

AIA Florida Northwest Annual Gingerbread House Contest

The Florida Northwest Chapter of AIA introduces students to the Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Industry through its Annual Gingerbread House Program. The program was developed by Chapter members in the early 2010s and started with one school in Santa Rosa County. It was designed for fifth grade students as an optional take home project where students can work alone or with a partner. The program has also been adapted for fourth and fifth grades at a specialty school with children with emotional and mental health challenges.

Students are responsible for determining the scope, schedule, and budget for their house. The Chapter provides students with a **lot** (board) to construct their homes and **Zoning Regulations** (rules) for the Gingerbread District. Students who do not comply with the Zoning Regulations receive a “**Zoning Violation**” and are not eligible to win the top award.

The Program begins with an **introductory assembly** in early November. Architects visit the schools and present the project and answer questions. Permission slips are sent home with students. Once signed **permission slips** are received, the school will issue the students a lot, typically before Thanksgiving Break. Most schools provide students at least two weeks to design and construct their houses.

Lots are returned to the school and Architects from AIA Florida Northwest volunteer to judge the entries one evening and identify award winners. This usually takes place in the cafeteria. **Judging** is closed to the AIA Members and School Staff. No Students or Parents are allowed to attend. Some schools hold their **awards** immediately after judging takes place, while other schools hold an assembly the next morning with the entire fifth grade class. For schools that hold awards the same night as judging, the school typically holds a STEAM Night with activities for students and families in other parts of the building.

The winners are presented Design Awards Certificates signed by the Chapter President with a giant candy cane. Prior to the pandemic, the Chapter engaged sponsors to provide prizes, such as gift cards, but the schools requested we not provide cash prizes.

For our specialty school, the project is done with the Art teacher as an in-class assignment over four class periods. AIA Florida Northwest provide a **kit of parts** to the art teacher for the program. Two architects visit the school and present a modified presentation to the students. The students learn about the color wheel and mix two containers of white icing with food coloring to create their custom colors. The Art Teacher and paraprofessionals work the students over the next two class periods to decorate their prefabricated gingerbread houses. The same two architects return for the final class session to watch the students complete their houses and hand out awards. This group of students is unique and everyone receives an award in this class.

The Gingerbread House Program is offered for free to the schools and provides STEAM learning. Sponsoring partners help offset the cost of supplying the boards, gingerbread house kits, and decorating supplies.

Lot

Lots are ¼” plywood, approximately 16”x24”. The millwork company orders sheets of plywood from their suppliers, cuts, and finishes the boards for us. We get 12 lots from each sheet of material. Once the lots are cut, we pick them up and place a label in the bottom right corner of the board with the “lot number”. The lot number is three digits, with the first number identifying the school site. Lots are dropped off at the school during the Introductory Assembly. New schools are generally provided with 40-60 boards. Schools that have held the program for several years tend to have more interest and require additional boards. The school assigns lots to students when permission slips are received and retains the lot list through judging. Empty lots can go home with students on the school bus but cannot be returned to school or home by school bus. Lots not used can be held by the school until the following year or returned to the Chapter. We typically order extra lots to accommodate additional needs. One school had over 90 lots issued in 2023. Some lots will be returned without houses because the students ran out of time or had scheduling conflicts, and some boards are never seen again. There is always a loss factor, which we try to minimize by “limiting” the number of lots in the Gingerbread District. While there is a “limit” that number is not fixed and we have always fulfilled requests for additional lots so each student that wants to participate is provided a lot.

Zoning Regulations

A sample of the Zoning Regulations, or rules, is provided. These have been developed and modified over the years and included Setbacks, Height Limits, and Work Restrictions. The setbacks and height restrictions allow gingerbread houses to be transported from home to school. We remind students they must consider which vehicle will transport the house to the school. Work restrictions indicate students may be helped by siblings or an adult but must be responsible for most of the work. It is readily apparent which houses are built by fifth graders and which houses are built by adults.

Zoning Violation

Zoning Violations are printed on cardstock and are placed near each house that violates the setbacks or height restrictions. A sample of the zoning violations is provided.

Introductory Assembly

The introductory assembly is less than an hour, including time for student questions. This is a PowerPoint presentation and is adjusted or adapted each year based on lessons learned.

Permission Slips

Permission slips are sent home after the Introductory Assembly and contain the Zoning Violations and List of dates. Some schools collect a “Permit Fee” to cover the cost of juice and cookies during the awards. This money is collected and retained by the school and the amount is at their discretion. Each school modifies the permission slips to suit their needs.

Judging

Judging takes place in the evening. There are usually 3-5 AIA Members judging 30-70 entries, and a judging coordinator that acts as the main point of contact for the school site. The judging coordinator is responsible for checking each lot for Zoning Violations and tallying the judges scores. They are provided with a folder with blank awards certificates, Zoning Violation Cards, Scoresheets, a ruler, pens for judges, and a sharpie. Scoresheets are provided with the awards categories and judges can select up to three lots per category. If there is no decisive winner, the judging coordinator will announce the award category and have the judges evaluate the top two or three lots with the most votes. All judging information is kept confidential amongst the judges because we work as a team. Most schools invite School Board Members and District Administrators to serve as judges.

Awards

We do not award multiple awards to the same lot. If a lot wins one award, we remove their name from other awards categories. Once each award category has a winning lot, the school provides the names of the Lot owners to the judging coordinator to write on the Awards Certificates. We use the same Awards Certificates as our Annual Design and Honor Awards recipients receive printed on cardstock and signed by the Chapter President. There are two blank awards certificates for each award since students can work in pairs. Large candy canes or peppermint sticks are given to each Award Recipient along with their Certificate. This is inexpensive but always appreciated by the students.

Kit of Parts

We provide a “kit of parts” to our specialty school to complete the Gingerbread House Program as an at school project. The class that we work with has 4-6 students. All items are brought to the school for the introductory assembly.

- Prefabricated Gingerbread Houses
- White icing containers, 2 per student
- Gel food coloring (for icing)
- Peppermints
- Gumdrops
- Sprinkles

- Dry Cereals in single serve packages (Fruit Loops, Trix, etc.)
- Mini Marshmallows
- Licorice
- Disposable Gloves
- Disinfecting Wipes
- Plastic Spoons
- Paper Bowls

Cereal, crackers, and cookies also work well to decorate. We suggest getting bulk candy that is not individually wrapped and avoiding chocolate that can melt and get messy. Some students have tactile sensitivity and wear gloves the whole time. Please remind the students the candy is for decorating and not eating because we don't want anyone to get sick!

