

# The 2026 Official Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Gingerbread House/Structure Contest

Sponsored and Hosted by the Atlanta Public Museum, Atlanta, Illinois

## Entry Form Deadline

Monday, June 1, 2026 @ 4 PM CST

## 2025 Route 66 Gingerbread Awards Ceremony

Wednesday, June 17, 2026 @ 2 PM CST

## Entry Submission of Gingerbread Display

Saturday, June 13, 2026

- Youth: 9 AM – 12 PM CST
- CLOSED 12 – 2 PM CST
- Teen: 2 PM – 5 PM CST

Sunday, June 14, 2026

- Adults: 12 PM – 5 PM CST

## Public Viewing/Voting

June 18, 2026 – July 31, 2026

Monday – Saturday, 10 AM – 4 PM;

**Judging:** Monday, June 15, 2026 -

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

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The 2026 Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Gingerbread House/Structure Contest, Sponsored & Hosted by the Atlanta Public Museum during their Christmas in July event, will be held Saturday, June 13, 2026 – Wednesday, June 17, 2026, with Public Viewing from Thursday, June 18, 2026 – July 31, 2026.

Gingerbread Artists of all ages and backgrounds are invited to compete for more than \$4500 in cash and prizes. In addition to the categories of: Adult, Teen, and Youth divisions, there will be an additional prizes for Furthest Traveled, Most Innovative Design, Best Use of the Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Theme; and a People's Choice Winner, which will be awarded after the close of viewing on July 31, 2026.

Contestants will bring their entries to the Museum on Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> & Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, for check-in; followed by closed judging on Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>; with Awards on Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM CST. Depending on the number of entries, the Awards Ceremony may be closed to only the entrants, their families, and approved media outlets.

## JUDGING PROCEDURE

Judging will be conducted by an in-person panel of 3 - 5 judges selected by the Atlanta Public Museum. Each contestant will be assigned an entry number so the judging of the entries is completely blind. The judging panel's decision will be final and absolute in their selections.

## WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Announcement of Winners will take place at 2 PM, Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at the Atlanta Public Museum, Route 66 Meeting Room. All categories will be awarded except for the People's Choice, which will be awarded at the conclusion of the viewing period. Winners are asked to be available for publicity, photos and interviews immediately following the awards or as arranged.

## PUBLIC VIEWING/PEOPLE'S CHOICE WINNER

Public Viewing of all entries will begin on Thursday, June 18, 2026 at the Atlanta Public Museum at the posted designated times and will continue until July 31, 2026. During this time, the public will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite Route 66 Structure by ticket/ballot vote. Upon the closing of the public viewing, the votes will be tallied, and the People's Choice Award will be announced.

## OFFICIAL RULES

Please read all the information carefully and completely. The following rules have been established for The 2026 Official Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gingerbread House/Structure Contest (henceforth referred to as 'the Contest') for the 2026 competition event sponsored by The Atlanta Public Museum, Atlanta, IL.

The deadline for entry submissions is **Monday, June 1, 2026, at 4 PM CST**. The Atlanta Public Museum reserves the right to refuse any entry deemed inappropriate without explanation. For additional information/questions, please contact [atlantamuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:atlantamuseum@yahoo.com).

## ENTRY OPTIONS/CATEGORIES

Two different options are available for entry: Individual or Team. Whether a team or individual, the entries will compete against those in their category as a single entry.

**INDIVIDUAL COMPETITORS** – the completed entry form must be received by: **Monday, June 1, 2026, at 4 PM CST**. The person listed on the entry form will be the individual to receive all correspondence, notifications, or updates regarding the Contest via email. If the competitor is under the age of 18, then the consent of a parent or legal guardian is required in addition to the competitor's information. The age of the contestant must be provided (date of birth). Only one entry per individual.

**TEAM ENTRIES** – the completed entry form must be received by: **Monday, June 1, 2026, at 4 PM CST**.

Each Team must designate a "Captain" that is solely responsible for receiving all correspondence, notifications, or updates regarding the Contest via email. Only one (1) form per Team should be submitted. If entering as a school or civic group, the representative of the group should be listed as the Team Captain and provide their contact information.

