



PDHonline Course A104 (4 PDH)

Definitions of Terms Commonly Used in Architecture and Interior Design

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Course Content

ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN TERMINOLOGY

<i>Terms</i>	Description
AAMA	Architectural Aluminum Manufacturer's Association.
Abode	A dwelling place, home
Above-Grade	The portion of a building that is above ground level.
Abstract or Title	A summary of all deeds, wills, and legal actions to show ownership of a piece of real estate.
Abutment	1) Part of a structure which supports the end of a span or accepts the thrust of an arch; often supports and retains the approach embankment. The aircraft hangars require this kind of strengthening to hold up the large roofs wide enough for airplane wings; 2) A solid piece of masonry used to support a projecting part of a structure, for example, the supports that connect a bridge with a river bank.
A/C (Alternating Current) Circuit	The flow of current through a conductor first in one direction then in reverse. It is used exclusively in residential and commercial wiring because it provides greater flexibility in voltage selection and simplicity of equipment design.
ACCA	Air conditioning Contractors of America - a leading HVAC/R Association - http://www.acca.org/
Accelerator	Any material added to stucco, plaster or mortar which speeds up the natural set.
Access Floor	A platform structure typically consisting of 0.6 m x 0.6 m (2 ft x 2 ft) concrete-filled steel floor panels supported on pedestals 0.2 to 0.46 m (8" to 18") above the concrete structural floor slab. Each panel can be independently removed for easy access to the under floor plenum created below and can include openings for electrical outlets, grilles or any other floor accessory in its thickness. In most office installations, carpet tiles are laid on top to provide a finished floor surface. Raised floor systems provide maximum flexibility and significantly lower costs associated with reconfiguring building services.
Access Panel	A small metal or wood door flush with a wall or ceiling surface which provides a closure over a valve or other operable device which is recessed into the wall or located above a ceiling. The access door may be keyed and lockable.
Acceptable Indoor Air Quality	1) Indoor air that does not contain harmful concentrations of contaminants; 2) Air with which at least 80% of building occupants do not express dissatisfaction.
ACGIH	American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists.
Acoustic	1) The science of sound; 2) Material used to reduce the volume of noise within a room or prevent the passage of sound through a wall.
Acoustical Tile	A ceiling or wall tile finishing material with an inherent property to absorb sound; usually made of mineral, fiber or insulated materials.
Acre	A unit of land area equal to 4,840 square yards, or 43,560 square feet.
Acrylic Paint	Paint composed of acrylic resins, thinned with water.
Addendum	Written or graphic instruments issued prior to the execution of the Contract which modify or interpret the bidding documents, including Drawings and Specifications, by additions, deletions,

Terms	Description
	clarifications or corrections. Addenda will become part of the Contract Documents when the Construction Contract is executed. (Plural-"Addenda".)
Adhesion	The property of a coating or sealant to bond to the surface to which it is applied.
Adhesive	A sticky substance to bond one material to another. Use the term "Adhere" instead of "Glue." Do not use "Glue," "Cement," or Mastic."
Adhesive Failure	Loss of bond of a coating or sealant from the surface to which it is applied.
Admixture	A chemical which is added to concrete to accelerate or retard the setting process or to create air bubbles in the concrete, called "accelerators," or air entraining agents."
Adobe	1) Sun dried brick of clay and straw; 2) Clay from which bricks are made; 3) The structure built with such bricks.
Advertisement for Bids	Published public notice soliciting bids for a construction project. Most frequently used to conform to legal requirements pertaining to projects to be constructed under public authority, and usually published on newspapers of general circulation in those districts from which the public funds are derived.
Aedicule	An architectural surround, consisting usually of two columns or pilasters supporting a pediment. Literally means 'little building'.
AFUE (Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency)	A rating that denotes the efficiency of gas heating equipment.
Aggregate	Crushed stone, sand, gravel, slag or pebbles added to cement to make concrete, mortar or plaster and is used to surface built-up roofs.
Agreement	1) A legally enforceable promise or promises between two or among several persons; 2) On a construction project, the document stating the essential terms of the Construction Contract which incorporates by reference the other Contract Documents; 3) The document setting forth the terms of the Contract between the Architect and a consultant.
AIA	American Institute of Architects
Air conditioning system	The process of treating air for simultaneous control of temperature, humidity, cleanliness, and distribution.
Air drier lumber	Lumber that has been left in the air to dry as opposed to drying in a kiln.
Air duct	Ducts usually made of sheet metal (also flex & board) that distribute conditioned air.
Air filters	Adhesive filters made of metal or various fibers that are coated with adhesive liquid to which the particles of lint and dust adhere. These filters will remove as much as 90% of the dirt if they do not become clogged. The more common filters are of the throwaway or disposable type. High efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters are used in cleanroom applications and are available with 99.9% efficiency down to 0.3 microns.
Air infiltration	The amount of air leaking in and out of a building through cracks in walls, windows and doors.
Air trap	A 'U' shaped pipe located below plumbing fixtures, filled with water to form a seal against the passage of gases and odors.
Aisle	1) A passageway between rows of seats; 2) The side of a church nave separated by piers from the nave proper.
Alabaster	A compacted variety of sulphate of lime, or gypsum, of fine texture. Usually white and translucent, but sometimes yellow, red or grey. Often carved into vases, busts, and memorial tablets in churches.
Alarm	A device to call attention to an event such as fire, smoke,

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	intruders, etc
Alcazar	A building type that is a legacy of the Moorish occupation of Spain, a fortified palace found mainly in south of the country, particularly Seville and Granada.
Alcove	A recessed or partly enclosed extension of a room.
Align	The faces of objects that are in line with each other, or when their center-lines lie on the same axis.
Alkyd (Paint)	Paint composed of a chemically synthesized, alkyd derived base, thinned with mineral spirits. The current version of "oil" based paints.
Alley	1) A passage way; 2) A garden walk surrounded hedges
Alligatoring	A condition of paint or aged asphalt brought about by the loss of volatile oils and the oxidation caused by solar radiation. "Alligatoring" produces a pattern of cracks resembling an alligator hide and is ultimately the result of the limited tolerance of paint or asphalt to thermal expansion or contraction.
Altar	1) A raised place; 2) Any elevated structure upon which sacrifices may be offered or incense burned or before which religious ceremonies may be enacted; 3) A structure found in churches before which the priest recites divine offices and upon which the Eucharist Mass is celebrated. Often elevated, covered with a cloth, and typically a table in stone or wood.
Altarpiece	A panel, painted or sculptured, situated above and behind an altar. Sometimes made of three panels hinged together so that it can be folded up, when it is called a triptych.
Alteration	A change in, or addition to, an existing building.
Alternate	Mechanism used in Bid Documents to seek separate bids for a different design than the "Base Bid" design. May be "Additive" or "Deductive" alternates.
Aluminum Wire	Conductors made of aluminum for carrying electricity. Aluminum generally is limited to the larger wire sizes. Due to its lower conductivity, aluminum wire smaller than No.12 is not made. Aluminum is lighter and less expensive than copper but not as good a conductor. It also breaks easily.
Ambulatory	A continuous aisle around the apse at the east end of a church; a term is common in church architecture.
Ammeter	Device to measure the current flowing in a circuit.
Amortization	An installment payment of a loan, generally monthly.
Ampere	The unit used in the measure of the rate of flow of electricity.
Amphitheater	1) A very large auditorium; 2) An oval or circular structure with tiers of seats around a stage or arena.
Amps (Amperes)	The rate at which electricity flows through a conductor.
Anchor	1) To hold or held in place; 2) The device that holds the object in place.
Anchor bolt	Bolts which fasten columns, girders or other members to concrete or masonry such as bolts used to anchor sills to masonry foundation. Foundation plates or sills shall be bolted to the foundation with not less than 1/2" diameter steel bolts embedded at least 7" into the concrete or reinforced masonry or 15" into unreinforced grouted masonry.
Angle	1) The figure formed by two lines diverging from a common point; 2) The position or direction from which an object is viewed.
Angle iron	A piece of structural iron or steel having the cross section in the form of an 'L'.
Annealing	In the manufacturing of float glass, it is the process of controlled cooling done in a lehr to prevent residual stresses in the glass. Re-annealing is the process of removing objectionable stresses in glass by re-heating to a suitable temperature followed by

Terms	Description
	controlled cooling.
Annex	A building added on to a larger one or situated near the main one.
Antechamber or Anteroom	1) A room before an entrance; 2) A smaller room leading into a larger room; 3) A waiting room.
Antenna	A metallic apparatus for sending and receiving electromagnetic waves.
Anterior	Situated before or in front of.
Anti-walk blocks	Elastomeric blocks that limit lateral glass movement in the glazing channel which may result from thermal, seismic, wind load effects, building movement, and other forces that may apply.
Apartment	1) A room or suite of rooms designed for dwelling; 2) Part of a divided building.
Aperture	An opening, orifice.
Apex	The top, summit.
Apparatus	An outfit of instruments or machines to accomplish a task.
Appliance	A device or instrument especially one run by electricity and designed for household use.
Appraisal	The estimated price of a house which a buyer would pay and the seller would accept for a property.
Approach	The area between the sidewalk and the street that leads to a driveway or the transition from the street as you approach a driveway.
Approve	The term "approved," where used in conjunction with the Architect's action on the Contractor's submittal, applications, and requests, is limited to the Architect's duties and responsibilities as stated in General and Supplementary Conditions.
Apron	1) The finish board immediately below a window sill; 2) A paved or hard packed area abutting a garage door or other opening; 3) A paved strip leading to an aperture or door; 4) A platform before a dock or drive; 5) The part of a stage in a theater extending in front of the curtains; 6) In airport the area where baggage handling activities take place.
Apse	A singular and semi-circular recess, usually at the east end of a church.
Arabesque	1) Art, painting, inlay, or relief of plants, foliage, etc; 2) An ornate design of intertwined floral, foliate and geometric figures.
Arbor	1) A shady garden shelter or bower; 2) A shaded nook or walk with trees.
Arboretum	A place for the study and exhibition of trees.
Arcade	1) A series of arches supported by a row of columns; 2) An arched roofed in gallery; 3) An arched or covered passageway with shops on each side; 4) A public area or establishment containing games of a mechanical or electronic nature.
Arch	1) A structure forming the curved, pointed, or flat upper edge of an open space and supporting the weight above it, as in a bridge or doorway; 2) A curved opening; 3) Curved.
Arch Barrel	The inner surface of an arch extending the full width of the structure.
Arch Ring	An outer course of stone forming the arch. Made of a series of voussoirs. An archivolt is an arch ring with decorating moldings.
Architect	1) One who designs and supervises the construction of a building; 2) Any planner.
Architects Rule	Three sided ruler with different scales on each side. Also referred to as a "scale."
Architecture	1) The art and science of designing and erecting buildings; 2) A

Terms	Description
	style or method of design and construction.
Archive(s)	A place where records are preserved.
Archway	1) A passageway under an arch; 2) An arch covering a passageway.
Area	1) A flat open surface; 2) Any specific region, as of a building.
Area wall	A wall surrounding an area way.
Area way	An uncovered space next to the fountain walls of a building, for entrance of light and air to the basement.
Arena	An area or stage for contests or activity.
Arris	Sharp edge of a finished member.
Art Deco	A style of decorative forms marked by geometric motifs, curvilinear forms, sharply defined outlines and often bold colors.
Asbestos	A soft, fibrous, fireproof mineral used in fireproofing building materials.
As-Build Drawings	A drawing or print marked by the Contractor to show actual conditions of a project as constructed after construction.
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
ASHRAE	A leading HVAC/R Association - American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers - http://www.ashrae.org/ . The trade association provides information and sets standards for the industry.
ASID	American Society of Interior Designers
ASME	American Society of Mechanical Engineers
Ashlar	Worked stone with flat surface, usually of regular shape and square edges. As opposed to rough stone, this is not squared off.
Ashphalt	A dark brown to black, highly viscous, hydrocarbon produced from the residue left after the distillation of petroleum. Asphalt is used on roofs and highways as a waterproofing agent (also called Bituminous sandstone).
Ashphalt Shingles	Composite roof shingles made from asphalt-impregnated felt covered with mineral granules.
Ashphaltic Concrete	This is the term used for paving for roads and driveways. Not "Asphalt" or "Bituminous" Concrete.
Ashpit	The area below the hearth of a fireplace which collects ash.
Assessed value	A value set by governmental assessors to determine tax assessments
Astragal	A small molding attached to one or both meeting stiles of a double door, used to provide a tight, draft-free fit.
Asylum	1) A place offering safety; 2) A refuge.
Atelier	A workshop or studio.
Atrium	1) An open court within a building; 2) A lighted entrance way.
Attic	1) The space between the roof and the ceiling; 2) The upper most room in the roof; 3) A garret.
Auditorium	A room or building to accommodate an audience.
Auger	In carpentry, a wood-boring tool used by a carpenter to bore holes
Aumbry	A small cupboard recessed into the wall of a church near the altar. Used for keeping sacred vessels and vestments.
Aviary	A large enclosure for birds.
Award	The acceptance of a bid or negotiated proposal by an owner.
Awning	A structure, as of canvas stretched over a frame, to shelter from weather
Awning Window	An out swinging window hinged at the top.
Axonometric	A drawing that gives a 3D representation of an object in scale with top and bottom edges usually tilted to an angle.
Back Nailing	The practice of nailing roofing felts to the deck under the overlap, in addition to hot mopping, to prevent slippage of felts.

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Back Splash	A band of unpermeable material at a basin, sink, or other wet area to prevent water from splashing on the walls.
Backer Rod	In glazing, a polyethylene or polyurethane foam material installed under compression and used to control sealant joint depth, provide a surface for sealant tooling, serve as a bond breaker to prevent three-sided adhesion, and provide an hour-glass contour of the finished bead.
Backfill	1) The material (earth, gravel, or sand) used for filling in any previously excavated area; 2) In carpentry, the process of fastening together two pieces of board by gluing blocks of wood in the interior angle.
Backflow	The flow of liquids through irrigation into the pipes of a potable or drinking water supply from any source which is opposite to the intended direction of flow.
Backflow preventer	A device or means to prevent backflow into the potable water supply.
Backhearth	The part of the hearth inside the fireplace
Backhole	Self powered excavation equipment that digs by pulling a boom mounted bucket towards itself. It is used to dig basements and/or footings and to install drainage or sewer systems.
Backup	The inner portion of a masonry wall usually finished with face brick, stone ashlar, stucco, or other decorative or protective veneer on the outside.
Baffle	A partial blocking against a flow of wind or sound.
Bailey	Castle courtyard and surrounding buildings.
Balconet	An ornamental balcony.
Balcony	A platform projecting from the wall of a building and surrounded by a rail or parapet.
Baldachin	A richly ornamented canopy structure supported by columns, suspended from a roof, or projected from a wall, as over an altar
Balloon Framing	In carpentry, the lightest and most economical form of construction, in which the studding and corner plates are set up in continuous lengths from the first floor line or sill to the roof plate.
Baltimore Truss	A subdivided Pratt truss commonly constructed for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It has angled end posts and a top chord which is straight and horizontal.
Baluster	1) Vertical member, usually wood, that supports the railing of a porch or the handrail of a stairway; 2) One of the upright supports of a handrail; 2) A post supporting a hand rail; 3) Any of a number of closely spaced vertical supports for a railing or balustrade.
Balustrade	A rail and the row of posts that support it.
Band	A strip or stripe that can be distinguished (as by color or texture) from nearby matter.
Banded	Having the regular flutings, moldings, or the like interrupted at regular intervals by projecting blocks or drums.
Bandstand	A usually roofed platform on which a band or orchestra performs outdoors.
Banister	1) A balaster also bannister; 2) The balastrade of a staircase and/or balcony; 3) A handrail.
Bar	1) A relatively long, rigid piece of solid material; 2) A counter at which drinks are served; 3) The railing in a courtroom enclosing the part of the room where the judges and lawyers sit and the defendants tried; 4) A handrail placed at hip height, used by a dancer to maintain balance during practice; 5) An obstruction.
Barge-board	A board, often carved, hanging from the projecting end of a

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	sloping roof.
Barge-couple	Either of the pair of rafters that carry the part of a gable roof that project beyond the gable wall.
Barge-course	1) Tiling on a gable roof beyond the exterior surface of the gable wall; 2) The tiles or slates placed over the raking edge of a gable roof; 3) A coping of bricks set on edge, arranged transversely.
Barn	1) A large building used for storing produce and/or sheltering livestock; 2) A large shed for the housing of vehicles.
Barnwood	Aged and weathered boards. Especially those salvaged from dismantled barns.
Barometer	Instrument for measuring atmospheric pressure.
Baroque	An architecture of flamboyance and swaggering excess that characterized the 17th century. Taking as a starting point the elements of classicism, Baroque architects gave their buildings an unprecedented elaboration; creating particularly dramatic spatially complex interiors heighten by ornamentation and by the use of bold lighting effects.
Barrel Roof	A roof design which in cross section is arched.
Barrel Tile	Rounded clay roof tiles most often used on Spanish-style houses. Usually red, but available in many colors.
Barrel Vault	A roof or ceiling having semicylindrical form.
Bartizen	A small overhanging tower; common in Scotland (and France).
Bascule Bridge	From the French word for "see-saw," a bascule bridge features a movable span (leaf) which rotates on a horizontal hinged axis (trunnion) to raise one end vertically. A large counterweight is used to offset to weight of the raised leaf. May have a single raising leaf or two which meet in the center when closed.
Base	1) The lowest or supporting part or layer (the bottom) 2) The finish of a room at the juncture of the walls and floor.
Base board	The finish board covering the interior wall where the wall and floor meet.
Base course	The lowest part of masonry construction.
Base plate	A plate, usually of steel, upon which a column rests.
Base ply	An asphalt-saturated and/or coated felt installed as the first ply with 4 inch laps in a built-up roof system under the following felts which can be installed in a shingle-like fashion.
Baseline	A located line for reference control purposes.
Basement	The lowest story of a building, partially or entirely below ground
Basilica	The early Greek name for a royal palace; a large oblong building with double columns and a semicircular apse at one end, frequently used by Christian emperors of Rome for religious purposes.
Bath	A room equipped for bathing.
Bath house	A building equipped for bathing.
Bathroom	A room containing a bathtub or shower and usually a sink and toilet.
Bathtub	A tub or container for bathing.
Batt	A blanket insulation material.
Batt insulation	A preformed section of flexible fiberglass or mineral wool insulation with or without a vapor barrier covering on one side (either kraft paper or aluminum foil) sized to fit snugly in a framed cavity between studs or joists.
Batten	A narrow strip of wood or metal used to cover vertical joints between boards or panels.
Batten plate	A formed piece of metal designed to cover the joint between two lengths of metal edge.
Batter	Sloping a masonry or concrete wall upward and backward from

Terms	Description
	the perpendicular.
Batter board	Boards at exact elevations nailed to posts just outside the corners of a proposed building, so that strings may be stretched across the boards to locate the outline of the foundation.
Bay	1) An opening in a wall; a horizontal area division of a building, usually defined as the space between two columns or piers; 2) Any of a number of major vertical divisions in an interior, wall, etc.
Bay window	An alcove to a room, projecting from an outside wall and having its own windows. Especially one having its own foundation.
Bay, Bow and Oriel windows	These windows project out from the front or side of a house. Oriel windows generally project from an upper story, supported by a bracket. Bay windows are angled projections that rise up from the ground on the first floor. Bow windows are rounded projections, often formed of the window glass itself.
Bead	A narrow rounded molding.
Beam	A horizontal structure member supporting vertical loads by resisting bending. A girder is a larger beam, especially when made of multiple plates. Deeper, longer members are created by using trusses. Normally beams are larger and are spaced further apart than "joist."
Beam brick	A face brick for bonding to a concrete lintel, having a section like a right triangle.
Beam fill	Material, such as concrete, for filling in spaces between beams or joists in or on top of masonry walls.
Bearing	A device at the ends of beams which is placed on top of a pier or abutment. The ends of the beam rest on the bearing.
Bearing plate	A heavy metal plate for relieving and distributing concentrated weight, as from a column or truss end.
Bearing wall	A wall which supports any vertical load in a building (such as floors, roofs, joist, beams or girder) as well as its own weight.
Bed	1) A mass or heap; 2) A surface on which something rests; 3) A piece or part forming a foundation or base; 4) A foundation surface of earth or rock supporting a track, pavement, etc.; 5) the layer of mortar in which a brick, stone, etc is laid ; 6) The underside of a stone, brick, etc. laid in position; 7) The upperside of a stone laid in position; 8) A piece of furniture upon which a person sleeps or rests.
Bedding	A foundation or bottom layer.
Bedmould	The moulding or combination of mouldings projecting from a wall or frieze directly under the projecting portion of a cornice. The lowest portion of a classical cornice.
Bedroom	A room furnished with a bed.
Bell Reducer	In plumbing, a fitting shaped like a bell which has one opening of a smaller diameter used to reduce the size of the pipe in the line, and the opposite opening of larger diameter.
Bellow Grade	The portion of a building that is below ground level.
Belt	A horizontal course of decorative stone or brick exposed to the exterior face and encircling a masonry building
Belvedere	1) A building or architectural feature of a building that looks out upon a pleasing scene; 2) A pavilion or open structure on top of a building or hill.
Benchmark	A marked point of known or assumed elevation from which other elevations may be established.
Bending Moment	A measure of forces that break a beam by bending.
Bent	Part of a bridge substructure. A rigid frame commonly made of reinforced concrete or steel which supports a vertical load and is placed transverse to the length of a structure. Bents are