This program has been very successful for AIA Florida Northwest. In 2023, we held the competition at five schools across three school districts. There are plans to expand the program to another school in a new school district in 2024. New schools are identified by AIA Members and their connections with teachers and administrators at the school sites. We can only grow the program as big as our membership can responsibly sustain. If you have any questions about bringing the Gingerbread House Competition to your Component, please contact AIA Florida Northwest (admin@aianwfl.com)



AIA Florida Northwest GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

	School A (# Boards)	School B (# Boards)	School C (# Boards)	School D (# Boards)	School E (# Boards)
AIA Sends Packet to Schools	Tuesday 11/7	Tuesday 11/7	Tuesday 11/7	Tuesday 11/7	Tuesday 11/7
On-Site Presentation	Tuesday 11/14	Thursday 11/16	Wednesday 11/15	Tuesday 11/14	Thursday 11/16
Boards dropped off at school	Friday 11/17	Friday 11/17	Friday 11/17	Tuesday 11/14	Thursday 11/16
Turn-in and Judging	Tuesday 12/12	Monday 12/11	Wednesday 12/14	Tuesday 12/12	Thursday 12/15
Awards	Wednesday 12/13	Monday 12/11	Wednesday 12/14	Wednesday 12/13	Friday 12/16
Judges	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

List Name and Email for each school's Point of Contact

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 301

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 302

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 303

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 304

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 305

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 306

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 307

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 308

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 309

AIA Florida Northwest
LOT 310



Florida Northwest

GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

[School] Gingerbread District

Lot #	Student A	Student B	Homeroom Teacher	Returned
301				
302				
303				
304				
305				
306				
307				
308				
309				
310				
311				
312				
313				
314				
315				
316				
317				
318				
319				
320				
321				
322				
323				
324				



Florida Northwest

GINGER BREAD HOUSE CONTEST

Lot #	Student A	Student B	Homeroom Teacher	Returned
325				
326				
327				
328				
329				
330				
331				
332				
333				
334				
335				
336				
337				
338				
339				
340				
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342				
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344				
345				
346				
347				
348				
349				
350				



Florida Northwest

GINGER BREAD HOUSE CONTEST

Lot #	Student A	Student B	Homeroom Teacher	Returned
351				
352				
353				
354				
355				
356				
357				
358				
359				
360				
361				
362				
363				
364				
365				
366				
367				
368				
369				
370				
371				
372				
373				
374				
375				
376				



Florida Northwest

GINGER BREAD HOUSE CONTEST

Lot #	Student A	Student B	Homeroom Teacher	Returned
377				
378				
379				
380				
381				
382				
383				
384				
385				
386				
387				
388				
389				
390				

Instructions: Teacher retains this list of names. This allows teachers to know which student(s) received each lot and helps verify which boards are returned with houses. Some teachers offer extra credit for participating. Names are provided by teacher to AIA for the Awards Certificates.

GINGER BREAD HOUSE CONTEST

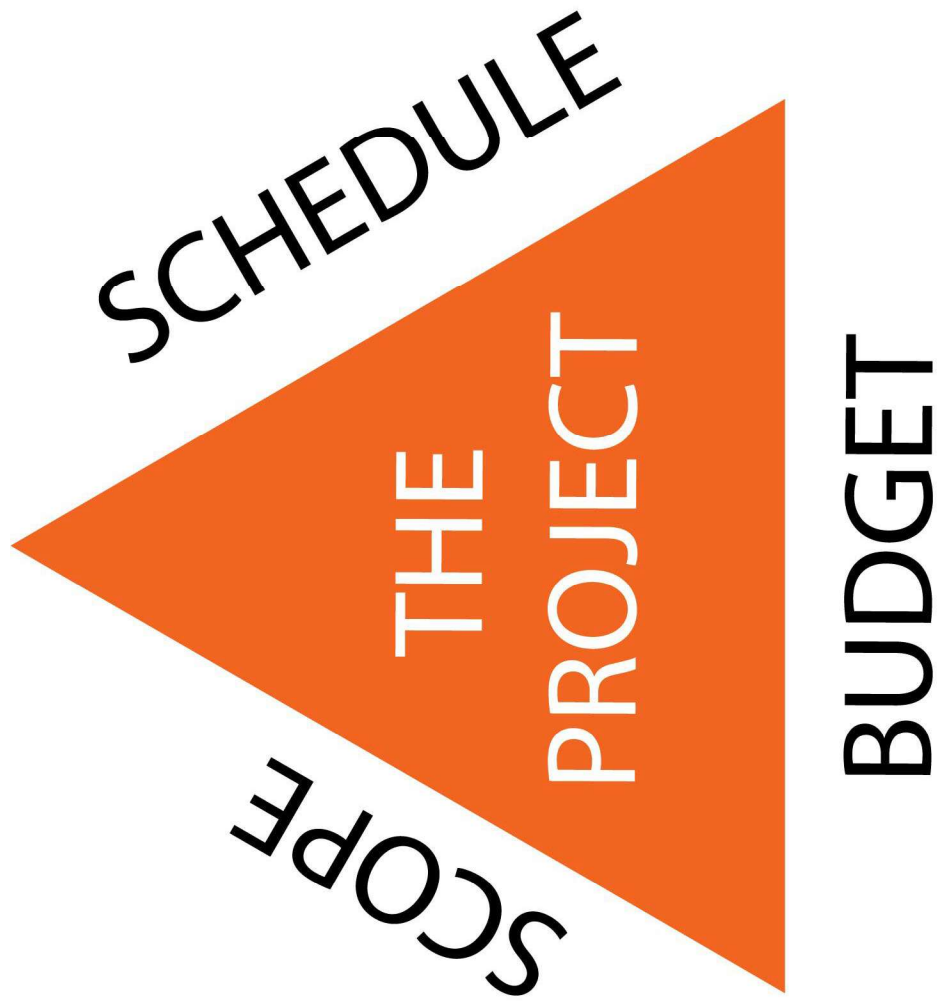
This is a sample of the 2023 Student Presentation and should be modified or adapted to meet your location.



What is an Architect?



An Architect solves a problem by creating space.



How do you become an Architect?

Professional Degree
+
Work for a licensed Architect
+

Take the Architect's Registration Exam (ARE)