If there are varying ages on the Team, the oldest member's age will determine the correct category that the entry should be entered. If a team member is under the age of 18, then the consent of a parent or legal guardian is required, and the age of the contestant must be provided (date of birth).

In the event a team entry wins a prize, the Team Captain will be the recipient of any prizes. Distribution of monies or ribbons will be left to the Team Captain. We are not able to provide ribbons for each participant, subject to change.

## RECEIPT OF ENTRY SUBMISSION

Upon receipt of the entry form, a confirmation email will be sent providing the Entry Number and any changes the contestant(s) should be aware of; any additional correspondence will be sent via email to the primary contact/contestant.

## ENTRY CATEGORIES

The following categories are available for entry in the Contest

- Adult Category – Individuals 18 years of age and older entering as a single entrant or team
- Teen Category – individuals between 13 – 17 years of age entering as a single entrant or team
- Youth Category – individuals between 8 – 12 years of age entering as a single entrant or team

## ENTRY SPECIFICATIONS

### JUDGING

Entries will be judged on the following criteria:

- Overall Appearance
- Difficulty
- Precision/Cleanliness of the Design
- Creativity
- Use of the Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Theme

Based on the title of *The 2026 Official Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gingerbread House/Structure Contest*, entries are NOT limited to house structures. This is a **ROUTE 66** competition and anything Route 66 is allowed. If the Structure can be seen on Route 66 between Chicago, IL and Santa Monica, CA, it is fair game. However, entries are required to be tasteful in nature as the competition is sponsored by The Atlanta Public Museum, so entries should be viewable by all ages. A good rule of thumb is -- if you have to ask if a particular design or idea is ok, it probably is not.

### SIZE RESTRICTIONS

All entries must be placed on a board base, preferably plywood. Entries should not exceed 24 inches tall (including base), and 24 inches x 24 inches wide. No part of the entry should extend beyond or hang over/down from the base. Pegs/risers/feet used under the base are preferred but not required. Pegs/risers/feet to count toward the 24-inch height restriction. Weight is **NOT** to exceed 50 pounds.

### CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS ALLOWED – **Read carefully for restrictions/age-appropriate materials**

Everything above the base must be edible. 70% of the main structure must be constructed of gingerbread, with some left exposed for verification purposes. 50% of the materials used must be handcrafted. The remaining 50% can be mechanically produced, but still edible. Example: gumdrops

Edible materials are not limited to candies and icings. Use of gum paste, fondant, chocolate, modeling chocolate, royal icing, gelatin, sugars, etc. are allowed.

However, due to the danger of working with liquid sugar, Youth entries are **not** permitted to have “glass” windows, i.e. melted sugar candies.

Any entry with non-edible components unfortunately will be automatically disqualified from receiving a prize, but can remain on display. No artificial display or structural materials such as Styrofoam, interior lighting or other electrical components will be allowed. Candies should be unwrapped, and any non-edible components removed, i.e. lollipop sticks or wrappers. Non-edible materials such as paint or ribbon can be used to decorate the base and is encouraged to provide a finished look for the overall entry.

Entries must be **COMPLETELY CONSTRUCTED** by the Individual(s) entering the competition. Teen & Youth competitors may be supervised for safety precautions by a parent, legal guardian, or classroom teacher. For example, assisting with operating stove top or removing items from the oven.

## **ENTRY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER**

When an entry form is received, a unique identification number (UIN) will be assigned and provided to the contestant. This number must be easily visible on the finished entry. This could be as a house number, a banner, signpost, etc. on the constructed entry. If not part of the overall design, the number should clearly be visible on the base of the entry. If it cannot be seen, it cannot be judged.

## **ENTRY DESCRIPTION - COMPETITOR DESCRIPTION SUMMARY**

**Submitted during entry check-in on Saturday, June 13, 2026, or Sunday, June 14, 2026**

To help the Judges fully understand and appreciate your entry, please provide a typed description and explanation of the entry. This Summary should give a clear understanding of your vision, process, materials and any special techniques you used to build your structure. This is also where you can share why you picked this Route 66 structure or idea and provide any backstory about it, i.e. you visited it when you were a child, it's one you'd like to visit, etc.