Terms	Description
	<p>commonly used to support beams and girders. An end bent is the supporting frame forming part of an abutment.</p> <p>Each vertical member of a bent may be called a column, pier, or pile. The horizontal member resting on top of the columns is a bent cap. The columns stand on top of some type of foundation or footer which is usually hidden below grade.</p> <p>A bent commonly has at least two or more vertical supports. Another term used to describe a bent is capped pile pier. A support having a single column with bent cap is sometimes called a "hammerhead" pier.</p>
Bent Glass	Flat glass that has been shaped while hot into curved shapes.
Bevel	1) To cut or slant at an angle; 2) A surface that does not form right angles with a surface adjacent to it; 3) To slant or incline.
Bevel Siding	Shingles or other siding board thicker on one edge than the other where the thick edge overlaps the thinner edge.
Beveled wood siding	Horizontal wood boards of varying widths, (usually 4", 6", 8", or 10") with lower edge thicker than upper edge.
Bib	A threaded faucet allowing a hose to be attached.
Bid	A complete and signed proposal to do the construction work or designated portion thereof for the dollar amount stated in the bid.
Bid Bond	Security posted by a bidder to ensure performance in accordance with a bid.
Bidder	One who submits a bid for a prime contract with the Owner, as distinct from a sub-bidder who submits a bid to another bidder. Technically, a bidder is not a contractor on a specific project until a contract exists between him and the Owner.
Bidding	Getting prices from various contractors and/or subcontractors.
Bidding Documents	The advertisement or invitation to bid, instructions to bidders, the bid form, the drawings, the specifications, and any Addenda issued prior to receipt of bids.
Bidet	1) A low basin like bathroom fixture, usually with spigots, used for bathing the genital and perineal areas; 2) A night commode, portable.
Bifold	Capable of being folded into two parts, as leaves that are hinged together.
Bill of Material	A parts list of materials accompanying a structural drawing.
Bite	The dimension by which the framing system overlaps the edge of the glazing infill.
Bitumen	Any of various mixtures of hydrocarbons occurring naturally or obtained through the distillation of coal or petroleum.
Blacktop	1) A bituminous substance, usually asphalt, for paving roads, parking lots, playgrounds, etc.; 2) to pave with blacktop
Blanket insulation	Roll type fiberglass insulation for installation over ceilings or on wall surfaces either laid flat or secured with impaling pins.
Bleeding	A migration of a liquid to the surface of a component or into/onto an adjacent material.
Blind	1) Something obstructing vision or light; 2) A camouflaged seat for hunting or viewing; 3) A place of concealment.
Blind Alley	A road, alley, etc. that is only open at one end.
Blind Arcade	A row of decorative arches that is attached to a wall surface and has no real openings.
Blind Arch	An arch applied to a wall for decorative purposes, without openings between the arches.
Blister	An enclosed raised spot evident on the surface of a building. They are mainly caused by the expansion of trapped air, water

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	vapor, moisture or other gases.
Block	1) A solid mass of stone, wood, etc. usually with one or more flat faces; 2) A hollow masonry building unit of cement, terra cotta, etc.; 3) A short length of plank serving as bridging as between joists; 4) To join (the ends of boards and the like) by fastening to a block of wood; 5) A small section of a city or town defined by neighboring and intersecting streets; 6) The length of one side of such a section; 7) A large building divided into separate apartments; 8) To sketch or outline roughly without details.
Blocking	Small wood framing members that fills in the open space between the floor and ceiling joists to add stiffness to the floors and ceilings.
Blue Print	Architectural plans for a building or construction project, which are likely to include floor plans, footing and foundation plans, elevations, plot plans, and various schedules and or details.
Board	1) A long flat slab of sawn lumber; 2) A table, esp. one for serving food.
Board & Batten	A siding with wide boards or sheets of plywood, etc set vertically with the butt ends covered by battens.
Board Foot	A unit of measure represented by a board one foot long, one foot wide and nominally one inch thick, or 144 cubic inches.
Board Measure	A system of cubic measurement for lumber; the basic unit is a board foot.
Boarding	1) Wooden boards collectively; 2) A structure of boards, such as a fence or flooring.
Bond	The arrangement of bricks in certain overlapping patterns to give the finished structural unit additional strength and to allow the individual elements to act together as a cohesive, integrated unit. Commonly used bonds are Running, common, English, and Flemish bonds.
Bond Breaker	A substance or a tape applied between two adjoining materials to prevent adhesion between them.
Bond Plaster	In addition to gypsum, bond plaster contains 2-5% lime by weight and chemical additives which improve the bond with dense non-porous surfaces such as concrete. It is used as a base coat.
Bond Stone	A stone, usually as a perpend, for bonding facing masonry to a masonry backing.
Border	The outer edge of anything, a margin, a boundary.
Borrowed light (or "lite")	An interior window between rooms which allows light from one room to enter another - It is an older term, but not entirely out of use - use instead "glazed opening."
Boss	1) A stud or knob; 2) An ornamental projection of a ceiling; 3) A carved stone positioned at the apex of a ribbed vault.
Bossage	Stonework having faces projecting beyond the mortar.
Bow (and wrap)	A curve, bend or other deviation from flatness in glass.
Bow Window	A rounded bay window.
Bowstring Truss	A truss having a curved top chord and straight bottom chord meeting at each end.
Box Beam	A beam or girder built up from shapes and having a rectangular cross section.
Box Column	A hollow wooden column for supporting a porch, usually having a rectangular cross section.
Box Cornice	A hollow cornice of boards and moldings nailed to rafters and lookouts.
Box Frame	1) A monolithic reinforced concrete structure having walls and

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	floors in the form of slabs; 2) A window frame with pockets for sash weights.
Box Girder	A steel beam built-up from many shapes to form a hollow cross-section.
Box Gutter	A gutter set into the slope of a roof above the cornice.
Box Nail	A nail having a long shank, smooth or barbed, with a sharp point and a flat head.
Box Sill	A sill for a building frame composed of a plate resting on the basement wall and a joist or a header resting at the outer edge of the plate, as well as a soleplate for the studs resting either directly on the joists or on the rough flooring.
Box Stoop	A high stoop reached by flights of steps along side the building front.
Brace	A structural member that reinforces a column, beam, or truss.
Braced Arch	An arch of steel, timber, etc. having a truslike framework maintaining rigidity under various eccentric loads.
Braced Frame	A building frame employing a heavy braced framework of solid girts motised into solid posts the full hieght of the frame with studs one story high filling the intercies.
Bracing	Ties and rods used for supporting and strengthening various parts of a building used for lateral stability for columns and beams.
Bracket	A horizontally projecting support for an overhanging weight such as cornice.
Bracketing	1) A series of brackets; 2) Framework supporting a cove, cornice, plaster ceiling ornemant, etc.
Brad	1) A slender flat nail; 2) To nail or secure with brads.
Brake Metal	Sheet metal that has been bent to the desired configuration.
Brattice	1) A partition or seperation wall in a level or shaft to form an air passage; 2) A timber tower or projecting wooden gallery.
Bratticing	An ornamental open work.
Breast Beam	A horizontal beam supporting an exterior wall over an opening.
Breast Work	The parapet of a building.
Breeze Way	A porch or passageway; open on the sides, for connecting two buildings.
BRI (Building Related Illness)	A discrete, identifiable disease or illness that can be traced to a specific pollutant or source within a building. (e.g., Legionnaire's disease, hypersensitivity pneumonitis).
Brick	A molded rectangular block of clay baked by the sun or in a kiln until hard and used as a building and paving material.
Bridge	1) A structure spaning and providing passage over a river, chasm, road, etc.; 2) A scaffold built over a walkway or street alongside a construction site to protect traffic from falling debris.
Bridging	A method of bracing wood or steel floor joists by providing lateral members between the joists. Cross-bridging forms an "x" shape between joists. The purpose of bridging is to distribute loading to several joists.
Bridle Joint	A heading joint in which the end of one member notched to form two parallel tenons is fitted into two gains cut into the edge of a second member.
Brown Coat	The coat of plaster directly beneath the finish coat. In three-coat work, the brown is the second coat.
BTU (British thermal unit)	The amount of heat energy required to raise the temperature of one pound of water through a change of one degree F.
Bubbling	In glazing, open or closed pockets in a sealant caused by release, production or expansion of gasses.
Buck	1) A sawhorse; 2) Any frame, rack, jig, etc. used to supportmaterials or partially assembled item during

Terms	Description
	manufacture ; 3) A doorframe of wood or metal set in wall to support hinges,hardware, finishwork, etc.
Buckstay	A beam held by stays to a masonry wall to keep the adjacent areas of the wall from being forced out.
Budget	The sum established by the Owner as available for the entire Project, including the construction budget, land costs, equipment costs, financing costs, compensation for professional services, contingency allowance, and other similar established or estimated costs.
Buffer Zone	An area within the home between the conditioned zones and the outside. This area is not conditioned (for instance, attics, attached garages, crawlspaces, basements, and enclosed porches).
Build	1) To construct by assembling and joining parts and materials; 2) The manner or form of construction; 3) A vertical joint. The vertical dimension of stone laid on its bed.
Builder	1) A person who builds; 2) A person who constructs buildings under contract or as a speculation.
Building	An edifice, structure.
Building Automation System (BAS)	The Building Automation System (BAS) is a direct digital control (DDC) based automation system that allows the building owner/operator, to completely manage the facility i.e., HVAC control, lighting control, fuel monitoring, security management, access control, intrusion detection and system integration from a single point of control. The BAS will also schedule occupancy and control sequences to take advantage of energy savings.
Building Brick	Brick for building purposes not especially treated for texture or color, formerly called "common brick." It is stronger than face brick.
Building Code	A set of laws drafted by the governing body of a borough, town or city to control building construction "to promote the public health, safety and general welfare" of the people in that locality.
Building Energy Efficiency Standards	The building codes and energy standards published by Federal department of energy (DOE) and adopted by state or other jurisdictions to control local construction activity (for instance California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2, Chapter 2-53; provides guidelines for energy efficiency of buildings constructed in California)
Building Envelope	The parts of the building: all external building materials, windows, and walls that enclose the building's internal space.
Building Permit	Written authorization from the city, county or other governing regulatory body giving permission to construct or renovate a building. A building permit is specific to the building project described in the application.
Building Trades	Those trades, carpentry, masonry, etc., that are primarily concerned with the construction and finishing of buildings.
Building Types	A classification of a building according to principal activities or uses for which it was constructed, such as housing, jail, shopping center. This is not the same as an "occupancy type" of building codes.
Built-in	Built so as to be an integral and permanent part of a larger structure.
Builtup Beam	A beam constructed of smaller members fastened together.
Builtup Roof	A method of roofing where the roofing materials, felt and asphalt, are laid in several layers.
Bulkhead	1) In commercial buildings, the area below the display windows at the sidewalk level; 2) A horizontal or inclined outside door over a stairway leading to a cellar; 3) A boxlike structure, as on

Terms	Description
	a roof, covering a stairway or other opening; 4) A retaining structure of timber, steel, or reinforced concrete used for shore protection and in harbor works.
Bullate	Having the surface covered with irregular and slight elevations, giving a blistered appearance.
Bullfloat	A tool used to finish and flatten a slab. After screeding, the first stage in the final finish of concrete, smoothes and levels hills and voids left after screeding. Sometimes substituted for darbying. A large flat or tool usually of wood, aluminum or magnesium with a handle.
Bullnose	1) A rounded or obtuse exterior angle as the corner made by two walls; 2) A structural member used in forming such an angle. 3) Having semicircular or quadrantal ends.
Bunglow	A single story house, lightly built, generally surrounded by a veranda.
Butler's Pantry	A service room between a kitchen and a dining room, typically equipped with counters, a sink, and storage space for china and silver.
Butt Glazing	The installation of glass products where the vertical glass edges are without structural supporting mullions.
Butt Hinge	A hinge for a door or the like, secured to the butting surfaces instead of the adjacent sides of the door and its frame.
Butt Joint	A joint formed by two pieces united end to end without overlapping.
Butt Plate	A protective plate, usually of metal, on the end of a post, column, or beam.
Butterfly Roof	A roof with two sides sloping down toward the interior of the house.
Buttering	In glazing, application of sealant or compound to the flat surface of some member before placing the member in position, such as the buttering of a removable stop before fastening the stop in place.
Button	1) A small disk or knob; 2) A fastener for a door or window having two arms and rotating on a pivot that is attached to the frame; 3) Any small knob or disk pressed to activate an electrical circuit.
Buttress	1) A wall projecting perpendicularly from another wall which prevents its outward movement and reinforce it. Usually wider at its base and tapering toward the top; 2) Any external prop or support built to steady a structure by opposing its outward thrusts.
Butyl	Type of non-curing and non-skinning sealant made from butylene. Usually used for internal applications.
Buzzer	A signaling apparatus similar to an electronic bell but without hammer and gong producing a buzzing sound by the vibration of an armature.
BX-Armoured cable	A factory assembly of insulated conductors inside a flexible metallic covering. It can be run except where exposed to excessive moisture and should not be run below grade. It must always be grounded and uses its armor as an equipment ground. It is difficult to pull out old wires or insert new ones.
By Others	The term "by others" means that work shown or described in the contract documents and labeled with this designation is not included in the specific sub-trade's contract, but will be required to be done within the General Contractor's contract.
By Owner	The term "by Owner" means that work shown or described in the contract documents and labeled with this designation is not included in the General Contractor's contract, but will be

Terms	Description
	completed under a separate contract with another contractor by the Owner. Coordination and scheduling of the work thus described shall be the responsibility of the General Contractor.
C/D circuit	A circuit where electricity flows in one direction only, at a constant rate.
Cabana	1) A small cabin or tentlike structure for use as a bathhouse, especially by a beach or swimming pool; 2) A cabin or cottage.
Cabin	1) A small hut, house or cottage, usually of simple design; 2) An enclosed space for temporary occupancy.
Cabin Hook	A hook and eye for fastening a cabinet door or the like.
Cabinet	1) A small room; 2) A cupboard attached to a wall used to store kitchen utensils or toilet articles; 3) A piece of furniture with shelves, drawers, etc. for holding or displaying items; 4) A small case with compartments for valuables or othewr objects; 5) A small chamber or booth for special use; 6) A room set aside for the display os small works of art.
Cabinet Wood	Any wood that is suitable for cabinet work.
Cable	Part of a suspension bridge extending from an anchorage over the tops of the towers and down to the opposite anchorage. Suspenders or hangers are attached along its length to support the deck.
Cable-stayed Bridge	A variation of suspension bridge in which the tension members extend from one or more towers at varying angles to carry the deck. Allowing much more freedom in design form, this type does not use cables draped over towers, nor the anchorages at each end, as in a traditional suspension bridge.
CAE	Combined Annual Efficiency (CAE) is a measure of the amount of heat produced for every dollar of fuel consumed for both home heating and water heating.
Cainet Work	The finish interior woodwork.
Caisson	A deep foundation type which is constructed by boring a large diameter hole in the ground and filling it with concrete.
Calcium Chloride	A chemical used to speed up curing of concrete during damp conditions.
Camber	A positive, upward curve built into a beam which compensates for some of the vertical load and anticipated deflection.
Camelback Truss	A truss having a curved top chord and straight bottom chord meeting at each end, especially when there are more than one used end to end.
Canopy	1) An overhanging roof; 2) A projection over windows and doors to protect them from weather.
Cant Strip	A slanted or angled board laid at roof-wall intersection or in back of a parapet, to eliminate a sharp, right angle on the roof.
Cantilever	A structural member projecting horizontally well beyond its vertical support.
Cap Sheets	In roofing, one to four plies of felt bonded and top coated with bitumen that is laid over an existing roof as a treatment for defective roofs.
Cape Chisel	Tool used to clean out mortar joints on brick.
Capital	The top part of a pillar or column.
Carbide Bit	Tool used to drill holes in brick or block.
Carpet	A heavy fabric made of wool or nylon for covering floors.
Carport	A shelter for automobiles usually opens on one or more sides.
Carriage	The horizontal part of stair stringers that suport the treads.
Case	1) A surrounding frame or framework; 2) To cover (a surface of a wall, well, shaft, etc.) with a facing orlining, revet; 3) A small or portable container for enclosing something.
Case wall	A partition to enclose mechanical and plumbing systems.

Terms	Description
Casement	A metal or wooden framed window that is hinged to open outward or inward.
Casing	The exposed trim molding, around a door or window; may be either flat or molded.
Casing Nail	A nail having a small, conical head, slenderer than a common nail of the same length, used for laying floors, attaching matchboarding etc.
Cast Stone	A concrete with fine aggregate, used to imitate natural stone.
Castellated Girder	A steel beam fabricated by making a zig-zag cut along its web, then welding the two sides together at their peaks. This creates a beam which has increased depth and therefore greater strength, but is not increased in weight.
Catenary	Curve formed by a rope or chain hanging freely between two supports. The curved cables or chains used to support suspension bridges may be referred to as catenaries.
Catslide Roof	A pitched roof covering one side of a building and continuing at the same pitch over a rear extension.
Caulk	1) The application of sealant to a joint, crack or crevice; 2) A compound used for sealing that has minimum joint movement capability; sometimes called low performance sealant.
Caulking	A waterproof material used to seal cracks.
Cavity	A hollow place.
Cavity wall	A hollow wall, usually of masonry, Made up of two walls joined by ties or webs.
Ceiling	1) The inner roof of a building; 2) The overhead interior surface of a room; 3) Vaulting, as in a medieval church.
Cell	A small room.
Cellar	1) An underground room; 2) a room or set of rooms used for storage, wholly or partly underground, usually under a building.
Cellar Sash	A window of relatively small size having two or three panes arranged horizontally.
Cellulose Insulation	Ground up newspaper that is treated with a fire retardant.
Celotex	A brand of board made of cane fiber, used for insulation.
Cement	1) Any substance used in its soft state to join other materials together and which afterward dries and hardens; 2) Any of various calcined mixtures of clay and limestone, usually mixed with water, sand, gravel, etc., to form concrete, that are used as a building material.
Cement mixtures	<u>Rich</u> - 1 part cement, 2 parts sand, 3 parts coarse aggregate. Used for concrete roads and waterproof structures. <u>Standard</u> - 1 part cement, 2 parts sand, 4 parts coarse aggregate. Used for reinforced work floors, roofs, columns, arches, tanks, sewers, conduits, etc. <u>Medium</u> - 1 part cement, 2 ½ parts sand, 5 parts coarse aggregate. Used for foundations, walls, abutments, piers, etc. <u>Lean</u> - 1 part cement, 3 parts sand, 6 parts coarse aggregate. Used for all mass concrete work, large foundations, backing for stone masonry, etc. *Mixtures are always listed cement to sand to aggregate
Cenotaph	A monument erected in honor of a dead person or persons whose remains lie elsewhere.
Center	The middle part of anything.
Centering	A temporary framework for supporting a masonry arch during construction until it can stand on its own.
Centerline	1) Any line that bisects a plane figure; 2) A line along the center of a roadway that divides it into separate sections for traffic moving opposite directions.
Central	Relating to or situated in the center.