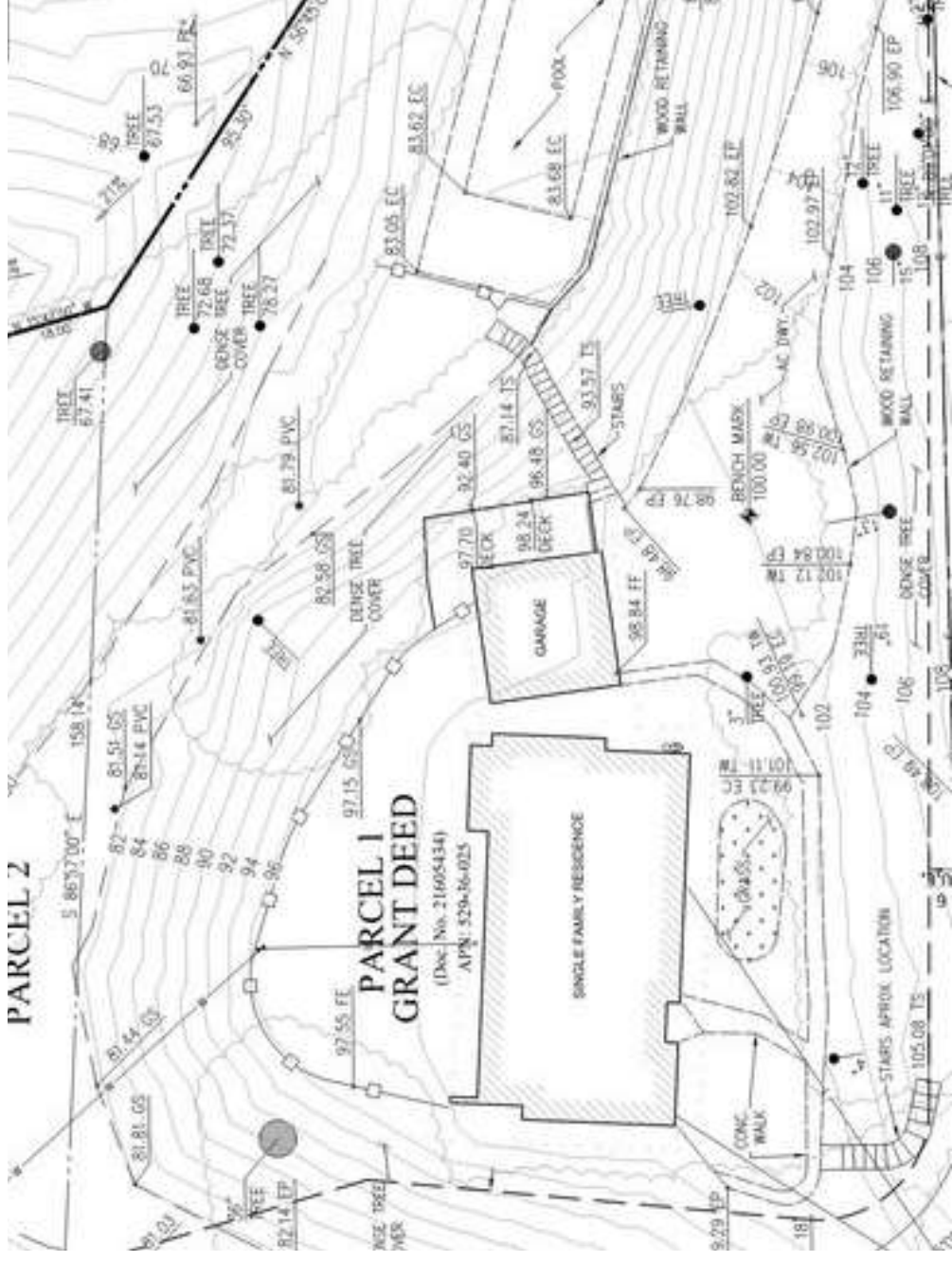
= Become a Registered Architect (RA)

What is it like to be an Architect?

You have a new project, where do you start?

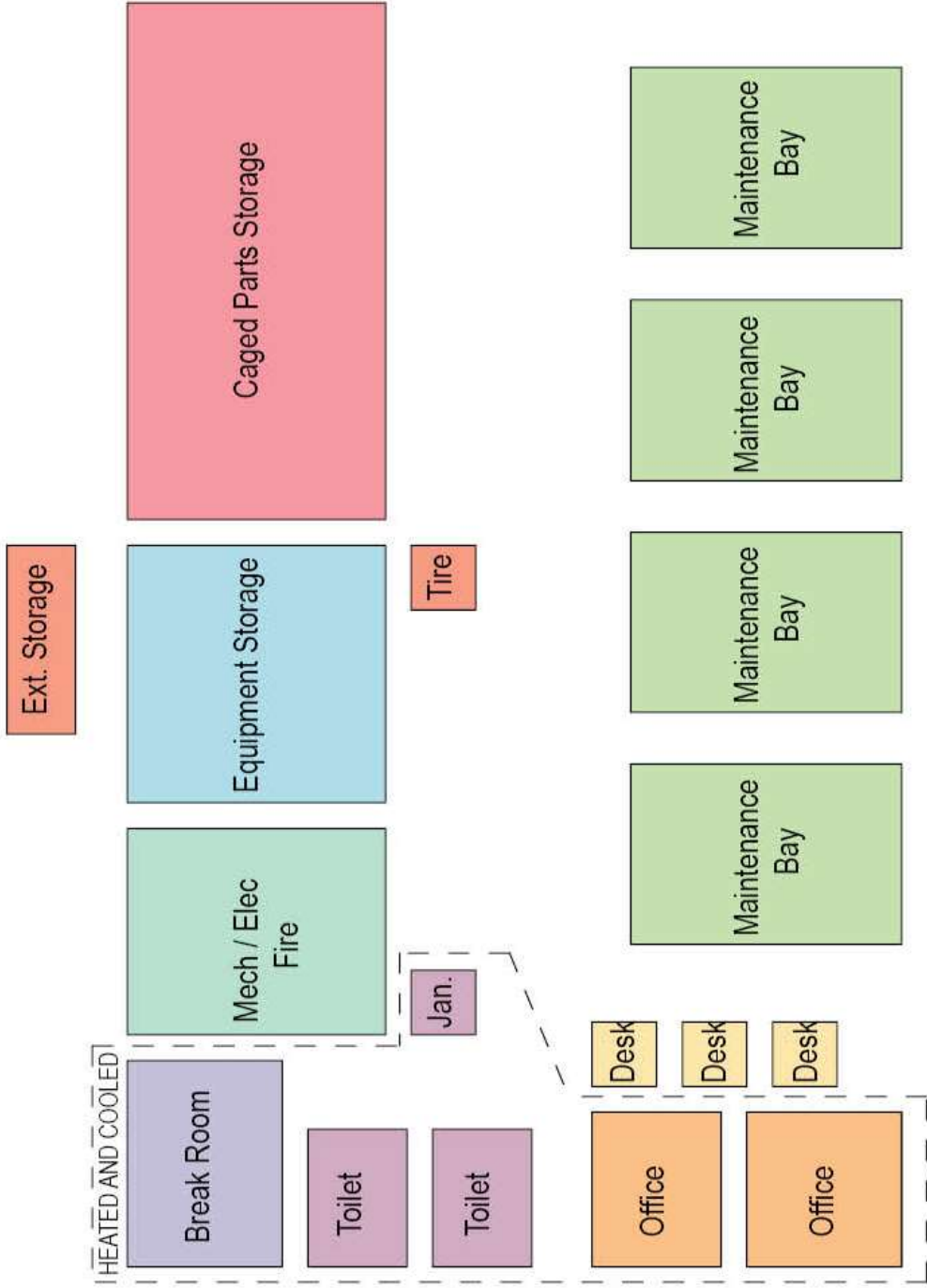
- Location (Where?)
- Program (What?)
- Team (Who?)
- Code Research (How?)

First, you must identify the where you project will be located. This is called your **site or lot**.