The Description Summary is not required, but the information provided would most certainly give you an edge over those who choose not to provide one.

Description Summary should not exceed 2 pages, 8.5" x 11", double-spaced, font size 10 pt – 12 pt sized. Calibri, Times Romans, Arial fonts are preferred.

**At the TOP of the PAGE, Left Side, please include ONLY:**

- Your Entry Title
- Your Unique Identification Number (UIN)
- NOTE: It must not include any identifying factors of the individual or team

Some suggested information to share:

- Why did you pick this design? Did it change as you were making it?
- Have you seen this Route 66 structure in person (is it a landmark)?
- How many hours do you think you spent making your entry?
- What did you find most challenging about creating your entry?
- How much does your design weigh?
- Fun, interesting facts about your build you want to share...

## GINGERBREAD HOUSE/STRUCTURE TURN-IN DAY(S)

Contestants must turn in their entries on the designated day and time for their Entry Category.

- Saturday, June 13, 2026
  - Youth Category: 9 AM – 12 PM, CST
  - Teen Category: 1 – 5 PM, CST

**Registration Closed 12 Noon – 2 PM CST    No Registrants will be accepted at this time**

- Sunday, June 14, 2026
  - Adult Category: 12 PM – 5 PM, CST

The address of the Atlanta Public Museum is 114 SW Arch Street, Atlanta, IL, located in the heart of Downtown Atlanta, on Historic Route 66.

The entrance for turn-in will take place through the Rear of the building. Contestants will be able to park in the designated parking lot and enter through the rear entrance of the Atlanta Public Museum for check-in. Signs will be posted throughout Downtown for ease in locating the parking and entrance areas.

### UNLOADING YOUR ENTRY

- Contestants should park in the designated parking area and enter through the designated door with their entry.
- A limited number of small carts will be available for transporting your gingerbread entries into the registration area. Carts are the property of the Atlanta Public Museum. Museum Staff or Volunteers may request them back at any time to accommodate other competitors and Museum needs. Hoarding of carts or refusing to return to Museum Staff could result in disqualification. If you have a small cart, you are encouraged to bring it with you to minimize waiting times.
- **NOTE:** Prior to judging, entries will **NOT** be handled by Museum Staff or Volunteers. Please make sure the person(s) delivering your entry, or yourself, can lift and place your entry.

### REGISTRATION DESK

The Registration Check-in Desk will be located just inside the back entrance of the Atlanta Public Museum. This is where contestants will check-in, receive the Registration Welcome Packet, and their Competitor's designation badge.

### GINGERBREAD TRIAGE AREA

Before moving onto the Designated Turn-in area, Contestants may need to make some minor fixes to their entry. Any and all fixes must take place in this area. Once an entry is placed in the Competition Room, no additional touch-ups may take place. Only the provided tables in the triage area may be used – competitors may not set up their own tables and workstations.

### DESIGNATED TURN-IN AREA

Once Competitors are satisfied with any fixes/touch-ups, they will proceed to the Designated Turn-in Area located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. There is an elevator (follow signs) to take you to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. If you prefer, there are two stairways also available.

At the Designated Turn-in Area, the Description Summary will be handed in, and the entry checked for the UIN visibility. Once approved, the Contestant and their entry may continue to the PR area.

#### **PR AREA**

In the PR area, Contestants will pose for photographs, filming and a short 2 – 3 question interview by Museum Staff and/or local media. This is mandatory for all Contestants for media purposes. Additional photos, filming and questions will be required of the Top 3 winners in each category following the Awards Ceremony on Wednesday, June 17, 2026.

#### **COMPETITION ROOM**

Once all PR requirements have been met, it's on to the Competition Room for turn-in. Museum Staff and Volunteers will direct Competitors to the areas/location designated for the correct Category entries. No location is better than another. Please do not argue about the designated locations. Once the entry has been placed, along with the Entry Description, we ask that all Competitors exit the room promptly. Only registered Competitors and/or Parents/Guardians of registered Competitors are permitted in the Competition Room.