Terms	Description
Central heating	A single source of heat which is then distributed by pipes or ducts.
Certificate of Occupancy	A document stating that a building is approved for occupancy. The building authority issues the Certificate of Occupancy.
Certificate of Title	A document given to the home buyer with the deed, stating that the title to the property named in the deed is clearly established.
Certification of Payment	A signed statement from the Architect to the Owner confirming the amount of money due the Contractor for Work accomplished and/or materials and equipment suitably stored.
Cess Pipe	A waste pipe, especially one draining from a cesspool.
Cess Pit	A pit for receiving wastes such as sewage.
Cess Pool	1) A pit, cistern or well to capture and hold sewage; 2) Any receptacle of filth.
CFM (cubic foot per minute)	The measure of volume of air. When testing systems, find the CFM by multiplying the face velocity times the free area in square feet. The face velocity is the amount of air passing through the face of an outlet or return. Free area is the total area of the openings in the outlet or inlet through which air can pass.
Chair Rail	A molding that runs horizontally along the wall at about 3 feet from the ground for preventing the backs of chairs from rubbing against the plaster or wainscoting.
Chalet	1) A herdsman's hut in the Swiss Alps; 2) A kind of farmhouse, low with wide eaves, common in alpine regions.
Chalk Line	1) A string which is impregnated with chalk and held tight and plucked to make a guideline on a surface; 2) The mark made by such a device.
Chamfer	1) A cut that is made in wood or other material usually at 45 degree angle to the surface; 2) A bevel; 3) A small furrow.
Chancel	The area around the altar of a church reserved for the clergy and sometimes the choir, often enclosed by a lattice or railing.
Change Order	A written order to the Contractor signed by the Contractor, Owner, and the Architect, issued after the execution of the Contract, authorizing a Change in the Work or an adjustment in the Contract Sum or the Contract Time. The Contract Sum and the Contract Time may be changed only by Change Order.
Channel	1) A groove or furrow; 2) A flute in a column; 3) Any of the prominent grooves in a triglyph; 4) Any structural member having the form of three sides of a triangle; 5) The bed of a stream, river, or other waterway; 6) The deeper part of a waterway; 7) A navigable route between two bodies of water; 8) A wide strait.
Channel Glazing	The installation of glass products into U-shaped glazing channels. The channels may have fixed stops; however, at least one glazing stop on one edge must be removable.
Channel Iron	A rolled steel or iron shape having U-shape cross section, with two narrower sides perpendicular to a broader one.
Channeling	Ornamentation with flutes or channels.
Chapel	1) A room or building for worship or ceremonies; 2) A room where funerals are held; 3) A print shop or printing house.
Chapiter	The upper part or capitol of a pillar or column.
Chaptrel	A capitol, as on a pilaster or vaulting shaft, engaged in masonry on one or more sides.
Chase	1) A groove, furrow, or trench; 2) A passage through the structure of a building to permit wires, pipes, or other conduits; 3) To ornament by engraving or embossing; 4) A private game preserve.
Chateau	1) A castle or fortress; 2) A country estate or manor house; 3) A

Terms	Description
	stately residence resembling a French styled castle.
Chatri	A domed pavilion supported by columns at each corner, which is a characteristic element of Mogul architecture in India.
Checking	A pattern of surface cracks running in irregular lines. When found in the top pour of an asphalt built-up roof, checking is the preliminary stage of alligatoring.
Checks	Splits or cracks in boards caused by seasoning.
Checkvalve	A valve permits passage thru a pipe in only one direction.
Chemical Injection Grouting	Leak repair technique usually used below grade in cracks and joints in concrete walls and floors that involves injection of sealant (usually urethane) that reacts with water to form a seal.
Chevron	A 'zigzag' pattern characteristic of Romanesque decoration that is often carved around pillars, arches and doorways.
Chime	1) To produce a musical tone by striking a bell, gong, etc.; 2) An apparatus for striking a bell for announcing or garnering attention.
Chimney	1) A vertical structure containing a passage for the exhaust of smoke and gases from a building; 2) The portion of such structure that rises above the roof.
Chimney Breast	A part of the chimney or fireplace that projects out from a wall, usually inside of the building.
Chimney Cap	A raised cover for the top of the chimney, usually in the form of a slab or cornice.
Chimney Corner	1) The corner or side of a fireplace; 2) A place near the fire.
Chimney Piece	1) A mantelpiece; 2) A decoration over a fireplace.
Chimney Place	An open hearth.
Chimney Pot	An earthenware or metal pipe or deflector, often cylindrical, fitted on top of the chimney to increase draft and reduce of disperse smoke.
Chimney Stack	A group of flues in the same chimney.
Chipboard	Type of wood panel manufactured from wood chips and glue - not a correct term - use the term "particle board" instead.
Choir	The space reserved for the clergy in the church, usually east of the transept but, in some instances, extending into the nave.
Chord	Either of the two principal members of a truss extending from end to end, connected by web members.
Cinder Block	A building block made of cement and cinders.
Circuit	1) The path of an electric current; 2) A closed loop of wire in which an electric current can flow.
Circuit Breaker	Simple switch-like device which automatically opens a circuit when the rated current is exceeded as in the case of a short circuit.
Circulation	Architecture is not experienced statically. Circulation routes, the means by which access is provided through and around a building, are very often key elements in creating an understanding of architecture as users move from one part of a building to another through a carefully considered sequence of spaces. That part of a room or building required for movement of people from place to place.
Cistern	A tank or other reservoir to store water.
City Plan	The developmental plan for a city arrived at by the process of city planning.
City Planning	The activity or profession of determining the future physical arrangement and condition of a city.
Civil Engineer	1) A person who designs public works, as roads, bridges, canals, dams, etc.; 2) A person who supervises The construction of public works.
Cladding	The lightweight outer skin of a building that does not carry any

Terms	Description
	weight or support the building, but does keep wind and rain out. A term used to describe the siding or materials covering the exterior of a building.
Clam Shell Door	A door consisting of two panels that spread open vertically.
Clapboard	Tapered horizontal boards used as siding, thickest on their bottom edge; each overlaps the one below. Also know as weatherboard or siding.
Clay	1) Soft plastic earth; 2) A natural earthy material, that is plastic when wet, used for making bricks, pottery, etc.
Clearance	1) The distance between two objects; an amount of clear space; 2) A clear space, a clearing.
Cleat	A wedge-shaped piece (usually of metal) which serves as a support or check. A strip fastened across something to give strength or hold something in position.
Clerestory	1) A set of high windows, usually above a roof line; 2) A portion of an interior rising above adjacent rooftops and having windows admitting daylight into the interior; 3) A raised construction having windows or slits to admit light and or air.
Clerestory Window	A window or series of windows in a wall above the eye line, for lighting and/or ventilation of the building.
Clinch	1) To fasten objects together with screws, nails, etc.; 2) To secure a nail, screw, etc., in position by beating down the protruding point; 3) The bent portion of a clinched nail, screw, etc ; 4) A clinched nail or fastening ; 5) To hold fast, be secure ; 6) The act of clinching; 7) A knot or bend in which a bight or eye is formed by making a loop or turn in the rope and seizing the end to the standing part.
Clinker	1) A hard brick used especially for paving; 2) A vitrified mass of brick.
Clinkerbuilt	Faced or surfaced with boards, plates, etc., each course of which overlaps the next.
Clip Bond	A form of brickwork raking bond for a facing of all stretchers are tied in to the backing every few courses by diagonally set bricks that project from the backing into angles made by cutting off the concealed corners of the face brick.
Clip Joint	A mortar joint made higher than usual to level the course above.
Cloister	In religious institutions, a courtyard with covered walks.
Cloistered Vault	A vault having the form of number of intersecting coves.
Close	1) To shut in or surround on all sides; 2) To stop or obstruct a gap, entrance, aperture, etc; 3) To bring together the parts of; join, unite; 4) to fit tightly; 5) An enclosed place especially one about a building; 6) A narrow entrance or alley terminating in a dead end; 7) A courtyard enclosed with one narrow entrance.
Close studding	The division of a wall into narrow panels by vertical studs in timber framed buildings.
Closed cornice	A slightly projecting wooden cornice composed of a frieze board and a crown molding without a soffit.
Closed plan	An office floor plan consisting of fully closed office spaces.
Closet	1) A small room, recess, or cabinet for storing clothes, food, utensils, etc.; 2) A small private room, especially one used for prayer, meditation, etc.
Closing	1) Something that closes; a fastening; 2) The final phase of a transaction, especially a meeting at which procedures are carried out in the execution of a contract for a real estate sale.
Closure	1) Something that encloses or shuts in; 2) Something that closes or shuts; 3) An architectural screen or parapet, especially one that stands free between columns or piers; 4) The completion of a land survey closed traverse in such a way that

Terms	Description
	the point of origin and the endpoint coincide within an acceptably small margin of error.
CMU - Concrete Masonry Unit	Refer terms concrete and masonry. Do not use "Cement Block" or "Cinder Block."
Coach House	A small building, usually part of an estate or adjacent to a main house, used for housing coaches, carriages, and other vehicles.
Coach Screw	A lag screw.
Coal tar Pitch	A bituminous material which is a by product from the coking of coal. It is used as the waterproofing material for tar and gravel built-up roofing.
Coaming	A raised border around an opening in a deck, roof, or floor, designed to prevent water from running below.
Coarse	1) Composed of relatively large parts or particles; 2) Lacking in fineness or delicacy of texture or structure.
Coating	A layer of any liquid product spread over a surface for protection.
Coaxial cable	A cable that consists of an insulated conducting tube with a central insulated conductor for transmitting high frequency electrical signals.
Cob	A mixture of clay and straw used as a building material.
Cobble	1) Rock, clay, coal or other substances in lumps larger than a pebble and smaller than a boulder; 2) A cobblestone; 3) To pave with cobblestone.
Cobble Stone	A naturally rounded stone larger than a pebble and smaller than a boulder used in paving.
Codes	Regulations, ordinances or statutory requirements of a village, town, city, county, state, or federal government relating to building construction, adopted and administered for the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare.
Cohesive Failure	Internal splitting of a compound resulting from over-stressing of the compound.
Cold applied	Products that can be applied without heating. These are in contrast to products which need to be heated to be applied.
Cold Patch	In roofing, a roof repair done with cold applied material.
Collar	In roofing, a conical metal cap flashing used in conjunction with vent pipes or stacks usually located several inches above the plane of the roof, for the purpose of shedding water away from the base of the vent.
Collar Beam	A horizontal member joining opposing rafters below the ridge in roof framing.
Colonnade	1) A series of regularly spaced columns supporting an entablature and usually one side of a roof. An arcade; 2) A series of trees planted in a row alongside a drive or avenue.
Colonial	Noting or pertaining to the architecture, ornamentation, or style of the British-American colonies of the 17th and 18th centuries.
Colonnade	A row of columns, usually equidistant.
Column	A vertical load-carrying structural member supporting horizontal members (beams, girders, etc.).
Commode	1) A toilet ; 2) A portable toilet with a chair like frame; 3) A stand or cupboard containing a chamberpot and washbasin; 4) A low cabinet or other furniture containing drawers and or shelves.
Common	A tract of land owned or used jointly by the residents of a community, usually a central square or park.
Common Property	Property belonging to all members of a community.
Common Rafter	A rafter that has no other function than to bear the roof.
Common Room	A room or lounge for informal use by all.
Common Wall	A wall that serves two compartments.
Community Center	A building or other place in which members of a community may

Terms	Description
	gather for social, educational, or cultural activities.
Compaction	The consolidation of earth resulting from natural settling of the site or from artificial means on the fill.
Compartment	1) A part or space marked or partitioned off; 2) A separate room, section, etc; 3) A private room with toilet facilities; 4) A distinct major division of a design.
Compass Rafter	A rafter cut to a curve on one or both edges.
Compatible	Two or more substances which can be mixed or blended without separating, reacting, or affecting either material adversely.
Complete	The term "complete" means all surfaces or areas of a construction item.
Component	Any one part of an assembly associated with construction.
Composite Board	An insulation board which has two different insulation types laminated together in 2 or 3 layers.
Compound	A chemical formulation of ingredients used to produce a caulking, elastomeric joint sealant, etc.
Compound Pier	A pier with several shafts attached or detached, or half-shafts against the faces of it. Compound piers have angular pieces separating the rolls, clustered piers do not.
Compound Pillar	A pillar that is either made up of a solid core surrounded by a cluster of shafts, or is simply a cluster of shafts.
Compression	A force which tends to make a member fail because of crushing.
Compression Gasket	A gasket designed to function under compression.
Compression Set	The permanent deformation of a material after removal of the compressive stress.
Concrete	A mixture of Portland cement, large and small aggregate, water and admixture.
Condemn	To legally declare unfit for use.
Condensation	The appearance of moisture (water vapor) on the surface of an object caused by warm moist air coming into contact with a colder object.
Condominium	1) Joint or concurrent dominion; 2) An apartment house, office building or other multiple unit complex where the units are individually owned and sharing ownership in any common grounds, passageways, etc.; 3) A unit in such a building.
Conduction	The flow of heat from one part of a substance to another part. A piece of iron with one end placed in a fire will soon become warm from end to end, from the transfer of heat by the actual collision of the air molecules.
Conductor	1) In roofing, a pipe for conveying rain water from the roof gutter to a drain, or from a roof drain to the storm drain; also called a leader, downspout, or downpipe; 2) In electrical contracting, a wire through which a current of electricity flows, better known as an electric wire.
Conductor Pipe	A round, square, or rectangular pipe used to lead water from the roof to the sewer.
Conduit	A protective metal tube for electric wiring.
Connect	To join, fasten together, unite, and bind.
Connector	Any device that connects or fastens two or more objects together.
Conservation	The art of the careful restoration and recycling of run-down and redundant buildings has become an increasingly sophisticated practice.
Construction Joint	A joint in concrete flatwork or walls which is necessary for stopping the pour for the day - sometimes referred to as a "cold joint," but do not use that.

Terms	Description
Construction	1) The act of constructing; 2) Something that is constructed; 3) The occupation or industry of building; 4) The way in which a thing is made or constructed.
Construction Documents	The term "Construction Documents" means the Scope of Work list and reference drawings contained within the Volume by that name.
Construction Loan	A mortgage loan to be used to pay for labor and materials going into the house. Money is usually advanced to the builder as construction progresses and is repaid when the house is completed and sold.
Construction Management	The combined operations for the authorization, purchasing, supervision, accomplishment, and acceptance of a construction project.
Consultant	An individual or organization engaged by the Owner or Architect to render professional consulting services, supplementing the Architect's services. Types of consultants could be Engineers, acoustical, energy, or cost consultants.
Continuous Beam	A beam that spans three or more supports as one structural element.
Continuous Span	A superstructure which extends as one piece over multiple supports.
Contract	1) An agreement between two parties for the doing or not doing of something; 2) The written form of such agreement; 3) To assign work by means of a contract.
Contract Administration	The duties and responsibilities of the Architect during the Construction Phase, which includes observation of construction, checking shop drawings, and approving pay requests.
Contract Documents	The term "Contract Documents" means all of the documents which make up the Contract between Owner and Contractor, including the Contract itself, the General and Special Conditions, the Technical Specifications, the Construction Documents (Scope of Work and Drawings), all Addenda issued prior to signing of the Contract and Change Orders issued by the Owner and agreed to by the Contractor after the signing of the Contract.
Contractor	A person who contracts to furnish supplies or perform work at a certain price or rate.
Control Joint	A control joint controls or accommodates movement in the surface component of a roof.
Convection	A method of transferring heat by the actual movement of heated molecules, usually by a freestanding unit such as a furnace.
Convectector	Any fluid or device that transfers heat by convection.
Cook Stove	A device, usually wood or coal burning, for use in cooking, having a flat surface with heat conducting areas to set cookware on.
Cook Top	A device for use in cooking having a flat surface with heating elements, usually electric or gas, and usually installed into a cabinet.
Cooling Tower	A large device mounted on roofs, consisting of many baffles over which water is pumped in order to reduce its temperature.
COP	Coefficient of Performance of a heat pump means the ratio of the rate of useful heat output delivered by the complete heat pump unit (exclusive of supplementary heating) to the corresponding rate of energy input, in consistent units and under operating conditions. COPs vary with the outside temperature: as the temperature falls, the COP falls also, since the heat pump is less efficient at lower temperatures. ARI standards compare equipment at two

Terms	Description
	temperatures, 47° F and 17°F, to give you an idea of the COP in both mild and colder temperatures. Geothermal equipment is compared at 32°F enter water temperature. COP & HSPF can not be compared equally. Air Source Equipment is rated by HSPF or COP and Geothermal equipment is rated by COP.
Cope	1) To join two members by undercutting the end of one of them to the profile of the other so that that the joint produced resembles a miter joint; 2) To cut away a part of one member so that it may be joined to another at an angle.
Copestone	1) The top stone of a building or structure; 2) A stone used for or in a coping; 3) The crown or completion; the finishing touch.
Coping	1) A construction unit placed at the top of the parapet wall to serve as a cover for the wall or to prevent water from getting into the parapet; 2) A flat cover of stone or brick that protects the top of a wall.
Copper	1) A malleable, ductile, metallic element, having a reddish-brown color, used as an electrical conductor, and in the manufacture of alloys such as bronze and brass; 2) To cover, coat, or sheath with copper.
Copper Pipe Types	Type K has the heaviest or thickest wall and is generally used underground. It has a green stripe. Type L has a medium wall thickness and is most commonly used for water service and for general interior water piping. It has a blue stripe. Type M has a thin wall and many codes permit its use in general water piping installation. It has a red stripe.
Corbeil	A sculptured ornament having the form of a basket, especially on a capital.
Corbel	A bracket of stone, wood, brick, or other building material, projecting from the face of a wall and generally used to support a cornice or arch.
Corbel Arch	Masonry built over an opening by progressively overlapping the courses from each side until they meet at the top center. Not a true arch as the structure relies on strictly vertical compression, not axial compression.
Corbel Table	A horizontal masonry construction, as a cornice or part of a wall, supported on corbels or on arches supported by corbels.
Corbel Vault	A structure having the form of a vault but constructed on the principle of the corbel arch.
Corbeling	1) A system of corbels; 2) The construction of corbels.
Cordon	1) The coping of a scarp; 2) A projecting course of stones at the base of a parapet; 3) A stringcourse, especially one having little or no projection; 4) A cut stone riser on a stepped ramp or the like; 5) A fruit tree or shrub trained to grow along a support or a series of supports.
Core	A small section cut from any material to show internal composition.
Core Zone	Typically the area at the center of the floor plan containing the services and circulation spaces -- such as the elevator shaft, fire escape stairs and equipment room. The AHU is also often located in this zone.
Corner Bead	A metal molding built into plaster corners to prevent the accidental breaking off of the plaster.
Cornice	A horizontal projecting course on the exterior of a building, usually at the base of the parapet.
Corrosion	The deterioration of metal by chemical or electrochemical reaction resulting from exposure to weathering, moisture, chemicals or other agents or media.

Terms	Description
Corrugated	Folded or shaped into parallel ridges or furrows so as to form a symmetrically wavy surface.
Cost Breakdown	A breakdown of all the anticipated costs on a construction or renovation project.
Counter	A truss web member which functions only when a structure is partially loaded.
Counter Flashing	A flashing used under the regular flashing.
Coupling	In plumbing, a short collar with only inside threads at each end, for receiving the ends of two pipes which are to be fitted and joined together. A right/left coupling is one used to join 2 gas pipes in limited space.
Course	A single layer of brick or stone or other building material.
Coursed Rubble	Wall made with stones or flints levelled up in courses.
Court	An open space surrounded partly or entirely by a building or buildings.
Covenants	Rules usually developed by a builder or developer regarding the physical appearance of buildings in a particular geographic area. Typical covenants address building height, appropriate fencing and landscaping, and the type of exterior material (stucco, brick, stone, siding, etc) that may be used.
Coving	A concave surface forming a junction between a ceiling and a wall.
Cradle	Part of a suspension bridge which carries the cable over the top of the tower.
Crawl space	An open area between the floor of a building and the ground.
Crawl space	An unfinished, accessible space below the first floor, generally less than full story height, but at least 1'-6" high clear under the joists or beams.
Crazing	A series of hairline cracks in the surface of weathered materials, having a web-like appearance. Also, hairline cracks in pre-finished metals caused by bending or forming. (see brake metal)
Cricket	A sloped roof device used to channel and direct water at intersections.
Cripple	A structural member that is cut to less than full length. Such as the studding pieces above a window or door.
Cross Bracing	Boards nailed diagonally across studs or other boards to make a framework rigid.
Cross Bridging	Bracing between floor joists to add stiffness to the floors.
Crosshatch	Lines drawn closely together at opposite angles to show a sectional cut.
Crossing	The space in a cruciform church formed by the intersection of the nave and the transept.
Crossing Square	The area in a cruciform church that is formed by the intersection (crossing) of a nave and transept of equal width.
Crown	On road surfaces, where the center is the highest point and the surface slopes downward in opposite directions, assisting in drainage. Also a point at the top of an arch.
Cruciform	Cross-shaped. Most often used to describe churches, with the nave forming the body of the cross, the altar and choir at the top (usually to the east), and the transept forming the arms of the cross.
Cruck	A pair of timbers that act as the principal members for a roof.
Crypt	A vaulted underground room beneath a church which may be used either as a burial place or for storage.
Cull	Anything cut out from the rest and rejected as below standard.
Culvert	A drain, pipe or channel which allows water to pass under a road, railroad or embankment.