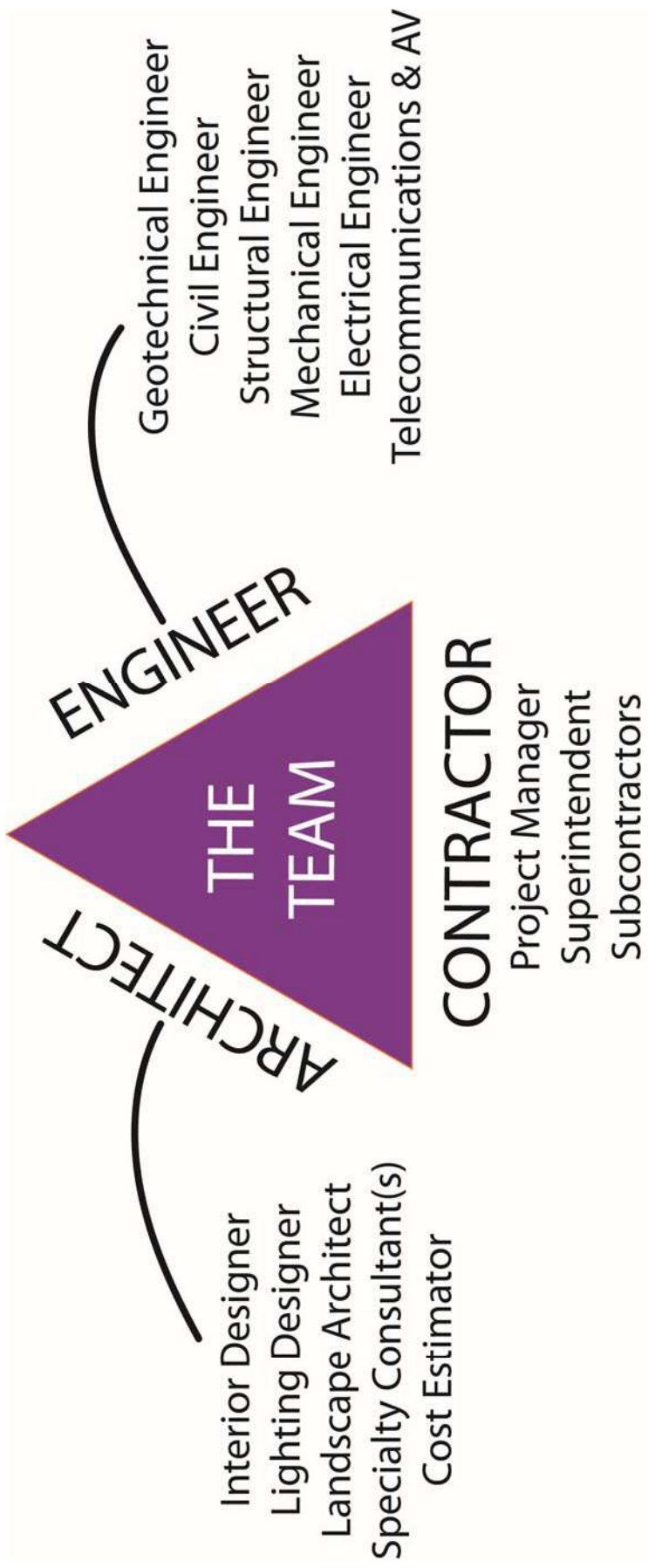


1. Site Boundary
2. Buildings
3. Topography
4. Paving
5. Utilities

Second, you define the program...



Third, you assemble your team.



Fourth, you research requirements...

In order to obtain a building permit, the architect must comply with the laws of where they plan to build:

Land Development Code
or Zoning

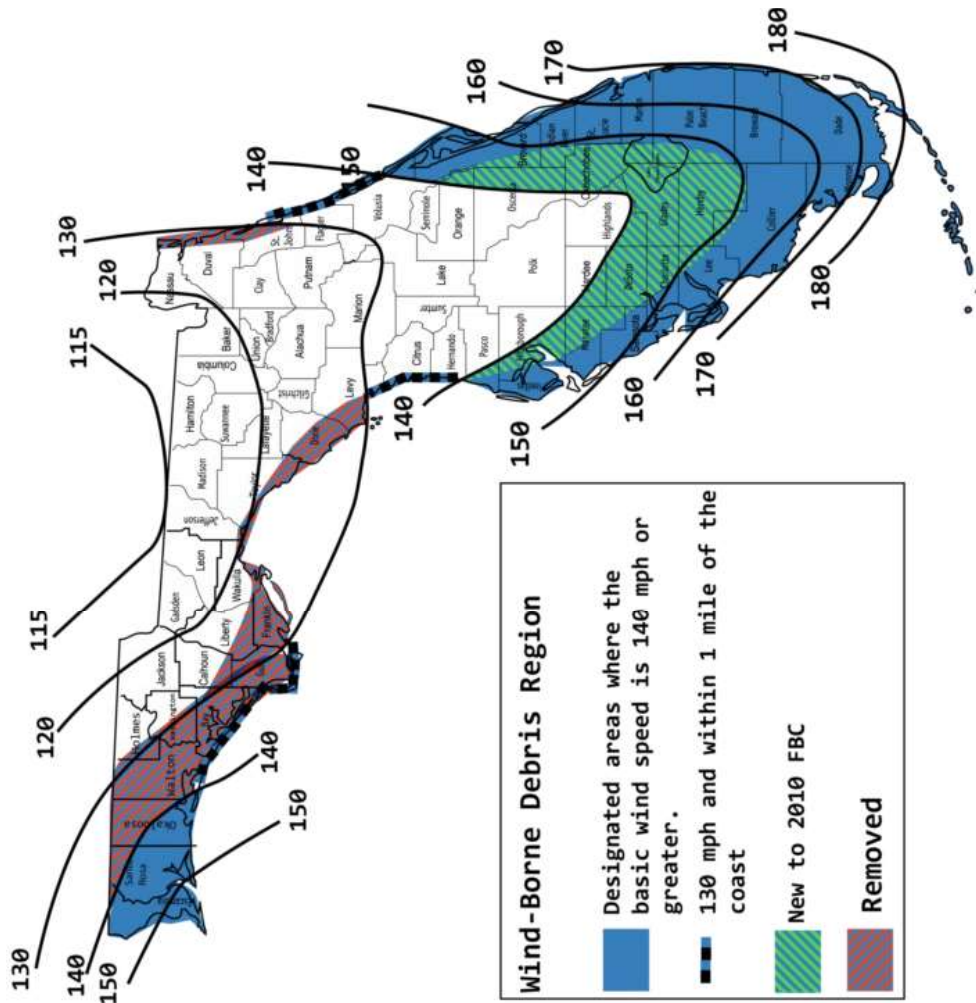
Building Codes

Special Overlay Criteria



Codes and Criteria allow us to build safely...