Competitors will have an opportunity to view all the entries on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, beginning at 10 AM CST. At this time, Competitor's will vote on their "Competitor's Pick" – their favorite of all the entries. The winner of the Competitor's Pick will receive a cash prize during the Awards Ceremony.

## **PLACING AND PRIZES \*\*\***

The following prize money and ribbons will be as follows:

### **ADULT CATEGORY**

Grand Prize: \$1000, Purple Ribbon, and name inscribed on *The 2026 Official Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gingerbread House/Structure Contest Trophy – Adult Division*

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$500, 2<sup>nd</sup> place ribbon

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \$250, 3<sup>rd</sup> place ribbon

### **TEEN CATEGORY**

1st Place: \$500, Purple Ribbon, and name inscribed on *The 2026 Official Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gingerbread House/Structure Contest Trophy – Teen Division*

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$250, 2<sup>nd</sup> place ribbon

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \$125, 3<sup>rd</sup> place ribbon

### **YOUTH CATEGORY**

1st Place: \$100, Purple Ribbon, and name inscribed on *The 2026 Official Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gingerbread House/Structure Contest Trophy – Youth Division*

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$50, 2<sup>nd</sup> place ribbon

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \$25, 3<sup>rd</sup> place ribbon

### **FURTHEST TRAVELED**

The award for the Competitor who traveled the furthest distance with their entry, based on mileage (US mailing address) will be awarded \$200 and a ribbon.

### **MOST INNOVATIVE & BEST USE OF THE ROUTE 66 THEME**

The awards for 'Most Innovative' and 'Best Use of Route 66 Theme' will receive \$200 each. These awards will be determined by the Judging Panel.

### **COMPETITOR'S PICK**

Each Competitor will receive one ticket in their Registration Welcome Packets to cast their vote for the Competitor's Pick. The voting timeframe for the Competitor's Pick award will be Wednesday, June 17, 2026, beginning at 10 AM – 1:00 PM CST. Competitors will be asked to select their favorite entry across all categories. Only individual entrants or team captains (on behalf of the team) are permitted in the competition area and can place their vote during this time. The winner of the Competitor's Pick will win a cash prize, amount to be determined, and a ribbon.

### **PEOPLE'S CHOICE**

Visitors to the Atlanta Public Museum will have an opportunity to vote for their favorite Gingerbread entry through the purchase of a ticket(s). Voting for the People's Choice will begin on Thursday, June 18, 2026, and continue until July 31, 2026. The winner of the People's Choice will be announced on August 1, 2026, at 12 Noon via social media. The winner will receive a check for 1/2 of the ticket sales and a ribbon.

### **\*\*\* SPECIAL ITEMS OF NOTE REGARDING PRIZE MONIES**

- IRS Guidelines require that a 1099 form be filed for all Entrants winning \$600 or more total. Prize money will not be released until a completed 1099 form has been received for IRS filing purposes.

### **AFTER THE EVENT DISPLAY PICK-UP**

For Competitors who wish to keep their Gingerbread creations, you may pick up your entry after the conclusion of the Public Viewing on the following dates and times:

August 1 - 3, 2026      Saturday & Monday, 10 AM – 3:30 PM    Sunday, 12 PM – 3:30 PM

Competitors must show their competitor's pin and ID prior to removing their entry. If someone else will be picking up an entry, the Atlanta Public Museum **MUST** be notified **PRIOR** to their arrival for pick-up. Those individual(s) will need to show an ID matching the name that was provided to the Museum Staff and is on file. Entries will **ONLY** be released to the identified Competitors or their designated representative.

In the case of the Team entries, **ONLY** the Captain of the Team will be allowed to pick-up the entry unless otherwise specified **PRIOR** to arrival.

The Museum Staff will not verify changes to the authorized pick-up designee(s) at the time of pick-up. This is a No Exception Rule.

Any entries remaining after Monday, August 3, 2026 at 3 PM will become the property of the Atlanta Public Museum and it will be at their discretion to donate, sell/auction or dispose of the structures.