Terms	Description
Cupola	A dome, usually small, topping a roof or turret.
Curb	A very low wall.
Cure	To allow materials to dry at a proper rate to achieve a desired strength, flexibility, etc.
Curing	In concrete application, the process in which mortar and concrete harden. The length of time is dependent upon the type of cement, mix proportion, required strength, size and shape of the concrete section, weather and future exposure conditions. The period may be 3 weeks or longer for lean concrete mixtures or it may be only a few days for richer mixes. Favorable curing temperatures range from 50 to 70° F. Design strength is achieved in 28 days.
Curing Agent	One part of a multi-part sealant which, when added to the base, will cause the base to change its physical state by chemical reaction between the two parts.
Curtain Wall	An exterior wall which encloses but does not support the structural frame of the building.
Cut off	A piece of roofing membrane consisting of one or more narrow plies of felt usually moped in hot to seal the edge of insulation at the end of a day's work.
Cutback	In roofing, basic asphalt or tar which has been "cut back" with solvents and oils so that the material become fluid.
Dado	The finishing (often with panelling) of the lower part of a wall, usually in a classical interior, in origin a formalized continuous pedestal.
Dado Rail	The moulding along the top of the dado.
Damp Course	A row or layer of waterproof material.
Damp Proofing	A process used on concrete, masonry or stone surfaces to repel water, the main purpose of which is to prevent the coated surface from absorbing rain water while still permitting moisture vapor to escape from the structure. "Dampproofing" generally applies to surfaces above grade; "waterproofing" generally applies to surfaces below grade.
Damper	Valve for controlling airflow. When ordering registers, make sure each supply outlet has a damper so the air flow can be adjusted and turned off. Dampers maybe either manually or automatically operated. Automatic dampers are required for exhaust air ducts.
Darby	A flat tool used to smooth concrete flatwork immediately after screeding.
Datum	A reference elevation to which other elevations are measured.
Dead Load	The constant, design-weight (of the roof) and any permanent fixtures attached above or below.
Deadening	Construction intended to prevent the passage of sound.
Decay	The disintegration of a material from weathering and/or organic means.
Deck	An elevated platform. "Deck" is also commonly used to refer to the above-ground floors in multi-level parking garage.
Deflect	To bend or deform under weight.
Deflection	The displacement in a structural member that occurs when a load is applied to the structure.
Dehumidify	To reduce the moisture content in the air.
Delete	To take something out of the building or contract - do not confuse with "omit" which means not to install something in the first place.
Demising Wall	An interior wall or partition used to sub-divide tenant spaces from one another.
Demolition	Removal of an entire building -- see also "alteration" and

Terms	Description
	"selective demolition."
Density	The number of things, people, buildings, etc. in a calculated area.
Dentil	One of a series of small blocks used to form an ornamental row; the collective term is dentillations used to describe a decoration.
Depreciation	The loss of value of a thing.
Design Pressure	Specified pressure a product is designed to withstand.
Designer	1) One who designs and drafts; 2) The designation of a person who designs buidings but is not a registered architect.
Detail	A drawing, at a larger scale, of a part of another drawing, indicating in detail the design, location, composition and correlation of the elements and materials shown. (Usually referring to a plan detail.)
Dew point	The critical temperature at which vapor condenses from the atmosphere and forms water.
Dimension Line	A line with demarcations at each end to show the distance between two points.
Directed	Terms such as "directed," "requested," "authorized," "selected," "approved," "required," and "permitted" mean "directed by the Architect," "requested by the Architect," and similar phrases.
Distortion	Alteration of viewed images caused by variations in glass flatness or inhomogeneous portions within the glass. An inherent characteristic of heat-treated glass.
Dome	A hemispherical roof form.
Doorstop	The strips on a door jamb against which the door closes.
Doric	The simplest of the three classical orders of Greek architecture.
Dormer	A window set vertically into a small gable projecting from a sloping roof. Also, sometimes refers to the gable holding such a window.
Double Glazing	A pane made of two pieces of glass with air space on between and sealed to provide insulation.
Double Header	Two or more timbers joined for strength.
Double Hung	A window having top and bottom sashes each capable of movement up and down.
Double hung window	A type of window containing two movable sash sections which slide open vertically.
Double Plate	When two layers of 2 x 4's are placed on top of studs in framing a wall.
Double Strength	In float glass, approximately 1/8" (3 mm.) thick.
Double Tee	Refers usually to a precast roof deck panel poured with two fins in its underside to impart flexural rigidity.
Downspout	A pipe to carry rainwater from the gutter or roof to the ground or the sewer - can be sheet metal, plastic, or other type of piping material.
Drain	A pipe for carrying waste water.
Drawing Detail	A top view drawing of a building or roof showing the roof perimeter and indicating the projections and roof mounted equipment, drawn to scale.
Drawing Outline	A top view drawing of a building or roof showing only the perimeter drawn to scale.
Dressed Lumber	Lumber machined and smoothed at the mill, usually 1/2 inch less than nominal or rough size.
Dressed Stone	Blocks of stone that have been trimmed and given a smooth face, i.e. ashlar stone.
Dressing	Carved stonework around openings.
Drip	A projecting part of a sill or cornice that sheds rain water and protects structural parts below.
Drip Edge	A device designed to prevent water from running back or under

Terms	Description
	an overhang.
<i>Drippage</i>	Bitumen material that drips through roof deck joints, or over the edge of a roof deck.
<i>"Dropping" a Stringer</i>	In carpentry, means cutting short on the bottom of a stairs, to allow for thickness of the first tread.
<i>Dry Glazing</i>	Also called compression glazing, a term used to describe various means of sealing monolithic and insulating glass in the supporting framing system with synthetic rubber and other elastomeric gasket materials.
<i>Dry In</i>	To make a building waterproof.
<i>Dry Rot</i>	A term applied to many types of decay in wood, especially an advanced stage where the wood can be easily crumbled.
<i>Dry Seal</i>	Accomplishment of weather seal between glass and sash by use of strips or gaskets of neoprene, EPDM, silicone or other flexible material. A dry seal may not be completely watertight.
<i>Dry Sheet</i>	A ply mechanically attached to wood or gypsum decks to prevent asphalt or pitch from penetrating the deck and leaking into the building below.
<i>Dry Wall</i>	An interior wall sheathing of pre-manufactured boards made of gypsum or other material.
<i>Dry Wall Hammer</i>	A special hammer used for nailing up gypsum board. It is also known as an axe or hatchet. Edges should be smooth and the corners rounded off. The head has a convex round & checkered head.
<i>Dry Well</i>	A pit located on porous ground walled up with rock which allows water to seep through the pit. Used for the disposal of rainwater or effluent from a septic tank.
<i>Drywall Nail</i>	Nails commonly used are chemically-etched and are designed with a cupped head. They must also be of the proper depth to provide exactly 1" penetration into the framing member.
<i>Duct</i>	A rectangular or round sheet metal or fiberglass pipe used to convey warm or cooled air.
<i>Dumbwaiter</i>	1) An elevator too small for a person - used for vertically transporting food, mail, dishes, trays, etc; 2) An elevator with a maximum footage of not more than 9 sq. ft. floor area; not more than 4" headroom and a maximum capacity of 500 lbs. used for carrying materials only.
<i>Durometer</i>	A device for the measurement of hardness of a material. A gauge to measure the hardness of an elastomeric material.
<i>Dutch Door</i>	A door divided horizontally in half; the halves may be opened together or individually.
<i>Easement</i>	The right to use land owned by another, such as a right-of-way of a municipality for drainage.
<i>Eaves</i>	1) The lower portion of the sloping surface of a roof, especially the part that overhangs the building's wall; 2) The part of a roof which projects out from the side wall, or the lower edge of the part of a roof that overhangs a wall.
<i>Edge Clearance</i>	Nominal spacing between the edge of the glass product and the bottom of the glazing pocket (channel).
<i>Edge Metal</i>	A term relating to brake or extruded metal around the perimeter of a roof.
<i>EER</i>	Energy Efficiency Ratio; is figured by dividing BTU hours by watts.
<i>Efflorescence</i>	The process by which water leeches soluble salts out of concrete or mortar and deposits them on the surface. Also used as the name for these deposits.
<i>Effluent</i>	The liquid discharch from a septic tank after bacterial treatment.
<i>EIFS (Exterior Insulating</i>	Exterior wall cladding system consisting primarily of polystyrene

Terms	Description
Insulating System)	foam board with a textured acrylic finish that resembles plaster or stucco.
Elastic Limit	The limit to which a material may be bent or pulled out of shape and still return to its former shape and dimensions.
Elastomer	An elastic rubber-like substance, such as natural or synthetic rubber.
Elastomeric	A material which is inherently rubbery for sealants, flashings, and waterproof membranes.
Elbow	An L-shaped pipe or duct fitting.
Electrolytic Coupling	A fitting required to join copper to galvanized pipe and gasketed to prevent galvanic action. Connecting pipes of different materials may result in electrolysis.
Elevation	1) An orthographic view of some vertical feature of a house. (Front, rear, side, interior elevation); 2) One of the external faces of a building; also, an architect's drawing of a facade, set out to scale.
Ell	An extension or wing of a building at right angles to the main section.
Elliptical Arch	An arch formed by multiple arcs each of which is drawn from its own center. Compare to a roman arch which is a semi-circular arc drawn from a single centerpoint.
Embellish	To add decoration.
Embrasure	A splayed opening in a wall that frames an opening.
Eminent Domain	The right of the local government to condemn for public use.
Emissivity	The measure of a surface's ability to emit long-wave infrared radiation.
EMT (Electrical Metallic Tubing)	This electrical pipe, also called thin-wall conduit, may be used for both concealed and exposed areas. It is the most common type of raceway used in single family and low rise residential and commercial buildings.
Emulsion	In roofing, a coating consisting of asphalt and fillers suspended in water.
Enamel	Paint with a considerable amount of varnish that produces a hard glossy finish.
End Dams	Internal flashing (dam) that prevents water from moving laterally within a curtain wall or window wall system.
End Lap	The amount or location of overlap at the end of a roll of roofing felts in the application.
End Post	The outwardmost vertical or angled compression member of a truss.
English Basement	A basement with half its height above grade level.
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency - http://www.epa.gov/ . EPA is a federal agency, which administers federal environmental policies, enforces environmental laws and regulations, performs research, and provides information on environmental subjects.
EPDM (Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer)	A single ply membrane consisting of synthetic rubber; usually 45 or 60 mils. Application can be ballasted, fully adhered or mechanically
Equity	The interest in or value of real estate the owner has in excess of the mortgage indebtedness.
Ergonomics	The science that investigates the impact of people's physical environment on their health and comfort (e.g., chair design, monitor location, desk configuration or height, etc.)
Escutcheon	The hardware on a door to accommodate the knob and keyhole.
Evacuation	The removal of earth from its natural position, or the depression resulting from the removal of earth.
Excavation	A cavity or pit produced by digging the earth in preparation for construction.

Terms	Description
Exfiltration	The uncontrolled, unintentional, flow of inside air out of a building. This can occur through cracks in any building component, around openings that are not airtight, and during the everyday use of windows and doors. Like natural ventilation, infiltration is caused by differences in air-pressure or density between inside and outside.
Expansion Coefficient	The amount that a specific material will vary in any one dimension with a change of temperature.
Expansion Joint	A meeting point between two parts of a structure which is designed to allow for movement of the parts due to thermal or moisture factors while protecting the parts from damage. Commonly visible on a bridge deck as a hinged or movable connection. -- not a "control joint," or "construction joint."
Expansion Shield	A drilled-in lead shaft, into which a bolt is screwed, expanding the shaft tight against the hole
Expansion Tank	A tank located near the heating plant of a hot water system used to help balance the pressure.
Exterior glazed	Glazing infills set from the exterior of the building.
Exterior Stop	The molding or bead that holds the lite or panel in place when it is on the exterior side of the lite or panel.
Extrados	The outer exposed curve of an arch; defines the lower arc of a spandrel.
Extrusion	An item formed by forcing a base metal (frequently aluminum) or plastic, at a malleable temperature, through a die to achieve a desired shape.
Eyebar	A structural member having a long body and an enlarged head at each end. Each head has a hole though which a pin is inserted to connect to other members.
Eyebrow	A flat, normally concrete, projection which protrudes horizontally from a building wall; Eyebrows are generally located above windows.
Fabrication	Work done on parts of a structure at a factory before delivery to the building site.
Façade	The face or front of a building.
Face Brick	Brick made especially for exterior use with special consideration of color, texture and size, and used as a facing on a building.
Face Glazing	A system having a triangular bead of compound applied with a putty knife, after bedding, setting, and clipping the glazing infill in place on a rabbeted sash.
Factory Mutual (FM)	A major insurance agency who has established stringent guidelines for maximum construction integrity as it relates to fire and environmental hazards. Their specifications have become industry standards.
Fascia	Any cover board or framed metal assembly at the edge or eaves of a flat, sloping, or overhanging roof which is placed in a vertical position to protect the edge of the roof assembly.
Fasteners	A general term covering a wide variety of screws and nails which may be used for mechanically securing various components of a building.
Fatigue	A weakening of structural members.
Feasibility study	A detailed investigation and analysis conducted to determine the financial, economic, technical or other advisability of a proposed project.
Fee	A term used to denote payment for a professional service, (not including compensation for reimbursable expenses, such as travel, long distance telephone calls, photo copy, printing or mailing).
Felt	A very general term used to describe composition of roofing ply

Terms	Description
	sheets, consisting of a mat of organic or inorganic fibers unsaturated, impregnated with asphalt or coal tar pitch, or impregnated and coated with asphalt.
Felt Paper	Durable paper, usually tar impregnated, used on roofs and side walls to give protection against water intrusion.
Fenestration	The arrangement of windows, doors, and other openings in a wall or facade.
Ferrous	Refers to objects made of or partially made of iron, such as ferrous pipe.
Fiberboard	A building board of wood or other plant fibers compressed and bonded into a sheet, usually 4'-0" x 8'-0" x 1/2" thick.
Fiberglass	Finespun filaments of glass made into a yarn, used in blankets as insulation; or it may be added to gypsum or concrete products to increase tensile strength.
Fill	Soil, gravel, or sand used to equalize or raise the surface of the earth.
Filled Insulation	A loose insulating material poured from bags or blown in by machines into walls and ceilings.
Fillet Bead	Caulking or sealant placed in such a manner that it forms an angle between the materials being caulked.
Finial	A sculptured ornament, often in the shape of a leaf or flower, at the top of a spire or highpoint of a structure
Finish	In hardware, metal fastenings on cabinets which are usually exposed such as hinges and locks.
Finish Carpentry	The hanging of all interior doors, installation of door molding, base molding, chair rail, built in shelves, etc.
Finish Coat	The last coat applied in plastering intended as a base for further decorating or as a final decorative surface. Finish coat usually consists of calcified gypsum, lime and sometimes an aggregate. Some may require the addition of lime or sand on the job. The three basic methods of applying it are (1) trowel (2) flat and (3) spray.
Finish Grade	Any surface which has been cut to or built to the elevation indicated for that point. Surface elevation of lawn, driveway or other improved surfaces after completion of grading operations.
Finished Floor	The top or wearing surface of a floor system, of hardwood, vinyl, terrazzo, or ceramic tile.
Finished Lumber	Dressed wood used for trim.
Fire Blocking	Any fire resistant material used to block spaces in walls, trusses, etc. and impede the spread of smoke and fire.
Fire Brick	A brick that is especially hard and heat-resistant, used in fireplaces.
Fire Clay	A grade of clay that can withstand a large quantity of heat.
Fire Cut	The angular cut at the end of a joist designed to rest on a brick wall.
Fire Door	A door that is fire resistant.
Fire Partition	A partition designed to restrict the spread of fire.
Fire Proofing	The use of incombustible materials to protect steel structured membrane of a building so it can withstand a fire without losing structural integrity, for a stipulated period of time. Measured in hours, such as 1 hr, 2hr, 3hr, or 4hr.
Fire Rated	Descriptive of materials that has been tested for use in fire walls.
Fire Resistance	The ability of a wall or floor assembly to maintain structural stability and act as an effective barrier to the transmission of heat for a stipulated period of time. Measured in hours, such as 1hr, 2hr, 3hr, or 4hr.
Fire Stop	An obstruction across air passages in buildings to prevent the

Terms	Description
	spread of smoke, gasses, and flames. Fireblocking.
Fire Wall	Any wall built for the purpose of restricting or preventing the spread of fire in a building. Such walls of solid masonry or concrete generally sub-divide a building from the foundations to two or more feet above the plane of the roof.
Fish Tape (Fish Wire)	Material used to advance wire through a conduit.
Fished	A splice strengthened by metal pieces on the sides.
Fixed Light	A permanently sealed window.
Fixture	A piece of electric or plumbing equipment.
Flagging	Cut stone, slate, or marble used for flooring.
Flagstone	Flat stone used for floors, walls, steps, walks, etc.
Flake	A scale-like particle that lose bond from a surface in small thin pieces for example paint film "flakes".
Flake Board	Use the term "particle board" instead.
Flame Spread Classification	A standard measurement of the relative surface burning characteristics of a building material when tested by ASTM E 84. Classes are A, B, or C.
Flash Point	The critical temperature at which a material will ignite.
Flashing	The material used for making watertight the roof intersections and other exposed places on the outside of a house.
Flashing, base	The upturned edge of the watertight membrane formed at a roof termination point by the extension of the felts vertically over the cant strip and up the wall for a varying distance where they are secured with mechanical fasteners.
Flashing, counter	The formed metal secured to a wall, curb, or roof top unit to cover and protect the upper edge of a base flashing and its associated fasteners.
Flashing, step	Individual small pieces of metal flashing material used to flash around chimneys, dormers, and such projections along the slope of a roof. The individual pieces are overlapped and stepped up the vertical surface.
Flashing, thru wall	Flashing extended completely through a masonry wall. Designed and applied in combination with counter-flashings, to prevent water which may enter the wall above from proceeding downward in the wall or into the roof deck or roofing system.
Flat Glass	A general term that describes float glass, sheet, glass, plate glass, and rolled glass.
Flat Roof	A roof with just enough pitch to let water drain.
Flat Seam	A seam at the junction of sheet metal roof components that has been bent at the plane of the roof.
Fleet Averaging	By using a point system, builders can show compliance with energy building requirements by using average figures for all air conditioning units in the same sub division.
Flemish Bond	In brickwork, a bond in which each course (row) consists of headers (butt end) and stretchers (long side) laid alternately, each header being centered on the stretcher above and below it.
Flexible Metal Conduit	Conduit similar to armored cable in appearance but does not have the pre-inserted conductors.
Flitch Beam	A built-up beam of dissimilar materials consisting of a piece of plywood or metal sandwiched between two pieces of lumber and bolted or nailed together for strength.
Float Finish	The surface of concrete finished by a continuous spreading of the material with a flat board.
Float Glass	Glass formed on a bath of molten tin. The surface in contact with the tin is known as the tin surface or tin side. The top surface is known as the atmosphere surface or air side.
Floating	1) Spreading paste, stucco or cement on walls in an even coat;

Terms	Description
	2) Working a freshly poured concrete floor with a flat board to produce a smooth, even and level surface.
Floating Wall	A non-bearing wall built on a concrete floor. It is constructed so that the bottom two horizontal plates can compress or pull apart if the concrete floor moves up or down. Normally built on basements and garage slabs.
Floor Outlet	An electrical outlet installed in the floor, either flush or under a cover. A floor plug.
Floor Plan	1) The top view of a building as a section at a specified level; 2) A drawing showing the wall and room layout of a building as a top view.
Flue	The duct or open space within a chimney through which combustion gasses and smoke are allowed to escape.
Flue Collar	Round metal ring which fits around the heat flue pipe after the pipe passes out of the roof.
Flue Damper	An automatic door located in the flue that closes it off when the burner turns off; purpose is to reduce heat loss up the flue from the still-warm furnace or boiler.
Flue Lining	Terra-cotta pipe used for lining a chimney.
Fluorescent Lighting	A fluorescent lamp is a gas-filled glass tube with a phosphor coating on the inside. Gas inside the tube is ionized by electricity which causes the phosphor coating to glow. Normally with two pins that extend from each end.
Flush Glazing	The setting of a lite of glass or panel into a four-sided sash or frame opening containing a recessed "U" shaped channel without removable stops on three sides of the sash or frame and one channel with a removable stop along the fourth side.
Flush Surface	A continuous surface without an angle.
Flute	Vertical channeling, roughly semicircular in cross section and used principally on columns and pilasters.
Flying Buttress	A free-standing buttress linked to a church wall by an arch or part of an arch that serves to transmit the outward thrust of the wall to the buttress, thus relieving strain on the walls. Allows churches to be built very tall in the Gothic and Perpendicular styles.
Folded Seam	In sheet metal work, a joint between sheets of metal wherein the edges of the sheets are crimped together and folded flat.
Foliated	Carved with leaves.
Font	A basin for holding baptismal water in a church.
Footer	The concrete slab that supports all foundation walls.
Footing Form	A wooden or steel frame structure placed around the footing outline to hold the concrete in the desired shape and size.
Footings	Wide pours of cement reinforced with re-bar (reinforcing bar) that support foundation walls, pillars, or posts. Footings are part of the foundation and are often poured before the foundation walls.
Foot Print	The area of space taken up by the mechanical or electrical equipment.
Forced Air Heating	A common form of heating with natural gas, propane, oil or electricity as a fuel. Air is heated in the furnace and distributed through a set of metal ducts to various areas of the house.
Foundation	The base of a house providing stability and rigidity.
Foundation Ties	Metal wires that hold the foundation wall panels and rebar in place during the concrete pour.
Foundation Wall	The masonry wall that rest on the footer
Four Way Switch	Electrical switches connected between three-way switches in order to control a light from three or more stations.