Wind-Borne Debris Region

- Designated areas where the basic wind speed is 140 mph or greater.
- 130 mph and within 1 mile of the coast
- New to 2010 FBC
- Removed

Figure 1609A Wind-Borne Debris Region, Category II and III Buildings and Structures except health care facilities



Gingerbread District (GB-1A) Zoning Code

A. Purpose: The Gingerbread District ("The District") is designed to provide suitable areas for delicious Gingerbread development; construction of which shall benefit the School. The District will be characterized by completely edible structures constructed out of gingerbread, various candies, and icing. It is the express purpose of the Zoning Code to exclude all buildings and structures which are not in good taste or do not taste good. All building materials, including landscaping and site improvements, must be edible; battery powered lights, fog, and noise machines are allowed.

B. Permitted Uses: Building and structures within the district may only be used for the enjoyment of students. This district may also include, as specifically provided for in these regulations, conditional uses for community facilities which enrich the students of the district. Such facilities include fire houses, retail stores, community centers, and places of worship or education.

C. Lot Size: All lots within The District are approximately 16 inches (16") in width, when measured at the parcel boundary, and 24 inches (24") in depth. Each building or structure must be located entirely upon the lot provided by the Jurisdiction (AIA Florida Northwest) and within the required building setbacks.

D. Density: The Gingerbread District shall be limited in size to 75 lots. Multiple structures may be built on any lot, provided they conform to the building setbacks.

E. Minimum Required Setbacks: Setbacks shall be measured at right angles (90°) on the lot from the parcel boundary:

Front Setback: Five inches (5")

Rear Setback: Three inches (3")

Side Setbacks: Two inches (2")

All structures shall conform to the Setback Requirements above. Sitework and other improvements, such as sidewalks, non-covered decks no higher than one-half inch (1/2"), fences and other auxiliary structures, such as dog houses and sheds no larger than five square inches in area and six inches in height are permitted to encroach upon the setbacks as long as all improvements comply with Section G below.

F. Building Height: No building or structure shall exceed 36 inches in height when measured from the surface of the lot to the tallest point, with the exception of candy cane or gum drop ornamentation.

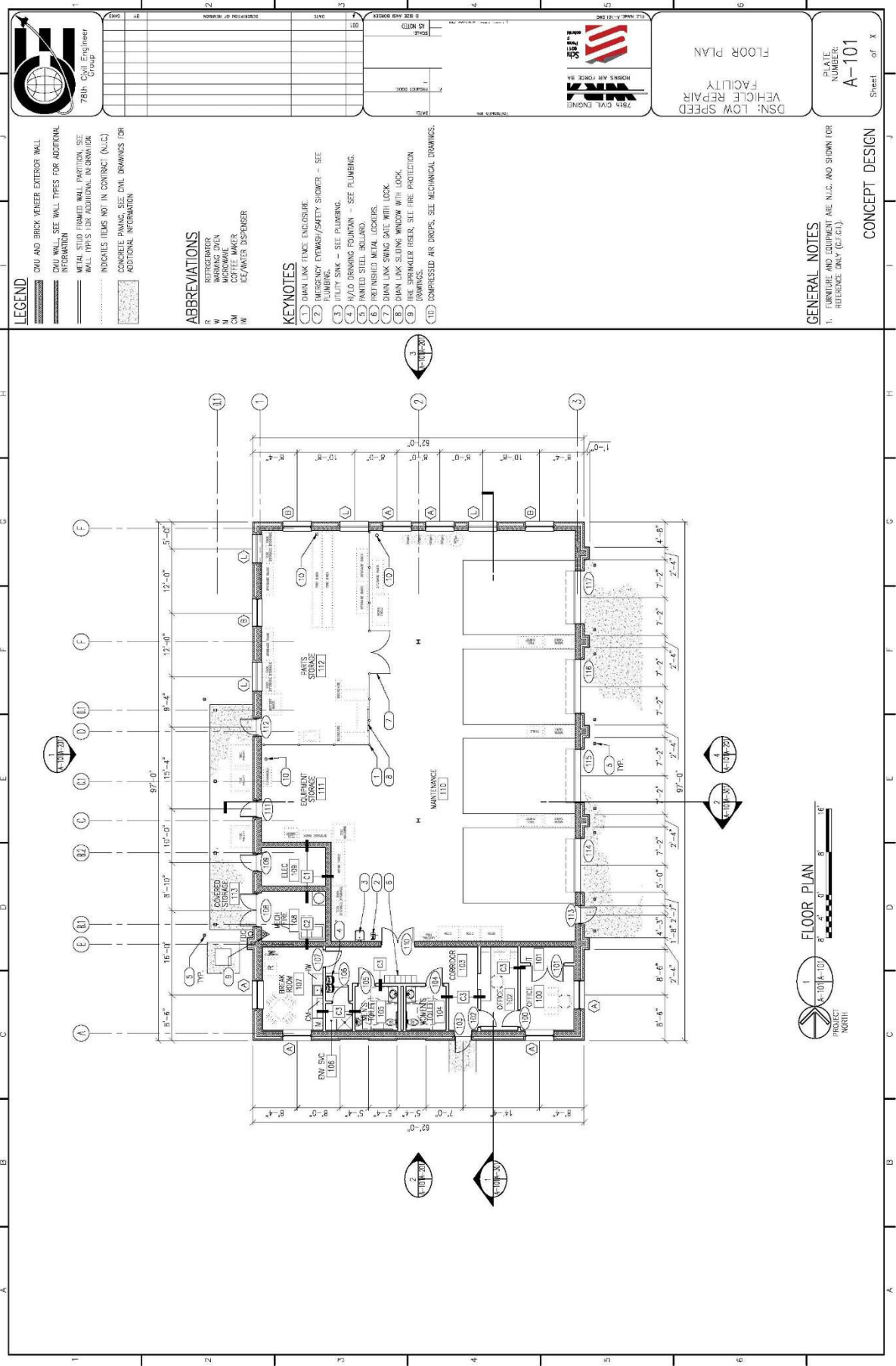
G. Transit Requirements: All buildings and structures designed for The District are to be constructed off site and transported by the Property Owner to The District. No structure shall be so tall as to be unstable and pose a risk to neighboring structures.

H. Use of Subcontractors: Houses and other structures within The District may be constructed using the help of subcontractors, including but not limited to, parents, grandparents, and siblings. Pets and wildlife are not permitted to work on buildings within The District.

I. Emergency Services: All lot numbers must be remain visible to emergency responders (and judges) – Do Not cover up the sticker that identifies your lot number.



Now that you know the requirements and restrictions, you begin the Construction Documents.



