Once the foundation and first floor slabs were complete, finished panels were simply hoisted into place by crane for final welding.

A unique time saving technique was also used for floor framing. The floor slabs consisted of 3" fluted steel floor deck with a 3¼" concrete cover. The underneath side of the steel deck was flat steel plate sprayed with a textured paint, eliminating the need for additional ceiling wallboard. The housing units were ready for occupancy 60 to 90 days earlier than anticipated thereby reducing interest on the construction loan and generating early income.

For the occupants, Friendship Village is an ideal retirement home. Residents claim the costs of owning an apartment there are far less than living in a nursing home and the upkeep is certainly a lot easier than owning your own home especially when you are 62 years old, or older. Comfort, solid secure living quarters, medical facilities, pleasant surroundings and companionship all are included in one compact and efficient community.