Terms	Description
Foyer	The entrance hall of a house or other building type.
Framing	The wood skeleton of a building.
Framing Plan	A top view plan of the roof of floor level showing the layout of rafters, ridge, joist headers, trimmers, etc.
French Door or Window	A tall casement window that reaches to the floor and opens like a door. It is a popular, modern, feature that brings more light into a home.
French Drain	A basement floor drain designed to allow water to seep into the ground rather than be carried away through pipes.
Frieze	1) A decorative horizontal band, as along the upper part of a wall in a room; The flat board of cornice trim that is attached to the wall.2)
Frostline	The depth of frost penetration in soil and/or the depth at which the earth will freeze and swell. This depth varies in different parts of the country. The underground pipes won't freeze if these are below the frostline.
Fully Adhered	A completely attached (adhered) roof membrane.
Fully Tempered Glass	Flat or bent glass that has been heat-treated to a high surface and/or edge compression to meet the requirements of ASTM C 1048. Fully tempered glass, if broken, will fracture into many small pieces (dice) which are more or less cubical. Fully tempered glass is approximately four times stronger than annealed glass of the same thickness when exposed to uniform static pressure loads.
Fumigate	To destroy harmful isects and pests with fumes.
Furnace	A heating system that uses the principle of thermal convection. When air is heated, it rises and as the air cools it settles. Ducts are installed to carry the hot air from the top of the furnace to the rooms. Other ducts, called cold air returns, return the cooler air back to the furnace.
Furnish	The term "furnish" is used to mean "supply and deliver to the Project site, ready for unloading, unpacking, assembly, installation, and similar operations."
Furring	1) The strips of wood or metal applied to wall or other surface to make it plumb or true to line, which will provide a fastening surface for a finish covering -- be more precise by using the terms "wood furring" or "metal furring."; 2) Narrow strips of wood nailed upon a surface to form a straight surface forthe purpose of attaching cladding.
Furring Channel	Cold rolled steel channel for suspension of plaster or drywall ceilings - usually 3/4" or 1 2" deep.
Fuse	A strip of metal inserted into electric circuit and designed to melt and open the circuit should the current exceed a predetermined value.
Gable	1) The end of a building as distinguished from the front or rear side; 2) The high end of a wall parallel with the roof structure and higher than the eaves; 3) The triangular section of the end wall of a gable roof.
Gable Roof	A roof that slopes on two sides and terminates its run in a wall.
Gage	Same as "gauge" -- thickness of metal; the higher the gauge lower the thickness, for eg. gauge 24 is thinner than gauge 20.
Gallery	The second story of an ambulatory or aisle. Also a long passage or room.
Galvanize	A lead zinc bath treatment on steel (sheet, rod etc) to prevent corrosion on metal objects.
Gambrel Roof	A type of roof which has its slope broken by an obtuse angle, so that the lower slope is steeper than the upper slope. A double sloped roof having two pitches.

Terms	Description
Gargoyle	A grotesque carving, usually in the form of a human or animal, at the end of a spout designed to carry rainwater clear of the wall of a building.
Garret	A room on the top floor of a house, typically under a pitched roof. May also be used as a synonym for an attic.
Gaskets	Pre-formed shapes, such as strips, grommets, etc., of rubber or rubber-like composition, used to fill and seal a joint or opening either alone or in conjunction with a supplemental application of a sealant.
Gauge	The thickness of sheet metal and wire, etc.
Gauge Board	Board used to carry grout needed to patch small jobs.
General conditions of Contract (for construction)	That written part of the Contract Documents which sets forth many of the rights, responsibilities and relationships of the parties involved.
General Contract	1) Under the single contract system, the Contract Between the Owner and the Contractor for construction of the entire Work; 2) Under the separate contract system, that Contract between the Owner and a Contractor for construction of architectural and structural Work.
General Contractor	A contractor responsible for all facets of construction of a building or renovation.
GFI or GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters)	Special devices capable of opening a circuit when even a small amount of current is flowing through the grounding system.
GFRC (Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete)	Material used in wall systems that resembles but generally does not perform as well as concrete. Usually a thin cementitious material laminated to plywood or other lightweight backing.
Girder	A horizontal structure member supporting vertical loads by resisting bending. A girder is a larger beam, especially when made of multiple metal plates. The plates are usually riveted or welded together.
Girt	A secondary horizontal framing member extending between columns or studs to stiffen the framing system; also to provide support for the siding or sheathing.
Glass	A hard, brittle substance, usually transparent, made by fusing silicates under high temperatures with soda, lime, etc.
Glaze Coat	In roofing, a light, uniform mopping of bitumen on exposed felts to protect them from the weather, pending completion of the job.
Glazed Opening	Glass window in an interior wall or partition -- do not use the term "window," "vision panel," "light," "lite," or "borrowed light."
Glazing	1) A generic term used to describe an infill material such as glass, panels, etc. ; 2) The process of installing an infill material into a prepared opening in windows, door panels, partitions, etc.
Glazing Bead	In glazing, a strip surrounding the edge of the glass in a window or door which holds the glass in place.
Glazing Channel	In glazing, a three-sided, U-shaped sash detail into which a glass product is installed and retained.
Gothic Architecture	A style of architecture that was prevalent in Western Europe from about 1200 until 1550. In England, Gothic is normally divided into three succeeding phases - Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular. Some of the characteristic features of this school of architecture are; pointed arches (lancets); tall, slender pillars; flying buttresses; and large windows often with ornate tracery.
Grade	The level of the ground around a building.
Grade Beam	A horizontal load-bearing foundation member but end-supported on piles, piers, or caissons like a standard beam; not ground-supported like a foundation wall.
Grade MW	"Moderate Weather" grade of brick for moderate resistance to

Terms	Description
	freezing used, for example, in planters.
Grade NW	"No Weather" brick intended for use as back-up or interior masonry.
Grade SW	"Severe Weather" grade of brick intended for use where high resistance to freezing is desired.
Gradient	The slant of a rod, pipe, or the ground expressed in percent.
Granules	The mineral particles of a graded size which are embedded in the asphalt coating of shingles and roofing.
Graphic Symbols	Symbolic representations used in a drawing to simplify the presentation of complicated items.
Gravel	Loose fragments of rock used for surfacing built-up roofs, in sizes varying from 1/8" to 1-3/4".
Gravel Stop	A strip of metal with a vertical lip used to retain the gravel around the edge of a built-up roof.
Green Lumber	Lumber that still contains moisture or sap.
Grillage	A system of beams, laid crosswise to form a foundation to evenly distribute the load.
Groined	A roof with sharp edges at intersection of cross-vaults.
Gross Area	The total enclosed floor area of all floors of a building measured from the outside surface of the exterior walls.
Ground System	The connection of current-carrying neutral wire to the grounding terminal in the main switch which in turn is connected to a water pipe. The neutral wire is called the ground wire.
Grounding Rod	Rod used to ground an electrical panel.
Grout	A cement mortar mixture commonly used for levelling or to fill joints and cavities of masonry.
Guard Rail	A protective railing around an open raised platform.
Gun Consistency	Sealant formulated in a degree of viscosity suitable for application through the nozzle of a caulking gun.
Gunite	A construction material composed of cement, sand or crushed slag and water mixed together and forced through a cement gun by pneumatic pressure, used in the construction of swimming pools.
Gusset	A plywood or metal plate used to strengthen the joints of a truss.
Gutter	Metal trough at the eaves of a roof to carry rain water from the roof to the downspout.
Gutter Strap	Metal bands used to support the gutter.
Guy Wire	A strong steel wire or cable strung from an anchor on the roof to any tall slender projection for the purpose of support.
Gypsum	See Drywall
Gypsum Board	A board made of plaster with a covering of paper.
Gypsum Keene Cement	Material used to obtain a smooth finish coat of plaster, for use over gypsum plastic base coats only and in areas not subject to moisture. It is the hardest plaster.
Gypsum Wall Board	A prefabricated sheet used in drywall construction made of gypsum covered with paper which can be painted, or wall papered -- use the term "drywall" instead.
Half-Timber	A frame construction of timbers in which the spaces are filled in with wattle, straw, or masonry.
Hammer Beam	A short horizontal beam usually made of wood, extending from the top of a masonry wall outward towards the center of the enclosed space, but not completely traversing it. The projecting end is usually connected to the roof with a diagonal brace.
Handrail	Single railing on wall at stair.
Hanger	1) Any suspended structural member to which other members are attached; 2) A metal strap used to support a joist, beam, pipe, etc.

Terms	Description
Hardboard	Manufactured flat wood panel used for interior finish material -- do not use the terms "Masonite," or "pressed board."
Hardpan	A compacted layer of soils.
Hardware	Metal accessories such as door knobs, towel bars, toilet paper holders, etc.
Hardwood	Wood obtained from deciduous trees, mainly used for finished wood trim, doors, panels, and furniture -- no specific species, could be oak, birch, ash, poplar, teak, mahogany, butternut, etc.
Hatch	An opening in a deck; floor or roof. The usual purpose is to provide access from inside the building.
Hatchment	A lozenge-shaped panel painted with armorial bearings, used in funeral ceremonies and often afterwards displayed in a church.
Haunch	The enlarged part of a beam near its supported ends which results in increased strength; visible as the curved or angled bottom edge of a beam.
Hawk	A flat wood or metal tool 10 inches to 14 inches square with a handle used by plasterers to carry plaster mortar or mud.
Hazard Insurance	Insurance for a building while it is under construction.
Head	A term that applied to the construction that comprises the entire lintel of a door or window.
Head Room	The distance between the top of a finished floor and the lowest part of the floor above.
Header	1) The horizontal supporting member above openings; 2) One or more members supporting the ends of joists.
Hearth	1) A fire resistant stone or platform in front of the fireplace; 2) The floor inside of the fireplace on which the fire is built.
Heat Loss	The heat that is lost (in BTU's) through ceilings, roof, floors and exterior walls of a house.
Heating Systems	Different heating methods for heating buildings: Hot Water, warm air, steam, electric, heat pump, geo-thermal, etc.
Heat Pump	A unit that both cools and heats your home. A heat pump system can be either a split system or a packaged system. A heat pump is basically an air conditioner with a valve that allows it to operate in reverse, removing heat from your house and transferring it outdoors in the summer, and removing heat from outdoor air and transferring it into your house in the winter. Because heat pumps do not actually create heat — they just move it from one place to another — heat pumps can be more efficient than other forms of heating.
Heat Strengthened Glass	Flat or bent glass that has been heat-treated to a specific surface and/or edge compression range to meet the requirements of ASTM C 1048, kind HS. Heat-strengthened glass is approximately two times as strong as annealed glass of the same thickness when exposed to uniform static pressure loads. Heat-strengthened glass is not considered safety glass and will not completely dice as will fully tempered glass.
Heel Bead	Sealant applied at the base of a channel, after setting the lite or panel and before the removable stop is installed, one of its purposes being to prevent leakage past the stop.
Heel Plate	A plate at the end of a truss.
HEPA	High Efficiency Particulate Arrestance (filters).
Hermetic Seal	Vacuum seal between panes of a double-paned window. Failure of a hermetic seal causes permanent fogging between the panels of the glazing.
High Early Cement	A portland cement sold as Type III sets up to its full strength faster than other types.
Hinched Arch	A two-hinged arch is supported by a pinned connection at each end. A three-hinged arch also includes a third pinned

Terms	Description
	connection at the crown of the arch near the middle of a span. Compare to <u>fixed arch</u> – which is a structure anchored in its position.
Hip Rafter	The diagonal rafter that extends from the top plate of a wall to the ridge to form a hip.
Hip Roof	1) A room whose four sides slope to a common point or to ridge; has no gabled ends; 2) A roof which rises by inclining planes from all four sides of a building.
Hoistway	Shaft for elevators and dumbwaiters.
Hollow Metal	Break-formed sheet metal used for doors, windows and frames.
Honeycomb	1) Areas in a foundation wall where the aggregate (gravel) is visible. Honeycombs can be usually be remedied by applying a thin layer of grout or other cement product over the affected area: 2) Method by which concrete is poured and not puddled or vibrated, allowing the edges to have voids or holes after the forms are removed.
Hood	An arched covering; when used to throw off rainwater, called hood-mould.
House Drain	Horizontal sewer piping within a building which receives waste from the soil stacks.
House Sewer	The soil pipe extending from the exterior of the building to the public sewer.
Howe Truss	A type of truss in which vertical web members are in tension and diagonal web members in compression. Maybe be recognized by diagonal members which appear to form an "A" shape (without the crossbar) toward the center of the truss when viewed in profile. Compare to <u>Pratt truss</u> and <u>Warren truss</u> .
HSPF	Heating Seasonal Performance Factor means the total heating output of a heat pump in Btus during its normal usage period for heating divided by the total electrical energy input in watt-hours during the same period. Heating seasonal performance factor is similar to SEER, but it measures the efficiency of the heating portion of your heat pump. Like SEER, industry minimums have been raised recently, and the minimum is now 6.80 HSPF.
Hub	In plumbing, the enlarged end of a pipe which is made to provide a connection into which the end of the joining pipe will fit.
Humidifier	A mechanical device which controls the amount of water vapor to be added to the atmosphere.
Humidistat	An instrument used for measuring and controlling moisture in the air.
HVAC	Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning.
Hydroelectric Elevator	An elevator where liquid is pumped under pressure directly into the cylinder by a pump driven by an electric motor without an accumulator between the pump and cylinder.
IAQ	Indoor Air Quality -characteristics of the indoor climate of a building, including the gaseous composition, temperature, relative humidity, and airborne contaminant levels.
I - Beam	A steel beam with an 'I' shaped cross section.
IIDA	International Interior Design Association
Impost	The surface which receives the vertical weight at the bottom of an arch.
In Kind	The term "in kind" means of the same type, size, material, etc. as the existing item.
Incompatibility	Descriptive of two or more materials which are not suitable to

Terms	Description
	be used together.
Indemnification Clause	Provision in a contract in which one party agrees to be financially responsible for specified types of damages, claims, or losses.
Indicated	The term "indicated" refers to graphic representations, notes, or schedules on the Drawings, other paragraphs or schedules in the Specifications, and similar requirements in the Contract Documents. Where terms such as "shown," "noted," "scheduled" and "specified" are used, it is to help the reader locate the reference; no limitation on location is intended.
Indirect lighting	Artificial light that is bounced off walls and or ceilings for general lighting.
Infiltration	The process by which air leaks into a building. In either case, heat loss results. To find the infiltration heating load factor (HLF), the formula to account for the extra BTU's needed to heat the infiltrated air is: BTU/HR = building volume x air changes x BTU/cu.ft/hr x TD (TD is temperature difference)
Insider Drain	In roofing, a drain positioned on a roof at some location other than the perimeter. It drains surface water inside the building through closed pipes to a drainage system.
Install	The term "install" is used to describe operations at project site including the actual "unloading, unpacking, assembly, erection, placing, anchoring, applying, working to dimension, finishing, curing, protecting, cleaning, and similar operations."
Installer	An "Installer" is the Contractor or an entity engaged by the Contractor, either as an employee, subcontractor, or sub-subcontractor, for performance of a particular construction activity, including installation, erection, application, and similar operations.
Insulating Board	Any board suitable for insulating purposes.
Insulating Fasteners	Any of several specialized mechanical fasteners designed to hold insulation down to steel or a nailable deck.
Insulating Glass Unit	Two or more lites of glass spaced apart and hermetically sealed to form a single-glazed unit with an air space between each lite. (Commonly called IG units.)
Insulation	1) Generally, any material which slows down or retards the flow or transfer of heat. Building insulation types are classified according to form as loose fill, flexible, rigid, reflective, and foamed-in-place. All types are rated according to their ability to resist heat flow (R-Value); 2) In electrical contracting, rubber, thermoplastic, or asbestos wire covering. The thickness of insulation varies with wire size and type of material, application or other code limitations.
Inter Layer	In glazing, any material used to bond two lites of glass and/or plastic together to form a laminate.
Interior Glazed	Glazing infills set from the interior of the building.
Interior Trim	A general term for all of the finish molding, casing, baseboard, etc.
Intrados	The interior arc of an arch.
Interply	Between two layers of roofing felts that have been laminated together.
IRMA (Insulated or Inverted Roof Membrane Assembly)	In this system the roof membrane is laid directly on the roof deck, covered with extruded foam insulation and ballasted with stone, minimum of 1000 lbs. per square.
Jack Rafter	A short rafter usually used on hip roofs.
Jalousie	Adjustable glass louvers in doors or windows to regulate light and air or exclude rain.
Jamb	The frame in which a door or window sits.

Terms	Description
Japanese Lanten	A collasible lantern of thin colored paper, often used for decorative lighting.
Jerry Built	Poor construction.
Jersey Barrier	A low, reinforced concrete wall wider at the base, tapering vertically to near mid-height, and then continuing straight up to its top. The shape is designed to direct automotive traffic back toward its own lane of travel and prevent crossing of a median or leaving the roadway. Commonly used on new and reconstructed bridges in place of decorative ballustrades, railings or parapets.
Joint	The meeting of two seperate pieces of material for a common bond.
Joint Filler	Material which fills the entire depth of a joint and in itself does not form a waterproof joint -- may be topped with sealant to provide water tightness.
Joist	Wood framing members, usually set 16" apart on center, carefully chosen to support all "live" and "dead" loads.
Kalamien Door	A fireproof door with a metal cover.
Kelvin	Thermometer scale on which a unit of measurement equals the Celsius degree.
KERF	A narrow slot cut in to the face of a material such as wood or metal.
Keystone	A wedge-shaped or tapered stone placed at the top of an arch or vault.
Kick Hole	A defect frequently found in perimeter flashings arising from being stepped on or kicked. A small fracture of the base flashing in the area of the cant.
Kiln	A heating chamber for drying lumber.
King Post or King Truss	1) The vertical member at the center of a triangular truss; 2) The central upright web in a roof truss.
Knee	A brace placed diagonally at the center of a triangular truss.
Knee Brace	Additional support connecting the deck with the main beam which keeps the beam from buckling outward. Commonly made from plates and angles.
Kneeler	A large approximately triangular stone at the foot of a gable, cut to have a horizontal bed and a top conforming, wholly or in part, to the slope of the gable.
Kneewall	1) A low wall; 2) A low frame wall used as a partition in an attic; 3) A low frame wall built on masonry construction used to raise the bearing hieght to a specified elevation above the masonry.
Knife Consistency	Compound formulated in a degree of firmness suitable for application with a putty knife such as used for face glazing and other sealant applications.
Knob & Tube	Electric wiring where the insulated wires are supported by porcelain knobs and by porcelain tubes when passing through wood construction.
Kraft	A heavy, water resistant paper.
Kynar Coating	Architectural coating that is UV stable and suitable for exterior use on aluminum and other metal surfaces.
Ladder, fixed	A ladder which is permanently attached to a building.
Lag	Crosspieces used to connect the ribs in centering.
Lally Column	A steel column used as a support for girders and beams.
Laminated Beam	A beam mades by bonding together several layers of material.
Laminated Glass	Two or more lites of glass permanently bonded together with one or more inter-layers.
Lancet Arch	A pointed arch, of which the width or span is narrow compared with the height.

Terms	Description
Lancet or Lancet Window	A long, narrow window with a sharply pointed head.
Landing	A platform in a flight of steps.
Landscape Architect	A professional person who utilizes and adapts land for people's use.
Lap	To extend one material partially over another; the distance so extended.
Lap Joint	A joint produced by lapping two pieces of material.
Lateral Bracing	Members used to stabilize a structure by introducing diagonal connections.
Lath	1) The material, wood strips or metal screen, used as a base for plastering; 2) A wooden strip nailed to masonry construction to which wallboard is attached; 3) Any strip of material attached to a surface used to level that surface in preparation of cladding.
Lattice	An assembly of smaller pieces arranged in a gridlike pattern; sometimes used a decorative element or to form a truss of primarily diagonal members.
Lavabo	1) A vase or fountain for ablutions; 2) The hall or shelter in which such basin is placed
Lavatory	1) A washbasin; 2) A room equipped with a washbasin.
Leaching Bed	A system of trenches constructed in sandy soil or filled with gravel that carries wastes from sewers and drains them into the earth.
Lead (Pb)	A soft, malleable, ductile, bluish-white, dense metallic element, extracted chiefly from galena and in buildings used for guttering, pipes, flashing, and as a roof covering.
Leader	A vertical pipe or downspout that carries rainwater from the gutter to the ground.
Leads	Strips of lead used to hold the panes of glass of a window.
Lean-to-roof	The sloping roof of a building addition having its rafters or supports pitched against and supported by the adjoining wall of a building.
Lectern	A reading desk in a church for the reading of lessons.
Ledger	A wood strip nailed to a wall or girder to provide a bearing surface for joists, rafters, or trusses.
Lenticular Truss	A truss which uses curved top and bottom chords placed opposite one another to form a lens shape. The chords are connected by additional truss web members.
Lessee	The one who leases.
Lessor	The owner of leased property.
Levelling Rod	A rod with graduated marks for measuring heights or vertical distances between given points and the line of sight of a leveling instrument. They are longer than a yardstick and are held by a surveyor in a vertical position.
Lien	A legal claim on a property which may be exercised in default of payment of a debt.
Light Well	An open area within a building or in a subsoil space around a basement window, which provides light and air.
Lightweight Concrete	Concrete which uses lightweight aggregate such as expanded shale or clay instead of crushed stone; normally weighs about 110 lbs per cubic foot.
Linear Foot	A measurement of material consisting of one foot along a straight line.
Lintel or Header	A horizontal piece of wood or steel over an opening such as a window or door to support the walls immediately above the opening. Lintels can also be steel or stone.
Liquid Applied Membrane	Generally applied to cast-in-place concrete surfaces in one or more coats to provide fully-adhered waterproof membranes which conform to all contours.