LEGEND

CMU AND BRICK VENEER EXTERIOR WALL
 CMU WALL, SEE WALL TYPES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
 METAL STUD FRAMED WALL PARTITION, SEE WALL TYPES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
 INDICATES ITEMS NOT IN CONTRACT (N.I.C.)
 CONCRETE FINISH, SEE CIVIL DRAWINGS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ABBREVIATIONS

R REFRIGERATOR
 W WASHING MACHINE
 CM COFFEE MAKER
 W ICE/WATER DISPENSER

KEYNOTES

- CHAIN LINK FENCE ENCLOSURE.
- EMERGENCY EYEWASH/SAFETY SHOWER - SEE PLUMBING.
- UTILITY SINK - SEE PLUMBING.
- H/O DRINKING FOUNTAIN - SEE PLUMBING.
- PAINTED STEEL BOLLARD.
- REFINISHED METAL LOCKERS.
- CHAIN LINK SLIDING GATE WITH LOCK.
- CHAIN LINK SLIDING WINDOW WITH LOCK.
- FIRE SPRINKLER ROSE, SEE FIRE PROTECTION.
- COMPRESSED AIR DROPS, SEE MECHANICAL DRAWINGS.



FLOOR PLAN
 VEHICLE REPAIR FACILITY
 DSN: LOW SPEED

PLATE NUMBER:
A-101
 Sheet of X

GENERAL NOTES

- FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT ARE N.I.C. AND SHOWN FOR REFERENCE ONLY (C.F.G.).

CONCEPT DESIGN

Next, once the design is complete, you must submit your construction documents to the Authority Having Jurisdiction to review and approve. Once this process is complete, you receive a **building permit**.

We made our contest entry form similar to a permit application.



Building Inspection Department

2021 Gingerbread House Permit Application

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

Student(s) Name(s): _____

School Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

CONTRACTOR INFORMATION

Teacher Name: _____

PROPERTY LOCATION

- West Navarre Intermediate School
- Gulf Breeze Elementary School

PERMIT APPLICATION FEES

Plan Review:	\$0.95
Electrical Permit:	\$0.15
Plumbing Permit:	\$0.15
Mechanical Permit:	\$0.15
Water Meter Permit:	\$0.15
School District Fee:	\$0.15
Fire Department Fee:	\$0.15
Parks Department Fee:	\$0.15
TOTAL FEE DUE:	\$2.00



Now, Construction Begins!

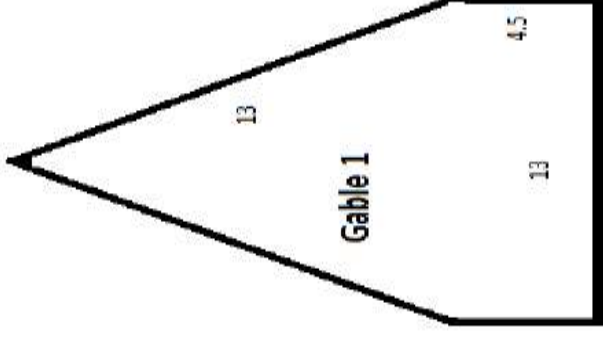
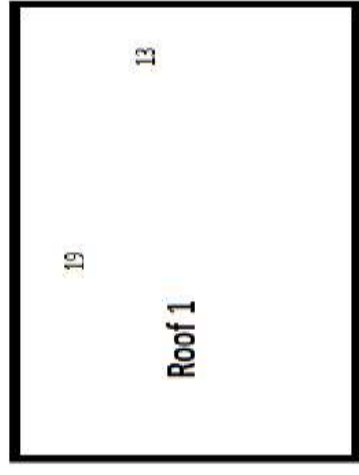
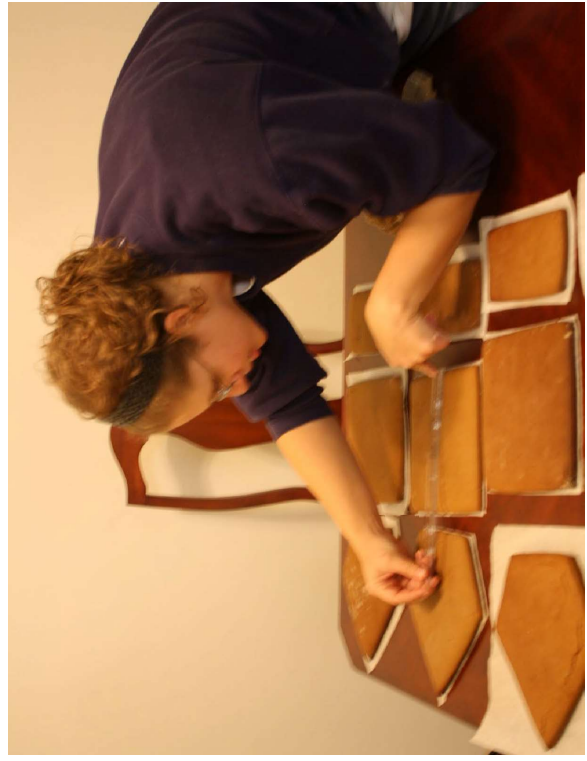
Consider the properties of your materials

Architects must know how the materials of construction, like concrete, are mixed and formed. You will need to think about the properties of your gingerbread dough when you plan your house.



Things to consider in using gingerbread as a building material

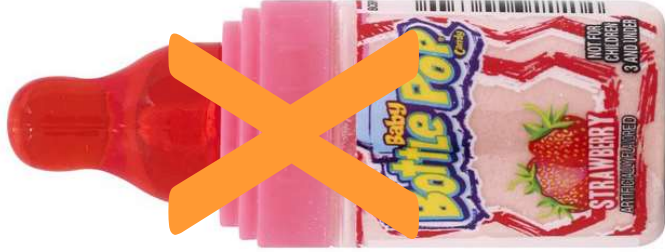
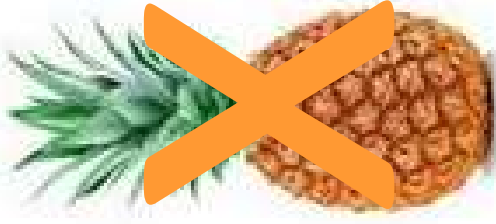
- Baking sheet size - determines how big a piece of gingerbread can you bake
- Oven - how many cookie sheets will fit?
- Strength of gingerbread material
- How much will you need of each ingredient to make all the parts you will need? – flour, butter, sugar, eggs, gingerbread spices, baking powder
- How much candy and icing do you need to decorate your house? What kinds?



Architects also create a project **schedule**. This is an estimate of how long it will take to design the project and build the project.

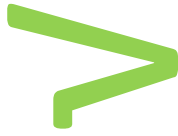
How long will it take for you to design and build your Gingerbread House?