## OFFICIAL COMPETITOR ENTRY FORM

- This form is required for **ALL** entries. *All fields are mandatory*
- **DEADLINE: Monday, June 1, 2026 by 4 PM CST**

Entry Classification (check one):  Individual  Team

Entry Category (check one):  Adult (18 and older)  Teen (13-17)  Youth (8-12)

Date of Birth: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ for Teen or Youth entry. If a Team, please use the age of oldest teammate

**Entry Title** - *May not exceed 36 characters including spaces*

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**Team Name** – Team entries only. *May not exceed 36 characters including spaces*

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Please provide the full name and age of all team members:

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### Complete the following as an Individual or the Team Captain

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. I understand the completed form must be submitted by email or direct mail by no later than 4 PM CST on June 1, 2026.
2. I understand that I must physically deliver my completed entry to the Atlanta Public Museum, Atlanta, IL on Saturday, June 13, 2025, or Sunday, June 14, 2025, at my designated entry time.
3. I understand that my entry will remain on display until July 31, 2026.
4. I understand that if I wish for the return of my entry, that I or my prior designated representative must do so on Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, or Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> at the designated times. I also understand that should my entry not be picked up by the designated date(s) or time(s), my entry will become the property of the Atlanta Public Museum to dispose of as they deem appropriate.
5. By voluntarily participating in the 2026 Office Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gingerbread House/Structure Contest sponsored by Atlanta Public Museum, I consent to receiving email communications from the Museum regarding updates, changes, and/or media requests as they arise. Competitors can choose to no longer receive communications by contacting the Atlanta Public Museum and requesting their name/email be removed from the database.
6. I hereby grant the Atlanta Public Museum to print or otherwise duplicate the picture or likeness of my entry for either internal or external release, this includes print, video or online publications, plus local and network television. I understand that the image of my entry becomes the property of the Atlanta Public Museum. Permission is also granted to the Atlanta Public Museum to transport my entry for publicity purposes while understanding that at no time does the Atlanta Public Museum guarantee the safety or security of my entry and cannot be held responsible for any damage incurred to my entry on or off Atlanta Public Museum property. By participating, each Competitor agrees to be bound by all Rules and Regulations herein, which may be amended at any time as deemed necessary. Atlanta Public Museum reserves the right to refuse any entry deemed inappropriate for display in a public setting. And to disqualify any Competitor who fails to follow the Rules and Procedures contained in the Entry Documents provided. Lastly, any Competitor found to have falsified any entry information will be dismissed and disqualified from any future contests.
7. I agree to HOLD HARMLESS, RELEASE, DEFEND, AND INDEMNIFY ATLANTA PUBLIC MUSEUM, THE ATLANTA PULBIC LIBRARY DISSTRICKT, THE LIBRARY BOARD & OFFICERS, AND STAFF, each of their current or former predecessors, successors, each of their affiliated organizations and companies, their insurance companies, their respective agents, employees, representatives, assignees, officers, directors, members, partners, medical providers, and shareholders for ANY AND ALL LIABILITY and/or claims arising from injury to persons or damage to property arising from the incident, any RELEASED PARTY'S alleged or actual

NEGLIGENCE OR GROSS NEGLIGENCE, BEACH OF any express or implied WARRANTY, breach of contract, or breach of any statutory or other duty of care, or mistake or errors in judgement of any kind. By signing this release, I agree that I am releasing any right to make a claim or file a lawsuit against APL&M. THE RELEASOR AGREES TO DEFEND AND INDEMNIFY each RELEASED PARTY for any and all claims and/or those of a third party arising from the incident.

I agree to all terms of The 2026 Official Route 66 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gingerbread House/Structure Contest and have fully read the Official Rules and Procedures

Any Competitors age 17-years or younger have parent/guardian permission to participate in the 2026 competition.

Signature of Contestant/Team Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Contestant's Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return completed form to the Atlanta Public Museum by Saturday, June 1, 2026, @ 4 PM CST.**

**Print/Complete/Scan/Email to:**

- [atlantamuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:atlantamuseum@yahoo.com)
- Subject Line: Route 66 Gingerbread Contest

**Direct Mail:**

- The Atlanta Public Library and Museum, ATTN: Route 66 Gingerbread Contest, PO Box 12, Atlanta, IL 61723