Terms	Description
Liquidated Damages	A monetary amount agreed upon by two parties to a contract prior to performance under the contract that specifies what a either party owes the other if that party defaults under the contract.
Lite	Another term for a pane of glass. Sometimes spelled "light" in industry literature but spelled "lite" in this text to avoid confusion with light as in "visible light."
Live Load	The total of all moving and variable loads that may be placed on a building.
Load Bearing Partition	A vertical structural interior wall supporting a floor or roof.
Load Bearing Walls	Walls that support a load from above as well as thier own wieght.
Loads	The sum of all forces affecting a structure, usually expressed as live and dead loads.
Loft	1) An attic-like space below the roof of a house or barn; 2) any of the upper stories of a warehouse or factory, 3) A type of apartment unit which is usually built within an old factory and which provides the occupant with large, open, high-ceiling spaces. Usually only a bathroom is enclosed and plumbing is minimal. Interiors are finished by occupant.
Loggia	A roofed open passage along the front or side of a building.
Lookout	A horizontal framing member extending from studs to the end of rafters.
Loose Laid	In roofing, a membrane "laid loosely", i.e., not adhered, over a roof deck or burm.
Lot	A parcel of ground with boundaries determined by the county.
Lot line	The line forming the legal boundary of a piece of property.
Louver	A set of fixed or movable slats adjusted to provide both shelter and ventilation.
Lozenge	A diamond-shaped pattern characteristic of Romanesque decoration that is often carved around pillars, arches and doorways.
Lucarne	Small gabled opening in a roof or spire.
Manel	A shelf over a fireplace.
Mansard Roof	A roof with a flat center section and steep hips on all four sides. The sloping roofs on all four sides have two pitches, the lower pitch usually very steep and the upper pitch less steep.
Manual D	Manual D is the ACCA method for designing duct systems. Designing a duct system is essential for proper equipment performance and customer comfort.
Manual J	Manual J is a widely accepted method of calculating the sensible and latent cooling (and heating) loads under design conditions. It was jointly developed by the Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA) and the Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI).
Manual S	Manual S is the ACCA method of selecting air conditioning equipment to meet the design loads. It ensures that both the sensible capacity and the latent capacity of the selected equipment will be adequate to meet the cooling load.
Marble	A metamorphic rock formed by alteration of limestone or dolomite, often irregularly colored by impurities, and used especially in architecture and sculpture.
Market Price	The monetary amount that a piece of property can be sold for at a given time.
Market Value	An estimate of what a piece of property is worth at a given time.
Masonry	Construction consisting of stone, brick, concrete, etc.
Mason's hammer or Bricklayer's hammer	Tool shaped like a chisel to trim brick or stone.

Terms	Description
Mastic	An adhesive paste used in the fabrication and sealing of thermal insulation on piping fittings, equipment, and duct work. It spreads easily and dries permanently.
Maximum Occupancy Load	The maximum number of people permitted in a room and is measured per foot for each width of exit door. The maximum is 50 per foot of exit.
Mechanic's Lien	A legal charge on property in favor of persons supplying labor or materials for a building for the value of labor or materials supplied by them. Clear title to the claim for the labor, materials or professional services is settled through the "release of liens" which is accomplished through a form given to the owner by the contractor.
Meeting Rail	The horizontal rails of a double hung sash that fit together when the window is closed.
Melt point	The temperature at which the solid asphalt becomes a liquid.
Member	One of many parts of a structure, especially one of the parts of a truss.
Membrane	A generic term relating to a variety of sheet goods used for certain built-up roofing repairs and application.
Metal	Used to denote products fabricated from thin sheet steel.
Metal Edge	Brake metal or metal extrusions which are secured at the perimeter of the roof to form a weathertight seal.
Metal Lath	Expanded metal used for plaster lath.
Metal Tie	A strip of metal used to fasten construction members together.
Metal Trim	Edge trim for drywall -- do not use the term "casing bead" which is for plaster.
Mezzanine	An intermediary floor having less than 1/3 of the area than the floor below.
Migration	Spreading or creeping of a constituent of a compound onto/into adjacent surfaces. See bleeding.
Mil Thickness	Measurement used to determine thickness of a coating. 1 mil = .001 inch (1/1000).
Mildew	A mold on wood or other material caused by fungi.
Mill Construction	A type of "slow-burning" construction made of masonry walls, heavy timber framing, and planked or laminated wood floors.
Mill Work	Doors, windows and door frames, mantels, panel work, stairways, and woodwork.
Minaret	A slender, lofty tower with balconies attached to a Muslim mosque.
Mineral Sprits	A by-product of petroleum, clear in color, a solvent for asphaltic coatings.
Mineral Wool	An insulating material made into fibrous form from mineral slag.
Misericord	A shelf placed on the underside of a hinged choir stall seat which, when the seat is turned up, provides the occupant with support during long periods of standing.
Miter	A joint formed by two pieces of material cut to meet at an angle.
Mock up testing	Controlled air, water and structural performance testing of existing or new glazing systems.
Model Building Codes	The building codes published and adopted by state or other jurisdictions to control local construction activity.
Model Code Organizations	Includes the following agencies and the model building codes they promulgate: Building Officials and Code Administrators International, Inc. (BOCA National Building Code/1993 and BOCA National Mechanical Code/1993); International Conference of Building Officials (Uniform Building Code/1991 and Uniform Mechanical Code/1991); Southern Building Code Congress, International, Inc. (Standard Building Code/1991 and Standard Mechanical Code/1991); Council of American Building

Terms	Description
	Officials (CABO One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code/1992 and CABO Model Energy Code/1993).
Modular Construction	Construction in which the size of the building is based on the measurements of common building materials.
Module	The measurement that architects use to determine the proportions of a structure, for example, the diameter of a column.
Modulus	Stress at a given strain. Also tensile strength at a given elongation.
Moisture barrier	A material, such as specially treated paper, that retards the passage of vapor or moisture into the walls and prevents condensation within the walls.
Molding	A finishing piece to cover construction joists or edges, usually a long narrow strip of plain or curved wood; may be ornamented.
Monitor	1) A raised rectangular and roofed structure on a roof having windows or louvers for ventilating or lighting the building; 2) A high capacity fire hydrant
Monitor, sawtooth	A type of monitor characterized by sharp angled pitches and vertical sections, usually arranged in rows much like teeth of a saw.
Monolithic	Concrete construction cast and poured in one piece without joints.
Monument	A boundary marker set by surveyors to locate property lines.
Mop basin	Floor mounted sink for building maintenance purposes -- do not use terms "slop sink" or "service sink," which are wall-mounted sinks.
Mopping	In roofing, a layer of hot bitumen mopped between plies of roofing felt. Full mopping is the application of bitumen by mopping in such a manner that the surface being mopped is entirely coated with a reasonably uniform coating. Spot Mopping is the procedure of applying hot bitumen in a random fashion of small daubs, as compared to full mopping. Sprinkle mopping is a special application of installing insulation to the decks. It is done by dipping a roof mop into hot bitumen and sprinkling the material onto the deck. Strip Mopping is the application of bitumen in parallel bands.
Mortar	A mixture of cement, sand, and water, used as a bonding agent for binding bricks and stone.
Mortar types	<u>Type M</u> is suitable for general use and is recommended specifically for masonry below grade and in contact with earth, such as foundations, retaining walls and walks. Type M is the strongest type. <u>Type S</u> is suitable for general use and is recommended where high resistance to lateral forces is required. <u>Type N</u> is suitable for general use in exposed masonry above grade and is recommended specifically for exterior walls subject to severe exposures. <u>Type O</u> is recommended for load-bearing walls of solid units where the compressive stresses do not exceed 100 lbs. per square inch and the masonry wall not subjected to freezing and thawing in the presence of excessive moisture.
Mortgage	The lender of money to the mortgagor.
Mortgagor	The owner who mortgages property in return for a loan.
Mosaic	A picture or decorative design made by setting small coloured pieces, as of stone or tile, into a surface.
Moulding	A continuous, narrow surface (projecting or recesses, plain or ornamented) designed to break up a surface, to accent, or to decorate.

Terms	Description
Mud	A common term for drywall joint compound products.
Mud Cracks	Cracks developing from the normal shrinkage of an emulsion coating when applied too heavily.
Mud Room	A small room or entranceway where wet or dirty shoes and garments can be removed before entering other rooms.
Mullions	A horizontal or vertical member that supports and holds such items as panels, glass, sash, or sections of a curtain wall.
Muntins	Horizontal or vertical bars that divide the sash frame into smaller lites of glass. Muntins are smaller in dimensions and weight than mullions.
Nailer	A piece of lumber secured to non-nailable decks and walls by bolts or other means, which provides a suitable backing onto which roof components may be
Narthex	An enclosed passage from the nave to the main entrance of a church.
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)	The US government agency authorized to research and developing exposure criteria for toxic substances and recommends these standards to OSHA. NIOSH is also authorized to investigate unsafe working conditions.
Nave	1) The principal area of a church, extending from the main area to the transept; 2) The central part of a church, extending from the narthex to the chancel and flanked by aisles.
Neat plaster	A base coat plaster which does not contain aggregates and is used where the addition of aggregates on the job is desired.
Neoprene	A synthetic rubber having physical properties closely resembling those of natural rubber. It is made by polymerizing chloroprenes, and the latter is produced from acetylene and hydrogen chloride.
NESHAP	National Emissions Standard for Hazardous Pollutants
Newel	A vertical support at the center of a circular staircase. Also, a post that supports a handrail at the bottom or at the landing of a staircase.
Niche	A shallow recess in a wall designed to contain a statue or some other ornament.
NM	A type of ROMEX cable (nonmetallic sheathed cable that contains several conductors). The cable, which is flame-retardant, is limited to use in dry locations only and can not be exposed to excessive moisture.
Noggin	Brickwork infilling of a timber-framed wall.
Nominal Dimensions	Dimensions, as for lumber of wall thickness, where the stated dimension differs than the actual dimension.
Non-bearing Wall	A dividing wall that does not support a vertical load other than it's own wieght.
Non-destructive	A phrase describing a method of examining the interior of a component whereby no damage is done to the component itself.
Non-drying (non curing)	A sealant that does not set up or cure. See Butyl.
Non-ferrous Metal	Metal containing no iron, such as copper, brass, aluminum, etc.
Non-sag	A sealant formulation having a consistency that will permit application in vertical joints without appreciable sagging or slumping. A performance characteristic which allows the sealant to be installed in a sloped or vertical joint application without appreciable sagging or slumping.
Non-skinning	Descriptive of a product that does not form a surface skin.
Non-staining	Characteristic of a compound that will not stain a surface.
Norman	A style of buildings erected by the Normans (1066 - 1154) based on the Italian Romanesque. It was used principally in castles, churches, and abbeys of massive proportions. Sparsely

Terms	Description
	decorated masonry and the use of the round arch are characteristic.
Nosing	The projecting portion of a stair treads beyond the riser, usually rounded.
Nozzle	The tubular tip of a caulking gun through which the compound is extruded.
NSPE	National Society of Professional Engineers
Nuclear Meter	A device used to detect moisture by measuring slowed, deflected neutrons.
Obelisk	An Egyptian monument with a tall, tapering shaft of stone with a pyramidal top.
Obscure Glass	Sheet glass that is made translucent instead of transparent.
OC (On Center)	A measurement term meaning a certain distance between like materials. Studs placed at 16" O.C. will be laid out so that there is 16" from the center of one stud to the center of the next.
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)	The regulatory arm of the US Department of Labor, which promulgates safety and health standards, facilitates training programs, and enforces regulations on work sites. OSHA has developed permissible exposure limits for over 600 contaminants present in the industrial workplace.
Oil-canning	The term describing distortion of thin-gauge metal panels which are fastened in a manner restricting normal thermal movement.
Omit	To leave something out by intention.
Open end mortgage	A mortgage that permits the loan amount to be increased as for improvements, by mutual agreement of the lender and the borrower without rewriting the mortgage.
Option	Term used in construction documents to indicate that contractor may use one of several products at his or her choice.
Order	A term applied to the three styles of Greek architecture, the Dorian, Corinthian, and Ionic, referring to the style of columns and their entablatures; it also refers to the Composite and the Tuscan, developed from the original three orders.
Orell	Porch at top of an outside stair.
Organic	A term designating any chemical compound which contains carbon and hydrogen.
Oriel	A projecting window in a wall. Originally the term was given to a form of porch, often of wood.
Orientation	The positioning of a house on a lot in relation to the sun, wind, noise and view.
Outlet	A passage connecting the gutter to the Down spout.
Overhang	That part of the roof structure which extends horizontally beyond the vertical plane of the exterior walls of a building.
Overlight	A horizontal opening over a door or window.
Oxidize	To combine with oxygen in the air.
Pagoda	A temple or sacred building, typically in an Asian nation, usually pyramidal, forming a tower with upward curving roofs over the individual stories.
Panel	A portion of a surface, often a wall lining or in a door, that is usually rectangular and can be recessed or above another surface.
Panel Board	The distribution center for controlling electrical circuits.
Pantile	A roofing tile with an S-shaped profile, laid so that the down curve of one tile overlaps the up curve of the next one.
Parabola	A form of arch defined by a moving point which remains equidistant from a fixed point inside the arch and a moving point along a line. This shape when inverted into an arch structure results in a form which allows equal vertical loading along its length.

Terms	Description
Parapet	An exterior low wall along the edge of a roof, balcony, ridge, or terrace.
Parapet wall	A low wall around the perimeter of a roof deck.
Parge coat	A thin application of plaster for coating a wall.
Pargeting	Exterior plaster decoration either molded in relief or incised.
Parging	A coating of cement mortar (Portland cement, sand, and water mix), on a masonry wall, used to waterproof the outside surface of an exterior wall or masonry foundation.
Parking Strip	The area in front of a building between the sidewalk and the street usually landscaped with grass. The parking strip serves as a buffer between the road and pedestrians walking on the sidewalk.
Parquet Floor	A hardwood floor laid in small rectangular or square patterns, not in long strips.
Particle Board	A wood and glue composite panel for sheathing, underlayment, subflooring, and substrate for veneers and plastic laminate for millwork.
Partition	A non-bearing wall which divides space and supports only its own weight.
Partition	An interior wall that separates two rooms.
Party Wall	A wall built along the dividing line between adjoining buildings for their common use.
Patch	The term "patch" means to remove any damaged or defective material within the area to be patched, and to replace it with new material, fitted in a workmanlike manner so as to provide a continuous plumb, level, and/or true to line surface, uninterrupted by flaws, defects, or blemishes.
Patio	An open court.
Patterned Glass	On type of rolled glass having a pattern impressed on one or both sides. Used extensively for light control, bath enclosures and decorative glazing. Sometimes call "rolled," "figured or "obscure" glass.
Paver Stone	Usually pre-cast concrete slabs used to create a traffic surface.
Pedestal	An architectural support or base, as for a column or statue.
Pediment	In a classical-style building, the triangular segment between the horizontal entablature and the sloping roof. A low-pitched gable over porticos, doors, windows, etc.
Pendentive	A curved support shaped like an inverted triangle, used to support a dome.
Penny	A term for the length of a nail, noted as "d".
Pennsylvania Truss	A subdivided Pratt truss invented for use by the Pennsylvania Railroad. The Pennsylvania truss is similar in bracing to a Baltimore truss, but the former has a camelback profile while the latter has angled end posts only, leaving the upper chord straight and horizontal.
Penthouse	A building on the roof of a building to enclose mechanical or elevator equipment; also, an apartment on the roof of a high-rise apartment.
Performance and Payment bond	Guaranty by a surety company that if a contractor fails to perform under a contract, the surety company will complete the work.
Performance Bond	An insurance document purchased by the contractor from a bidding company (a "surety") which guarantees that the work will be performed in accordance with the Contract Documents.
Periphery	The entire outside edge of an object.
Perlite	An aggregate formed by heating and expanding siliceous volcanic glass.
Permanent set	The amount by which a material fails to return to its original

Terms	Description
	dimensions after being deformed by an applied force or load.
Permeability	The property of material to permit a fluid (or gas) to pass through it; in construction, commonly refers to water vapor permeability of a sheet material or assembly and is defined as Water Vapor Permeance per unit thickness.
Permit	A document issued by a local, state, county, or federal governmental authority having jurisdiction to authorize specific work on a building.
Perspective	1) A drawing of an object in three dimensional form on a plane surface; 2) An object drawn as it would appear to the eye.
Photo-oxidation	Oxidation caused by rays of the sun.
Pier	A vertical structure which supports the ends of a multi-span superstructure at a location between abutments.
Pilaster	1) A square column usually set in or against a wall, used to support and strengthen the wall; 2) A decorative column set against a wall.
Pile	A long column driven deep into the ground to form part of a foundation or substructure.
Pillar	Usually a weight-carrying member, such as a pier or a column; sometimes an isolated, freestanding structure used for commemorative purposes.
Pin	A cylindrical bar which is used to connect various members of a truss; such as those inserted through the holes of a meeting pair of eyebars.
Pinfold	An enclosure where stray animals are confined.
Pinnacle	A projecting or ornamental cap on the high point of a roof.
Piscina	A niche near the altar in a church, containing a small basin and drain for rinsing altar vessels and ceremonial ablutions. The word comes from the Latin for a fish-pond.
Pitch	1) The slope or incline of a roof, expressed in inches of rise per foot of length, or by the ratio of the rise to the total roof span; 2) A term frequently used to designate coal tar pitch.
Plan	A horizontal, graphic representational section of a building showing the placement of the walls, doors, windows, stairs, etc.
Plan submittal	Submission of construction plans to the city or county in order to obtain a Building Permit.
Plank	A piece of unfinished structural lumber 2 to 4 inches thick and at least 8 inches wide.
Plans	See Blue Prints.
Plaster	A mixture of gypsum, sand, and water, used as a finished surface for walls and ceilings, applied over gypsum, metal or wood lath.
Plaster Board	A board made of plaster material covered on both sides by heavy paper, used in place of lath and plaster.
Plaster Ground	A nailer strip included in plaster walls to act as a gage for thickness and to provide nailing support for trim around openings and at the base of walls.
Plastic Insulation	Generic term for polystyrene ("Styrofoam") or urethane insulation.
Plastic Laminate	Thin sheet material of plastic composition used for finishing of interior millwork - do not use the terms "Formica," or "Melamine."
Plat	A map or chart of an area showing the boundaries of lots and other pieces of property.
Plate	The horizontal member of a frame wall.
Plate cut	The cut in a rafter which rests upon the plate of the wall. Also called the seat-cut or bird mouth.
Plate Glass	A high quality sheet of glass used in large windows or glass

Terms	Description
	walls.
Plate Line	The top horizontal line of a building wall upon which the roof rests.
Platform framing/construction	The process of constructing a building in one or more consecutively installed platforms.
Plenum	1) The open space between the suspended and structural ceiling used as part of the air distribution system that accommodates the mechanical and electrical equipment; 2) A chamber within an air conditioning system connected to distribution ducts through which air is forced.
Plinth	A square block at the base of a column, pedestal, or door casing.
Plot Plan	A bird's eye view showing how a building sits on the building lot, typically showing setbacks (how far the building must sit from the road), easements, rights of way, and drainage.
Plot Plan	The land on which structure is built.
Plow	To cut a groove running in the same direction as the grain of wood.
Plumb	The true vertical position of an object as determined by a level or a plumb bob.
Ply	A term to denote the number of thickness or layers as "3-ply"; for roofing felt, veneers, etc.
Plywood	A fabricated wood product constructed of three or more layers of veneer joined with glue, laid with grain or adjoining plies at right angles.
Pocket (channel)	A three-sided, U-shaped opening in a sash or frame to receive glazing infill. Contrasted to a rabbet, which is a two-sided, L-shaped sections as with face glazed window sash.
Pointing	The process where joints between masonry units, brick, etc., are filled with mortar.
Polished Wired Glass	Wired glass that has been ground and polished on both surfaces.
Polymer	A substance consisting of large molecules which have been formed from smaller molecules of similar make-up.
Polysulphide sealant	Polysulfide liquid polymer sealant which is mercaptan terminated, long chain aliphatic polymers containing disulfide linkages. They can be converted to rubbers at room temperature without shrinkage upon addition of a curing agent.
Polyurethane sealant	An organic compound formed by reaction of a glycol with and isocyanate.
Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC)	Polymer formed by polymerization of vinyl chloride monomer. Sometimes called vinyl.
Ponding	A condition where water stands on a roof for prolonged periods due to poor drainage and/or deflection of the deck.
Pony Truss	A truss which carries its traffic near its top chord but not low enough to allow crossbracing between the parallel top chords.
Pop rivets	Fasteners used to join pieces of metal that are installed by either compressed-air-assisted or hand-operated guns. Unique in that they are installed from one side of the work.
Porch	A covered platform, usually having a separate roof, at an entrance to a building.
Porosity	The density of substance and its capacity to pass liquids.
Portal	An entrance, doorway, or gateway.
Portico	A roof supported by columns, whether attached to a building or wholly by itself.
Portland Cement	A mixture of certain minerals which when mixed with water forms a gray colored paste and cure into a very hard mass.
Post	A vertical member of wood, steel, concrete or other material