Review of Gingerbread District Zoning Code



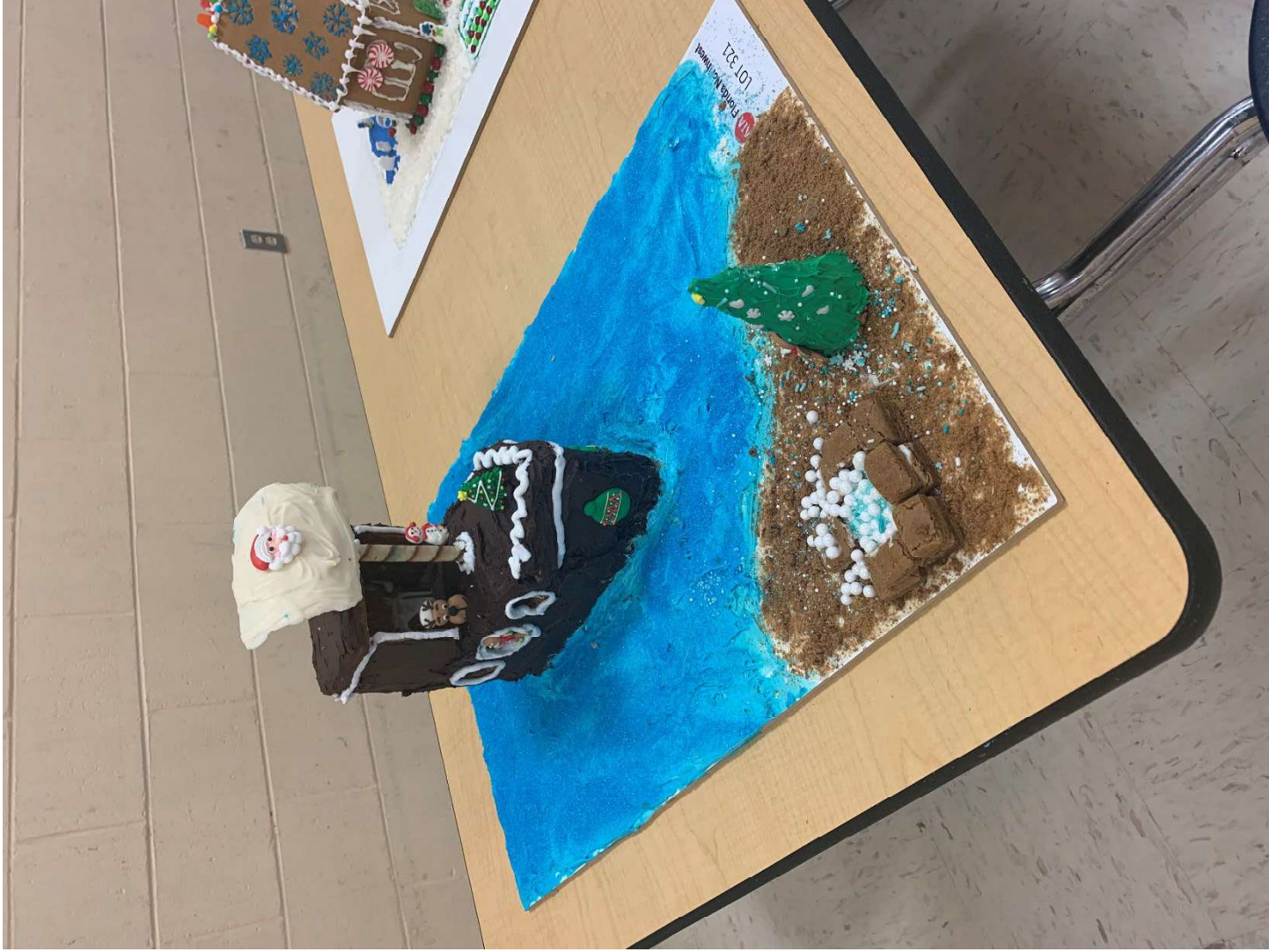
Common Questions

Can I use icing
and candies in
my setback?





Do I have **X**
to use
gingerbread?



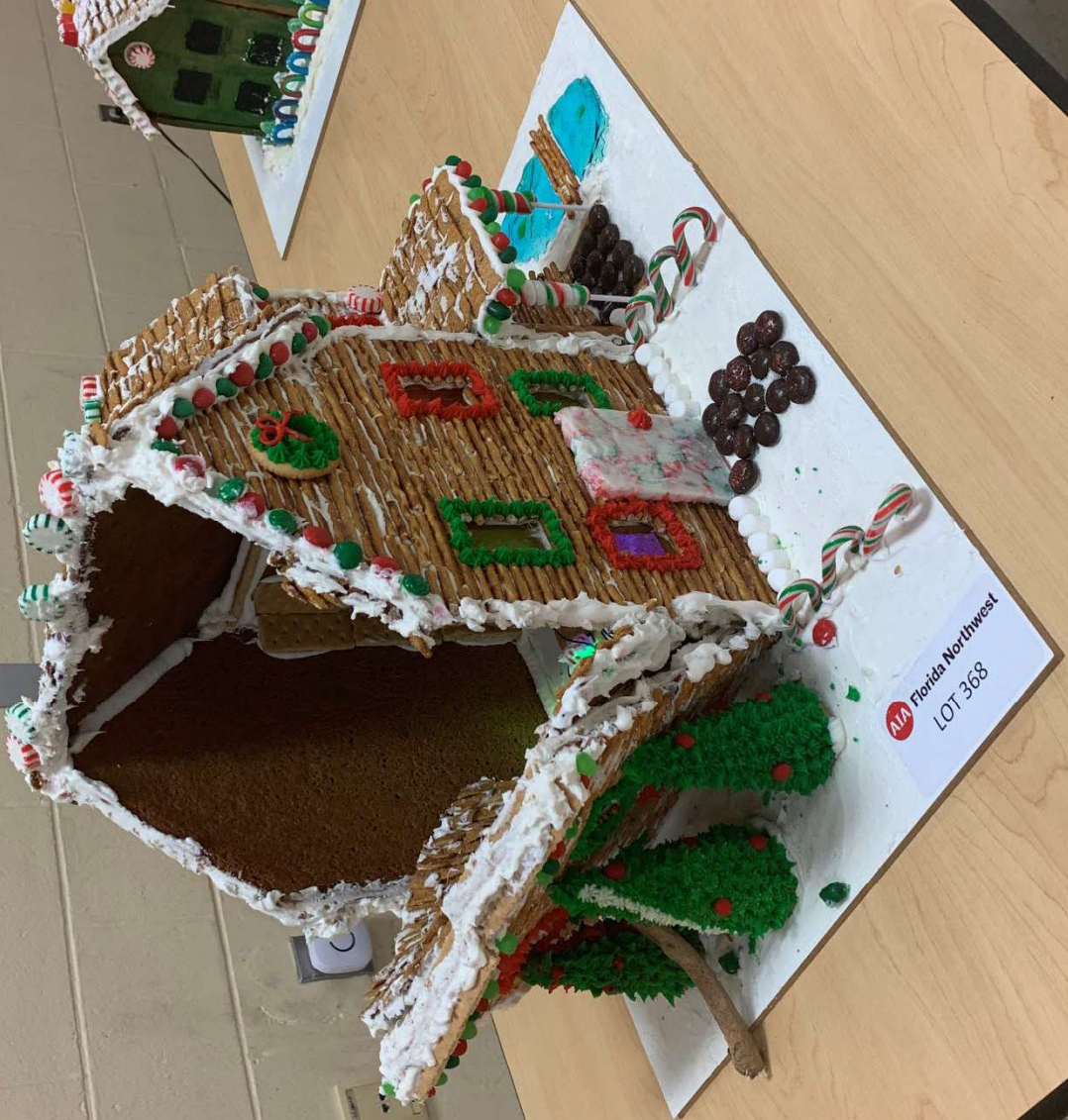
Does it have to
be a house?