Terms	Description
	that transfers weight from the top of the post to whatever the post is resting on.
Post and Beam Construction	A method of construction in which vertical beams (posts) are used to support a horizontal beam (lintel).
Pot Life	The time interval following the addition of an accelerator before chemically curing material will become too viscous to apply satisfactorily.
Power	The energy rate, usually measured in watts. Power equals voltage times amps or $W = E \times I$. The heavier the flow of amps at a given supply, the higher the rate at which energy is being supplied and used.
Pratt Truss	A type of truss in which vertical web members are in compression and diagonal web members in tension. Many possible configurations include pitched, flat, or camelback top chords. Maybe be recognized by diagonal members which appear to form a "V" shape toward the center of the truss when viewed in profile. Variations include the Baltimore truss and Pennsylvania truss. Compare to <u>Warren truss</u> and <u>Howe truss</u> .
Precast	Concrete building components which are formed and cured at a factory and then transported to a work site for erection.
Prefabricated Houses	Houses that are built in sections or component parts in a factory, and then assembled on site.
Pre-shimed Tape Sealant	A sealant having a pre-formed shape containing solids or discrete particles that limit its deformation under compression.
Pressure Reducing Valve	Valve installed in the water service line where it enters the building to reduce the pressure of water in the line to an acceptable pressure used in buildings (40-55 psi desired).
Pressure Relief Valve	Valve to relieve excess pressure in water storage tanks.
Pressure Treated Lumber	Lumber that is treated in such a way that the sealer is forced into the pores of the wood.
Pre-stressed Concrete	A method of giving tensile strength by stressing the reinforcing in the concrete before it sets, then releasing the tension after the concrete has hardened.
Primary Coat	The first coat of paint, plaster or stucco.
Primer	A material of relatively thin consistency applied to a surface for the purpose of creating a more secure bonding surface and to form a barrier to prevent migration of components.
Principal	The original amount of money loaned.
Project manual	The book of written documents prepared by the Architect for a Project, including the bidding requirements, Conditions of the Contract and technical Specifications, used by the Contractor in bidding & building the project.
Project site	The term "Project Site" is the space available to the Contractor for performance of construction activities, either exclusively or in conjunction with others performing other work as part of the Project. The extent of the Project Site is shown on the Drawings and may or may not be identical with the description of the land upon which the Project is to be built.
Projection	In roofing, any object or equipment which pierces the roof membrane.
Proprietary product	A product produced by only one manufacturer to his own design and not available from competing manufactures.
Proscenium	In a theater, the front area of the stage still visible to the audience when the curtain is lower; the curtain and the opening that surrounds it.
Protection board	In roofing, heavy asphalt impregnated boards which are laid over bituminous coatings to protect against mechanical injury.
Provide	The term "provide" means "to furnish and install, complete and

Terms	Description
	ready for the intended use."
Pulpit	A raised and enclosed platform in a church from which a preacher delivers a sermon.
Purlin	A structural roof framing member laid horizontally across the roof beams to support a roof deck.
Push Stick	In hardware, a tool used when cutting a short board on a table saw.
PVDF	Architectural coating.
Pylon	A monumental vertical structure marking the entrance to a bridge or forming part of a gateway.
Quad	An enclosed court.
Quantity Survey	Detailed analysis and listing of all items of material and equipment and quantities of each necessary to construct a Project.
Quarry tile	1) Thick type of ceramic tile which is composed of fired clays and shales used for floors and bases; 2) A machine made unglazed tile.
Quatrefoil	Ornamental tracery in the form of a flower with four symmetrical petals, or any ornament with four foils or lobes.
Quarter Sawn	Logs cut in quarters lengthwise to reveal intricacies of wood grain.
Queen Post	Either of two vertical members of a triangular truss, each being equidistant from the apex.
Quoins	The dressed stones at the corners of buildings, usually laid so their faces are alternately large and small. Usually in contrasting colour of brick from the rest of the wall.
Rabbet (also rebate)	A longitudinal channel, groove, or recess cut out of the edge or face of a member to receive another member, or one to receive a frame inserted in a door or window opening; the recess into which glass is installed in a window sash.
Racking	Lateral stress exerted on an assembly. See test Procedure ASTM E 72.
Radation	Any heated surface loses heat to cooler surrounding space or surfaces through radiation. The earth receives its heat from the sun by radiation. The heat rays are turned into heat as they strike an object which will absorb some or all of the heat transmitted.
Radial saw	A circular saw which hangs from a horizontal arm or beam and slides back and forth. The arm pivots from side to side to allow for angle cuts and bevels. When sawing finish plywood, the good side should face up as the saw cuts on the down stroke.
Radiant heating	A heating system using heating elements in floors, ceilings, or walls to radiate heat into a room.
Radiator	A heating unit which is supplied heat through a hot water system.
Rafter	1) Structural members used to frame a roof; 2) A roof beam sloping from the ridge to the wall. In most houses, rafters are visible from the attic. In styles such as craftsman bungalows and some "rustic" contemporaries, they are exposed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common rafter is one which runs square with the plate and extends to the ridge. • A hip rafter extends from the outside angle of the plate towards the apex of the roof. They are 2" deeper or wider than common rafters. • A valley rafter extends from an inside angle of the plates toward the ridge of the house.
Raggle block	A specially designed masonry block having a slot or opening into which the top edge of the roof flashing is inserted and

Terms	Description
	anchored.
Raglin	The open joint in masonry to receive flashing.
Rail	The cross of horizontal piece of a door, window sash, or panel. The top horizontal member of a balustrade.
Rake	The angle of slope of a roof rafter, or the inclined portion of a cornice.
Random	Without uniformity of dimension or design; e.g., masonry wall with stones placed irregularly, not in a straight course.
Rankin	Thermometer's scale on which unit of measurement equals the Fahrenheit degree.
Realtor	A salesperson licensed in the state to broker real estate.
Re-bar	Reinforcing bar used to increase the tensile strength of concrete.
Rebate	A rectangular recess along the edge of a timber to receive a shutter, door or window
Rebuild	The term "rebuild" means to reconstruct a portion or portions of the building completely and properly using new or salvaged materials acceptable to the Owner and Architect.
Record drawings	Sometimes called "as-built" drawings, these are normally modified from the construction documents to conform to all changes made during construction.
Refinish	To put finish back into its original condition.
Reflective glass	Glass with a metallic coating to reduce solar heat gain.
Register	A fixture through which conditioned air flows. In a gravity heating system, it is located near the baseboard. In an air conditioning system, it is located close to the thermostat.
Register	The terminal end of a duct opening into a room.
Reglet	A horizontal slot formed or cut in a parapet or other masonry wall, into which the top edge of counter-flashing can be inserted and anchored. In glazing, a reglet is typically a pocket or keyway extruded into the framing for installing the glazing gaskets.
Regulation	The term "Regulations" includes laws, ordinances, statutes, and lawful orders issued by authorities having jurisdiction, as well as rules, conventions, and agreements within the construction industry that control performance of the Work.
Reinforced concrete	A combination of steel and concrete using the best properties of each. The steel consists of rebar or reinforcing bars varying from 3/8 " to 2 1/4 "in diameter and is placed before concrete is poured.
Reinforced masonry	Masonry units, reinforcing steel, grout and/or mortar combined to act together to strengthen the masonry structure.
Reinforcement	Adding strength or bearing capacity to a structural member. Examples include the placing of metal rebar into forms before pouring concrete, or attaching gusset plates at the intersection of multiple members of a truss.
Relative heat gain	The amount of heat gain through a glass product taking into consideration the effects of solar heat gain (shading coefficient) and conductive heat gain (U-value).
Relieving arch	An arch which encloses an arch or a window or other opening. It helps relieve some of the weight on the arch of the opening.
Relocate	To move an item from one location and install in another location.
Remodel	To reconstruct or make over.
Render	To coat (brick, for example) with plaster or cement.
Rendering	The art of shading or coloring a elevation or perspective drawing.
Renovate	To restore to good condition, to make new or as if new again.

Terms	Description
Repair	The term "repair" means to fix and restore a portion or portions of the building to a sound, acceptable state of operation and serviceability or appearance.
Replace	The term "replace" means to remove an existing element or elements from the building and install a new element of like kind or a salvaged element acceptable to the Owner and Architect, completely and properly anchored to the substrate and surrounding materials; also the term can mean to provide a substitute or replacement for an item.
Reredos	An ornamental screen behind and above an altar. Can be painted, sculpted, or both.
Reset	The term "Reset" means to remove an existing element/s from the building and reinstall it completely and properly anchored to the substrate and surrounding materials.
Resilient flooring	Either tile or sheet goods for flooring material made from vinyl or rubber.
Resilient tile	Floor tile use this term generically instead of "vinyl composition tile," "vinyl tile" or "rubber tile."
Resistance	The internal structure of wires even in the best conductors opposes the flow of electric current and converts some current into heat. This internal friction-like effect is called resistance and is measured in ohms. Resistance equals Voltage divided by Amperage.
Respond	A half pillar attached to and projecting from a wall, used to carry one end of an arch.
Restoration	Rebuilding a structure so that it will appear in its original form.
Restrictions	Limitations on the use of real estate as set by law or contained in a deed.
Retaining wall	A wall built to keep a bank of earth from sliding.
Return	In heating and cooling systems, a vent that returns cold air to be warmed. In a hot air furnace system, it is located near an inside wall.
Reveal	The part of the side of a window or door opening that is between the outer surface of a wall and the window or door frame; the jamb.
Revet	The process of covering an embankment with stones.
Revetment	A facing of masonry or stones to protect an embankment from erosion.
Rheostat	A device for regulating electric current.
Rib	Any one of the arched series of members which is parallel to the length of a bridge, especially those on a metal arch bridge.
Ribbed Vaulting	Stone or brick vaulting typically used for roofing and comprising a thin, light layer supported by a framework of arched ribs.
Ribbon	A board set into the studs to support joists.
Ridge	The top edge of the roof where two slopes meet.
Rigid Frame Bridge	A type of girder bridge in which the piers and deck girder are fastened to form a single unit. Unlike typical girder bridges which are constructed so that the deck rests on bearings atop the piers, a rigid frame bridge acts as a unit. Pier design may vary.
Rigid insulation	High density fiberglass or cellular glass insulation.
Rigid metal conduit	This conduit resembles plumbing pipe, protecting wires from damage.
Riprap	1) Stones placed on a slope to prevent erosion; 2) Broken stone used for foundation fill.
Rise	The measure of an arch from the spring line to the highest part of the intrados, which is to say from its base support to the crown.

Terms	Description
Riser	1) The vertical part of a stair step; a vertical HVAC, plumbing, or electrical run or extension; 2) The vertical portion of a step. The board covering the open space between stair treads.
Rock Wool	An insulating material that looks like wool but is composed of mineral substances like granite, or silica.
Rodding	Stirring freshly poured concrete with a rod or vibrator to remove air pockets.
Roll Roofing	A continuous roofing material usually made of fiber and asphalt that comes in a roll form.
Romanesque Architecture	A style of architecture that flourished in Western Europe between 1050 and 1200. This style derived its name from the fact that it drew much of its influence from Roman architecture. In England, it is also called the Norman style. Some of the characteristic features of this school of architecture are; rounded arches; squat, massive pillars; small windows; simple, carved decoration.
Romex	A nonmetallic sheathed cable consisting of two or more insulated conductors having an outer sheath of moisture resistant, nonmetallic material. The conductor insulation is rubber, neoprene, thermoplastic or a moisture resistant flame retardant fibrous material.
Roof Pitch	Degree of roof slant stated in inches rise per foot.
Roof Run	The horizontal distance from the outside of a bearing wall plate to the center of the ridge rafter.
Roof Sealing	General term referring to the waterproof covering, roof insulation, vapor barrier, if used and roof deck as an entity.
Roof Span	Equal to twice the roof run, or the horizontal distance between the outside faces of bearing wall plates.
Roof Types	<u>Gable</u> - A roof consisting of two oppositely sloping planes that intersect at a level ridge. <u>Gambrel</u> - A roof shape consisting of two superimposed levels of gable roofs with the lower level at a steeper pitch. <u>Hip</u> - A roof consisting of four sloping planes that intersect to form a pyramidal or elongated pyramidal shape. <u>Mansard</u> - A roof shape consisting of two superimposed levels of hip roofs with the lower level at a steeper pitch. Other styles and shape of roofs –Gambrel, Shed, Flat, Butterfly, Salt box
Rough	In hardware, metal fastenings on cabinets which are usually concealed, like staples
Rough Floor	The subfloor on which the finished floor is laid.
Rough Hardware	Hardware used in a building, such as nails and bolts, which will not be seen in the completed house.
Rough Lumber	Unfinished lumber as it comes from the saw, usually measuring the nominal dimensions.
Rough Opening	Any unfinished opening in the framing of a building.
Rough Plumbing	All plumbing that should be done before the finish trades (sheetrock, painting, etc), including all waste lines and supply water lines that are in the walls or framing of the building.
Roughing In	Putting up the skeleton of a building or one of its components such as plumbing or electrical.
Roundel	A curved form, especially a semicircular panel, window, or recess.
Rowhouse	A residential building, usually built as rental apartments, in which the floor plan is commonly repeated from unit to unit, with each unit sharing a wall with the adjacent one. The building has a single continuous wall along the street.
RPM	Revolutions per Minute.

Terms	Description
Rubber tire roller	A roller with rubber tires commonly used for compacting trimmed subgrade or aggregate base or clay type soils.
Rubble	Masonry construction using stones of irregular shape and size.
Run	1) The horizontal distance between the eaves and the ridge of the roof, being half the span for a symmetrical gable roof; 2) The horizontal distance a rafter must span; 3) The horizontal distance covered by a flight of stairs; 4) Stonework having irregular shaped units and no indication of systematic course work.
Runner Channel	Cold rolled steel channel 12" deep used for suspended ceiling framing.
Rustication	Worked ashlar stone, with faces left rough.
R-value	The thermal resistance of a glazing system. The R-value is the reciprocal of the U-value. The higher the R value, the less heat is transmitted throughout the glazing material.
Saber Saw	A saw that cuts on the upstroke, good side of wood faces down.
Sacristy	A strong room usually attached to the north side of the chancel where vestments and the utensils belonging to the altars were placed. It is synonymous with vestry.
Saddle	The ridged covering of a roof designed to divert water away from the back of a chimney.
Safety Factor	1) The ultimate strength of a material divided by the allowable working load; 2) The element of safety needed to make certain there will be no structural failures.
Sand Finish	A final plaster coat, a skim coat.
Sandstone	A sedimentary rock formed by the consolidation and compaction of sand and held together by a natural cement, such as silica.
Sanitary Sewer	A sewer designed to carry sewage from bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen waste, not usually storm water.
Sap	All of the fluids in a tree.
Sash	The framework which holds the glass in a window or door.
Sawtooth Roof	A roof composed of a series of single-pitch roofs whose shorter or vertical side has windows for light and air.
Scab	A small wooden member used to join other member which is fastened to the outside face.
Scale	The relationship between actual measurements on a page of plans or blue prints and the actual measurements of the building represented by the plans or blue prints.
Scarfiging	A joint between two pieces of wood which allows them to be plied lengthwise.
Schedule	A table that spells out information about construction elements.
Schematic Design	The phase of the design process where the massing and size of a project is determined.
Score	To cut a surface of a material part way through with a sharp blade before braking; glass and ceramic tile are cut using this method.
Scratch coat	The first coat of plaster applied to a wall, scratched or scored to provide a bond for the second coat.
Screed	1) A metal or wood strip (guide) placed at intervals on a wall or floor to gauge thickness of plaster or concrete; 2) To level, as in pulling a straight edge across a concrete slab within the formwork.
Screeding	The wood or metal straightedge used to strike off or level newly placed concrete when doing cement work. Screeds can be the leveling device used or the form work used to level or establishes the level of the concrete. Screeds can be hand used or mechanical.

Terms	Description
Screen	A partition of stone or wood that separates without completely cutting off one part of a church from another part.
Scribe	To score or mark along a cutting line.
Scrim	A woven or mat-type fabric that is used as a membrane sandwich between other material to provide reinforcement and stretch resistance.
Scupper	An outlet in the wall of a building or a parapet wall for drainage of water from a flat roof.
Scutch	A bricklayer's cutting tool used for dressing and trimming brick to a special shape. It resembles a small pick
Scuttle	A small opening in a ceiling or wall to provide access to an attic or roof.
Seal	An embossing device or stamp used by a design professional on his Drawings and Specifications as evidence of his registration in the state where the Work is to be preformed.
Seal Coat	A fine thin coating of asphalt paving with bituminous material to provide water resistance.
Sealant	A semi-liquid or "elastomeric" water proofing material placed in a joint between materials to create a water tight joint or to fill small openings in wall or ceiling systems to prevent leakage of sound or to create a finished appearance and seal between dissimilar materials.
Sealant	An elastomeric material with adhesive qualities applied between components of a similar or dissimilar nature to provide an effective barrier against the passage of the elements.
Sealer	A base coating of paint to seal and equalize suction differences and prevent absorption of subsequent coats.
Seamless Flooring	Sheet flooring material with joints field welded or sealed.
Seasoning	The drying out of wood or lumber in an oven or kiln or by exposing to air.
Second Mortgage	A mortgage made by a home buyer or owner either to raise money for a down payment required by the first mortgage, or to raise money for renovation or remodel.
Section	1) A drawing of an object as if it were cut to show the interior or the relationships between components; 2) A component of panel construction used in walls, floors, roofs, ceilings etc; 3) An area of land equaling 1 square mile and delineated by a surveyed system of township and range lines.
Sedilla	In a church, a recessed seat, usually provided for the clergy or servers assisting at the celebrations
Seepage Pit	A pit or cesspool into which sewage drains from a septic tank and which is so constructed that the liquid waste seeps through the sides of the pit into the ground.
Segmental Arch	An arch formed along an arc which is drawn from a point below its spring line, thus forming a less than semicircular arch. The intrados of a Roman arch follows an arc drawn from a point on its spring line, thus forming a semi-circle.
Self edge	Plastic laminate edging in which the horizontal surface overlaps the vertical edge surface and is cut off flush with the vertical surface -- this will expose a dark brown edge of the plastic laminate material and will be visible.
Self Healing	A term used to describe to a material which melts with the heat from the sun's rays, and seals over cracks that were earlier formed from other causes. Some waterproof membranes are self-healing.
Self levling	A term used to describe a viscous material that is applied by pouring. In its uncured state, it spreads out evenly.
Selvage	The unsurfaced strip along a sheet of roll roofing which forms

Terms	Description
	the under portion at the lap in the application of the roof covering.
Seperation	In concrete application, what happens to concrete when it is dropped directly with a flat chute causing the concrete to separate, usually occurring at a 1:2 slope.
Septic Tank	A concrete, steel or plastic tank where sewage is reduced by bacterial action before draining off into a drain field, seepage pit, etc.
Service Conductor	In electrical contracting, the supply conductors that extend from the street main or from the transformer to the service equipment.
Service Connection	The electrical conduit runs from the utility company's distribution to the building.
Service Drop	In electrical contracting, the overhead service conductors from the last pole or other aerial support to and including the splices, if any, connecting to the service entrance conductors at the building.
Service Sink	Wall-mounted sink for building maintenance purposes -- do not use the terms "slop sink" or "mop basin."
Set	The hardening of cement or plaster.
Set back	A zoning restriction on the placement of a structure on a lot.
Setting Blocks	Generally rectangular cured extrusions of neoprene, EPDM, silicone, rubber or other suitable material on which the glass product bottom edge is placed to effectively support the weight of the glass.
Settlement	Compression of the soil or the members of a structure.
Sewer	An underground system of pipes which carry off waste matter or storm water to a sewage treatment plant or to an area of natural drainage.
SFD or Single Family Dwelling	A house built for the purpose of a single family as opposed to multi families such as a duplex or apartment complex.
Shading Coefficient	The ratio of the solar heat gain through a specific glass product to the solar heat gain through a lite of 1/8" (3mm) clear glass. Glass of 1/8" (3mm) thickness is given a value of 1.0.
Shaft	The main vertical part of a column between the base and the capital.
Shake	A shingle formed by splitting a short long into a number of tapered sections.
Shakes	Thick wedge shaped wooden shingles.
Sheating	The structural covering of boards or wall boards placed over the studs, joists or rafters of a structure.
Sheating Paper	A paper barrier agianst wind and moisture applied between the sheathing and the outer cladding.
Shed	A roof type with one high pitched plane covering the entire structure.
Shed Roof	A roof that slants in only one direction.
Sheet Flooring	Resilient linoleum, vinyl or rubber flooring installed wall to wall.
Sheet Metal	Usually thin steel sheets.
Sheet Piling	Planking or steel plates driven close together vertically, to form a temporary wall around an excavation.
Sheet Rock	Panels made primarily from gypsum installed over the framing to form the interior walls and ceilings. Sheetrock is often called gypsum board.
Shelf Life	Used in the glazing and sealant business to refer to the length of time a product may be stored before beginning to lose its effectiveness. Manufacturers usually state the shelf life and the necessary storage conditions on the package.
Shim	A piece of material used to level or fill in the space between two

Terms	Description
	surfaces.
Shingles	Thin pieces of wood, metal or other material which overlap each other in covering a roof.
Shiplap	A type of horizontal siding with lapped joints along the edges.
Shoe Mold	A small molding against the baseboard at the floor.
Shop drawings	Drawings, diagrams, illustrations, schedules, performance charts, brochures and other data prepared by the Contractor or any Subcontractor, manufacturer, supplier or distributor, which illustrate how specific portions of the Work will be fabricated and/or installed.
Shore "A" Hardness	Measure of firmness of a compound by means of a Durometer Hardness Gauge. (A hardness range of 20-25 is about the firmness of an art gum eraser. A hardness of about 90 is about the firmness of a rubber heel.)
Shoring	Structural bracing used as temporary support for a building during construction.
Shutter	A movable cover for a window used for protection from weather and intruders.
Shutter Dogs	Small metal structures used to hold the shutters against the wall.
Siding	The finished covering on the outside of non masonry walls of houses and buildings. Shingles, wood siding, Aluminium siding, vinyl siding, stucco, etc.
Sight Line	The line along the perimeter of glazing infills corresponding to the top edge of stationary and removable stops. The line to which sealants contacting the glazing infill are sometimes finished off.
Silicon Sealant	A sealant having as its chemical compound a backbone consisting of alternating silicon-oxygen atoms.
Sill	1) The horizontal member below a window or door opening; 2) A wood member placed directly on top of the foundation in wood frame construction.
Sill plate	The framing member anchored to the foundation wall upon which studs and other framing members will be attached. It is the bottom plate of your exterior walls.
Sill sealer	A material placed between the top of the foundation wall and the sill plate. Usually a foam strip, the sill sealer helps make a better fit and eliminate water problems.
Sill step	The first step coming directly off a building at the door openings.
Single ply	A descriptive term signifying a roof membrane composed of only one layer of material such as EPDM, Hypalon or PVC.
Single tee	The name given to a type of precast concrete deck which has one stiffening rib integrally cast into slab.
Site	Geographical location of the project, usually defined by legal boundary lines.
Skeleton Construction	Construction where the frame carries all of the weight.
Skew	When the superstructure is not perpendicular to the substructure, a skew angle is created. The skew angle is the acute angle between the alignment of the superstructure and the alignment of the substructure.
Skin Stressed Construction	Construction of panels or sections of framework covered in plywood and attached such that the covering carries a large portion of the loading.
Sky dome	A type of skylite exhibiting a characteristic translucent plastic domed top.
Skylight	A structure on a roof that is designed to admit light and is somewhat above the plane of the roof surface.
Slab Foundation	A reinforced concrete floor and foundation system.