X



ZONING VIOLATION	
Excluding Materials Not Exhibit	
Front Setbacks (5 inches)	
Side Setbacks (3 inches)	
Height Limit (25 inches)	
Lot Number Not Visible	

7



Judging Categories

- Best Overall
- Best Roof
- Best Use of Peppermints
- Best Theme
- Best “Green” or Sustainable Design
- Most Humorous
- Best Landscape
- Best Use of Icing
- Most Colorful
- Best Traditional Gingerbread House
- Best Modern Gingerbread House

[School] Gingerbread House Schedule

- Applications & Permit Fee (\$2.00 per lot) are due **Thursday, November 16th** to the Front Office. Late applications will not be accepted. The first 75 applications will be accepted.
- Gingerbread District Lots will be sent home on **Thursday, November 16th or Friday, November 17th**.
- Gingerbread House are due to WNIS on **Thursday, December 7th**.
 - Drop-off in Cafeteria 5:00pm – 5:30pm
 - Judging 5:30pm-6:00pm
 - Gallery Walk & Refreshments 6:00pm-6:15pm
 - Announcement of Awards Begins at 6:15pm

GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST [School]

Awards Ceremony

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

At 8:30am in the Cafeteria

Judging Categories

Best Overall

Best Roof

Best Use of Peppermints

Best Theme

Best "Green" or Sustainable Design

Most Humorous

Best Landscape

Best Use of Icing

Most Colorful

Best Traditional Gingerbread House

Best Modern Gingerbread House



Contest Schedule

- Applications are due Thursday, November 16th to [Teacher] Room. Late applications will not be accepted. The first 75 applications will be accepted.
- Gingerbread District Lots will be sent home on Thursday, November 16th and Friday, November 17th.
- Gingerbread House are due to [School] on Monday, December 11th. Drop off is in the Cafeteria:
 - Before School: 7:45am until school starts
 - After School: Dismissal until 4:00pm or 5:00pm-5:30pm
- Judging is Tuesday, December 12th at 5:30pm (closed to Students)
- Awards (students and teachers only!) will occur on Wednesday, December 13th at 8:30 am in the Cafeteria.

Contest Rules

1. Entries must conform with the Gingerbread District (GB-1A) Zoning.
2. All entries must fit on the lot (board) provided.
3. All lot number must remain visible.
4. All entries must be completely edible except for the actual lot.
5. Non-edible items integral to the candy, such as lollipop sticks, are allowed as long as they come attached from the store.
6. Battery powered electronics, such as sounds or lighting, are permitted.
7. Lots must be dropped off no later than 5:30pm on Monday, December 11th in order to be judged.
8. Only judges, teachers, and [School] staff can be in the cafeteria during judging.





Gingerbread District (GB-1A) Zoning Code

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G: Transit Requirments: All buildings and structures designed for The District are to be constructed off site and transported by the Property Owner to The District. No structure shall be so tall as to be unstable and pose a risk to neighboring structures.

H. Use of Subcontractors: Houses and other structures within The District may be constructed using the help of subcontractors, including but not limited to, parents, grandparents, and siblings. Pets and wildlife are not permitted to work on buildings within The District.

I: Emergency Services: All lot numbers must be remain visible to emergency responders (and judges) – Do Not cover up the sticker that identifies your lot number.





Florida Northwest

GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

Building Inspection Department

2024 Gingerbread House Permit Application

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

Student(s) Name(s): _____

School Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

CONTRACTOR INFORMATION

Teacher Name: _____

PROPERTY LOCATION

- School A School C
- School B School D

PERMIT APPLICATION FEES

PERMIT FEE HAS BEEN WAIVED

Plan Review: _____ \$0.95

Electrical Permit: _____ \$0.15

Plumbing Permit: _____ \$0.15

Mechanical Permit: _____ \$0.15

Water Meter Permit: _____ \$0.15

School District Fee: _____ \$0.15

Fire Department Fee: _____ \$0.15

Parks Department Fee: _____ \$0.15

TOTAL FEE DUE: _____ \$2.00



Florida Northwest



Florida Northwest

GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

[School]'s 5th Grade STEAM

Gingerbread House Competition

If your student is interested in participating in the Gingerbread House Competition sponsored by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Florida Northwest Chapter, please fill/cut out the slip below and have your student return the slip to [Teacher]. Please email [teacher's email] with any questions. The rules, along with some more information is attached. Thanks so much for supporting this STEAM project and your student!

Gingerbread House Competition Timeline:

This form is DUE BY Thursday, November 16th

- Boards will go home with students on November 16th and 17th
- Students may drop off boards to the cafeteria before or after school on Monday, December 11th
- Judging will take place on Tuesday, December 12th
- Awards will be announced on Wednesday, December 13th

----- CUT & RETURN -----

My child _____ would like to participate in the [School] STEAM Gingerbread House Competition on Tuesday, December 12th. My child will follow the rules of the competition and will build their Gingerbread House at home.

Parent Signature

Lot Number (provided by Teacher)

Student's Homeroom Teacher

Partner's Name (only for working with someone) _____



Florida Northwest



Florida Northwest

Honor Award for
Best Overall Design

To

for the design of a

Gingerbread House

December 13, 2023

[Name], AIA

2023 AIA Florida Northwest President

CATEGORY	PICK A	PICK B	PICK C
Best Overall			
Best Roof			
Best Use of Peppermints			
Best Theme			
Best Green Design			
Most Humorous			
Best Landscape			
Best Use of Icing			
Most Colorful			
Best Traditional House			
Best Modern House			

CATEGORY	PICK A	PICK B	PICK C
Best Overall			
Best Roof			
Best Use of Peppermints			
Best Theme			
Best Green Design			
Most Humorous			
Best Landscape			
Best Use of Icing			
Most Colorful			
Best Traditional House			
Best Modern House			

CATEGORY	PICK A	PICK B	PICK C
Best Overall			
Best Roof			
Best Use of Peppermints			
Best Theme			
Best Green Design			
Most Humorous			
Best Landscape			
Best Use of Icing			
Most Colorful			
Best Traditional House			
Best Modern House			

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Instructions: Print on cardstock and provide one table to each judge with a pen

NOTICE OF ZONING VIOLATION

The judges have determined that this property is in violation of the following Zoning Ordinance:

GB-1A – Gingerbread District

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encroaches on Front Setback | <input type="checkbox"/> Encroaches on Side Setback |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encroaches on Rear Setback | <input type="checkbox"/> Address not visible |

This violation has resulted in a downgrading of the judges' evaluation.

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