Terms	Description
Slab on Grade	A type of construction in which footings are needed but little or no foundation wall is poured.
Slag	A by-product of smelting ore such as iron, lead or copper. Also overburden/dropping from welding which may burn, melt, or discolor adjacent surfaces.
Slate	A fine-grained metamorphic rock that splits into thin, smooth-surfaced layers. In building, most often used in this area for roofing.
Sleepers	Strips of wood laid over a slab floor to which the finished floor is attached.
Slope	Incline or pitch of roof surface.
Sloped glazing	Any installation of glass that is at a slope of 15 degrees or more from vertical.
Slump Test	A concrete test method to evaluate water/cement ratio consistency for validation of its stiffness. If the tests results are high, one likely cause would be too much water. Low slump-not enough water. The test is measured in inches.
Smoke chamber	The portion of the chimney flue located directly over the fireplace.
Snecked	Of masonry, with courses broken by smaller stones (snecks).
Soffit	The exposed undersurface of any overhead component of a building such as an arch, balcony, beam, cornice, lintel or vault.
Softening point	The temperature at which a substance changes from a hard material to a softer and more viscous material.
Softwood	Type of lumber from conifer evergreen trees, such as pine, fir, larch, cedar, and redwood.
Soil stack	Any vertical pipe which recieves waste from the plumbing fixtures.
Solar Heat	Heat from the sun's rays.
Solar Orientation	The relationship of room to the sun's light.
Sole	The horizontal framing member directly beneath the studs.
Sole plate	Bottom horizontal member of a frame wall.
Spacers (shims)	Small blocks of neoprene, EPDM, silicone or other suitable material placed on each side of the glass product to provide glass centering, maintain uniform width of sealant bead and prevent excessive sealant distortion.
Spacing	The distance between structural members.
Spackle	To cover wallboard joints with plaster.
Spalling	The chipping or flaking of concrete, bricks, or other masonry where improper drainage or venting and freeze/thaw cycling exists.
Span	The horizontal space between two supports of a structure. Also refers to the structure itself. The clear span is the space between the inside surfaces of piers or other vertical supports. The effective span is the distance between the centers of two supports.
Spandrel	The roughly triangular area above an arch and below a horizontal bridge deck. A closed spandrel encloses fill material. An open spandrel carries its load using interior walls or columns.
Spandrel beam	A beam which lies in the same vertical plane as the exterior wall.
Specifications	1) A detailed description of requirements, composition and materials for a proposed building; 2) Apart of the Contract Documents contained in the Project Manual consisting of written descriptions of a technical nature of materials, equipment construction systems, standards and workmanship.
Spire	An elongated, pointed structure that rises from a tower, turret,

Terms	Description
	or roof.
Spke	A large heavy nail.
Splayed	An oblique angle or bevel given to the sides of an opening in a wall so that the opening is wider on one side of the wall than on the other.
Splice	The joining of two similar members in a straight line.
Splice Plate	A plate which joins two girders. Commonly riveted or bolted.
Splitting	The formation of long cracks completely through a membrane. Splits are frequently associated with lack of allowance for expansion stresses. They can also be a result of deck deflection or change in deck direction.
Sprayed fireproofing	Mineral fiber composition applied to structural steel members by spraying with an applicator gun used to obtain a specific fire rating for the structure to comply with building code requirements.
Spring Line	The place where an arch rises from its support; a line drawn from the impost.
Sprocket	In a roof, a short timber placed on the back and at the foot of a rafter to form projecting eaves; hence a sprocketed roof.
SPUD	The removal of gravel or heavy accumulations of bitumen from roof membranes by means of chipping or scraping.
Stack	A flue or chimney, or group of chimnies.
Stack vent	Also called a waste vent or soil vent, it is the extension of a soil or waste stack above the highest horizontal drain connected to the stack.
Stagger	To offset building members or fasteners in a horizontal or vertical plane in alternating sequence.
Staging	A temporary scaffolding to support workers and materials during construction.
Stained glass	Glass coloured by mixing pigments inherently in the glass, by fusing colored metallic oxides onto the glass, or by painting and baking transparent colors on the glass surface.
Stake	A sharpened piece of wood or other material used to mark locations, elevations, etc.
Stakeout	Marking the foundation layout with stakes.
Standard	An approved criterion governing the quality of a construction material, operation, functional requirement, or method of assembly.
Staning seam	A type of joint often used on metal roofs.
Static load	The total amount of permanent non moving weight that is applied to given surface areas.
STC (Sound Transmission Class)	A single number rating derived from individual transmission losses at specified test frequencies. It is used for interior walls, ceilings and floors.
Steel framing	Skeleton framing with either steel beams or steel studs.
Steel trowel	Tool used for non-porous smooth finishes of concrete. It is a flat steel tool used to spread and smooth plaster, mortar or concrete. Pointing trowels are small enough to be used in places where larger trowels will not fit. The pointing trowel has a point. The common trowel has a rectangular blade attached to a handle. For smooth finish, use trowel when concrete begins to stiffen.
Steening	Brickwork without mortar.
Stick building	Light weight wood framed building -- type 5 construction by the BOCA/National Building Code.
Stick built	Constructed by means of building stud-by-stud and joist-by-joist in the field from raw materials.
Stiffner	On plate girders, structural steel shapes, such as an angle, are

Terms	Description
	attached to the web to add intermediate strength.
Stile	A vertical member of a door, window, or panel.
Stirup	A metal 'U' shaped strap used to support framing members.
STL (Sound Transmission Loss)	The reduction of the amount of sound energy passing through a wall, floor, roof, etc. It is related to the specific frequency at which it is measured and it is expressed in decibels. Also called "Transmission Loss."
Stock	Common sizes of building materials and components available from most commercial industries.
Stone	Granite, marble, limestone, slate used for fabricated interior or exterior finishes.
Stool	An inside windowsill.
Stop	A small strip of wood to hold a door or window sash in place.
Storm door/window	An extra door or window placed outside an ordinary door or window for added protection from the wind or cold.
Storm sewer	A sewer that is designed to carry away excess water from storms but not sewage.
Storm window	A glazed panel or sash placed on the inside or outside of an existing sash or window as additional protection against the elements.
Story	A set of rooms on the same floor or level; a floor, or the space between two floors. Also, a horizontal division of a building's exterior considered architecturally, which need not correspond exactly with the stories within.
Stoup	Holy water basin at the entrance to a church, usually on a pillar or set in a niche.
Strain	The percentage of elongation or compression of a material or portion of a material caused by an applied force.
Strap work	Decoration like interlaced leather straps.
Stress	Any force acting upon a part or member used in construction.
Stress cover construction	Construction of panels or sections of framework covered in plywood and attached such that the covering carries a large portion of the loading.
Stretcher course	A row of masonry in a wall with the long side of the units exposed to the exterior.
Striking off	The operation of smoothing off excess compound or sealant at sight line when applying same around lites or panels.
String course	A continuous projecting horizontal band set in the surface of a wall and usually molded. Often in a different coloured brick or stone, and used for decoration.
String line	A nylon line usually strung tightly between supports to indicate both direction and elevation, used in checking grades or deviations in slopes or rises. Used in landscaping to level the ground.
Stringer	A beam aligned with the length of a span which supports the deck.
Stripping	1) Removal of concrete forms from the hardened concrete; 2) Wooden strips attached to the ceiling joists to level the ceiling plane for cladding.
Structure	As defined by ordinance, a combination of materials to form a construction that is safe and stable. The term includes, but is not limited to, buildings, outbuildings, barns, garages, walls, fences, display signs, scaffolds, trailers, or any object that is used or maintained above or below ground.
Structural silicone glazing	The use of a silicone sealant for the structural transfer of loads from the glass to its perimeter support system and retention of the glass in the opening.
Strut	A compressive member such as a roof timber, either upright &

Terms	Description
	connected to the rafter above it, or sloping, connecting another post to the rafter.
Stucco	Plaster made from portland cement, sand, and water used as an exterior wall surface finish; usually applied over a galvanized metal lath or wood lath base.
Stud	Small upright beams or columns used in framing a structure, usually of wood or steel.
Sub contractor	A person or organization that has a direct contract with a prime Contractor to perform a portion of the Work at the site.
Sub floor	The rough flooring under the finished floor that rests on the floor joists.
Sub rough	That part of a building's plumbing system that is done before the cement is poured.
Sub structure	The portion of a bridge structure including abutments and piers which supports the superstructure.
Subsoil drain	Also called a "footing drain". A perforated 4" diameter pipe which is installed on the outside of the footing surrounded by pea gravel, which allows storm water in the soil to drain into it and be carried off to the sewer system or to a sump pit inside the basement, and from there pumped out back to the gravel surface or into the sewer.
Substantial Completion	The term "Substantial Completion" means the date on which the Architect issues a Certificate of Substantial Completion based on an inspection of the Work, by which it can be determined that the Work is sufficiently complete in accordance with the Contract Documents so that the Owner can occupy or utilize the Work for the use for which it is intended. A Certificate of Substantial Completion may be issued for each individual building as it is completed, if this is in the Owner's best interests.
Substrate	A part or substance which lies below and supports another.
Sump	A pit in the basement floor to collect water.
Sump Pump	A submersible pump placed in a sump to remove the water through sewer pipes.
Super structure	The portion of a bridge structure which carries the traffic load and passes that load to the substructure.
Supplier	A person or organization who supplies materials or equipment for the Work, including that fabricated to a special design, but who does not perform labor at the site.
Surfaced Lumber	Lumber that is dressed by running it through a planer.
Survey	Boundary and/or topographic mapping of a site.
Surveyor	A person skilled in land measurement.
Suspenders	Tension members of a suspension bridge which hang from the main cable to support the deck. Also similar tension members of an arch bridge which features a suspended deck. Also called hangers.
Suspension Bridge	A bridge which carries its deck with many tension members attached to cables draped over tower piers.
Swale	A drainage channel formed where two slopes meet.
Swing Bridge	A movable deck bridge which opens by rotating horizontally on an axis.
Swiss Cap	A decorative furnace cap that exhales smoke by spinning.
Tack Board	A bulletin board made of cork or other resilient tackable surface.
Tail Beam	Joist supported by header at both ends, from a header in a floor opening to the sill header.
Tamp	To ram a compact soil.
Taping	Applying joint tape over embedding compound in the process of joint treatment of drywall.

Terms	Description
Tar	Heavy dark oil in roofing and roof surfacing.
Tear Off	In roofing, a term used to describe the complete removal of the built up roof membrane and insulation down to and exposing the roof deck.
Tempered	Thoroughly mixed cement or mortar.
Tensile Strength	The greatest stretching stress a structural member can bear without breaking or cracking.
Termite Shield	Sheet metal used to block the passage of termites.
Terra cotta	A hard, brown-red fired, clay product, typically used as exterior ornament. Can be glazed, or unglazed.
Terrazzo	A durable floor finish made of small chips of colored stone or marble, embedded in cement and polished in place to a high glaze.
Tester	A cover or canopy suspended over a tomb or a pulpit. The tester may have a purely ornamental purpose or - where positioned over a pulpit - may be used as a sounding board to magnify and direct the preacher's voice.
Testing Laboratories	A "testing laboratory" is an independent entity engaged to perform specific inspections or tests, either at the Project Site or elsewhere, and to report on and, if required, to interpret results of those inspections or tests.
Texture Paint	One which may be manipulated by brush, trowel or other to give various patterns.
Thermal Break	A separation between exterior and interior materials by an insulation material. Typically refers to a feature of a window wall system.
Thermal Bridge	A thermally conducive area of an exterior enclosure which will allow heat to transfer from the interior of the building to the exterior at a greater rate than the other parts of the enclosure.
Thermal Conductor	A substance capable of transmitting heat.
Thermal Movement	The measured amount of dimensional change that a material exhibits as it is warmed or cooled.
Thermal Shock	The stress built up by sudden and appreciable changes in temperature.
Thermoplastic Material	Solid material which is softened by increasing temperatures and hardened by decreasing temperatures.
Thermostat	A device for automatically controlling the supply of hot or cold air.
Three Phase	In electrical contracting, a wiring system consisting of 4 wires and used in industrial and commercial applications. This system is suitable for installations requiring large motors. It consists of three wires and one ground wire. The voltage in each wire is out of phase with the others by 1/3 of a cycle, as if produced by 3 different generators.
Threshold	The beveled piece of stone, metal, wood, etc. over which the door swings.
Throat	A passage directly above the fireplace opening where the damper is set.
Through Truss	A truss which carries its traffic through the interior of the structure with crossbracing between the parallel top and bottom chords.
Thru	Short version of the word "Through" as used in drawings.
Tie	A tension member of a truss.
Tie Beam	The main horizontal beam in a roof, connecting the bases of the rafters, usually just above a wall.
Tie in	In roofing, a term used to describe the joining of a new roof with the old.
Tilt up Wall	Cast concrete units which are preformed which, when cured,

Terms	Description
	are tilted to their vertical position and secured by mechanical fasteners to prior erected structural steel. May be pre-cast.
Timber	Lumber with a cross section larger than 4x6 inches, for posts, sills, and girders.
Tinted Glass	Glass with colorants added to the basic glass batch that gives the glass color as well as light and heat-reducing capabilities. The color extends throughout the thickness of the glass.
Title 24	A federal set of laws that mandate the construction industry to conserve energy.
Title Insurance	An agreement to pay the buyer for losses due to defects in title of ownership.
Toe Bead	Sealant applied at the intersection of the outboard glazing stop and the bottom of the glazing channel; must be sized to also provide a seal to the edge of the glass.
Toe Board	Raised protective edge (usually 4" high) at edges of landings, balconies, mezzanines, etc. where there is no wall or knee wall, but only a guard rail.
Toe Nail	To drive nails at an angle.
Toe Space	Recess at base of cabinets.
Tolerance	The acceptable variance of dimension from a standard or specified size.
Tons	A unit of refrigeration capacity. One ton is equivalent to heat removal rate of 12000 Btus per hour.
Tongue	A projection on the edge of wood that joins with a similarly shaped groove.
Tongue and Groove	A type of flooring where the tongue of one board is joined to the groove of another board
Tooling	The operation of pressing in and striking a sealant in a joint to press the sealant against the sides of a joint and secure good adhesion; the finishing off of the surface of a sealant in a joint so that it is flush with the surface.
Top Mopping	The finished mopping of hot bitumen on a built-up roof.
Top Plate	Top horizontal member of a frame wall.
Top Soil	Soil used for planting trees, shrubs, ground cover, or grasses.
Torching	Applying direct flame to a membrane for the purpose of melting, heating or adhering.
Total Run	The total of all the tread widths in a stair.
Tracery	Carved stonework of interlaced and branching ribs, particularly the lace-like stonework in the upper part of a Gothic window.
Trades	Use of titles such as "carpentry" is not intended to imply that certain construction activities must be performed by accredited or unionized individuals of a corresponding generic name, such as "carpenter." It also does not imply that requirements specified apply exclusively to trades persons of the corresponding generic name.
Transept	The transverse part of a church with a cruciform or cross-shaped floor plan, i.e. the 'arms' of the cross.
Transit	A surveyor's instrument used by builders to establish points and elevations both vertically and horizontally. It can be used to line up stakes or to plumb walls or the angle of elevation from a horizontal plane can be measured.
Transom	1) A window directly above a door or another window; 2) A horizontal crossbar in a window, over a door, or between a door and a window above it. Transom is the horizontal, as mullion is the vertical bar across an opening.
Trap	A plumbing device preventing sewage odors from entering the house.
Tread	The step or horizontal member of a stair.

Terms	Description
Trefoil	Ornamental tracery in the form of a flower with three symmetrical petals.
Trelliswork	An open pattern of interwoven strips, usually of wood but sometimes metal; also called latticework.
Tremie	A tube with removable sections and a funnel at the top used in concrete application. The bottom is kept beneath the surface of the concrete and raised as the form is filled and is used to pour concrete underwater.
Trim	A piece of material which finishes the edge of a surface or opening. It is usually made of a different material or color from the adjacent surface.
Trimmers	Single or double joists or rafters that surround an opening in frame construction.
Truss	A structural form which is used in the same way as a beam, but because it is made of an web-like assembly of smaller members it can be made longer, deeper, and therefore, stronger than a beam or girder while being lighter than a beam of similar dimensions.
Trussed Arch	A metal arch bridge which features a curved truss.
Tuck Pointing	The re-grouting of defective mortar joints in a masonry or brick wall.
Turret	A small, often ornamental tower projecting from a building, usually at a corner.
Two part Sealant	A product composed of a base and curing agent or accelerator, necessarily packages in two separate containers which are uniformly mixed just prior to use.
Tympanum	The ornamental recessed space or panel enclosed by the cornices of a triangular pediment. Also, a similar space between an arch and the lintel of a portal or window.
Typical	Means that the item referred to is repeated several times in similar circumstances and locations.
Ultraviolet	The invisible rays of the spectrum of light which are at its violet end. Sometimes abbreviated U.V.
Under Counter Light	Placed beneath upper cabinets to provide additional task lighting.
Underlayment	A smooth, hard sheet material, such as hardboard, cement board, plywood, or particle board, placed over rougher substrates to achieve a surface suitable for application of finishes such as resilient flooring or ceramic tile.
Underpinning	A foundation replacement or reinforcement temporary braced supports.
Undisturbed Earth	Soil which has not previously been excavated.
Undressed Lumber	Lumber that is not finished smooth.
Unit Construction	Construction consisting of preassembled walls, roofs, and or floors that are shipped to the building site.
Universal Design	Items and spaces which can be used by the majority of people regardless of their abilities or disabilities
Upholstery	Materials used to make soft seating including wood or metal frame, springs, foam, batting, cording, fabrics.
Uprights	Vertical members supporting the sides of a trench.
U-value	A measure of air-to-heat transmission (loss or gain) due to the thermal conductance and the difference in indoor and outdoor temperatures. As the U-value decreases, so does the amount of heat that is transferred through the glazing material. The lower the U-value, the more restrictive is the heat transfer. Reciprocal of R-value.
Valley	The internal angle formed by two roof slopes.
Valley Jacks	Rafters that run from a ridgeboard to a valley rafter.

Terms	Description
Valve	A device to stop, start or regulate the flow of liquid or gas through or from piping.
Vapor	The gaseous form of any substance.
Vapor barrier	A watertight material used to prevent the passage of moisture or water vapor into or through walls.
Vapor retarder	A membrane which is placed between the insulation and the roof deck to retard water vapor in the building from entering the insulation and condensing into liquid water.
Vault	An arched brick or stone ceiling or roof. The simplest form is the barrel vault, a single continuous arch; the groined vault consists of two barrel vaults joined at right angles; a ribbed vault has diagonal arches projecting from the surface. 1) A barrel or tunnel vault, semicylindrical in cross section, is in effect a deep arch or an uninterrupted series of arches, one behind the other, over an oblong space; 2) In a cross-barrel vault, the main barrel (tunnel) vault is intersected at right angles with other barrel (tunnel) vaults at regular intervals; 3) A quadrant vault is a half-barrel (tunnel) vault; 4) A sexpartite vault is a rib vault with six panels; 5) A fan vault is a development of lierne vaulting characteristic of English Perpendicular Gothic, in which radiating ribs form a fan-like pattern; 6) A cross vault (or groin) is formed at the point at which two barrel (tunnel) vaults intersect at right angles; 7) In a ribbed vault, there is a framework of ribs or arches under the intersections of the vaulting sections.
Veining	In roofing, the characteristic lines or "stretch marks" which develop during the aging process of soft bitumens.
Veneer	1) A thin layer of material bonded to other layers; 2) A thin layer of a valuable material over a less expensive material.
Vent	A screened opening for ventilation.
Vent Pipe	Small ventilating pipes extending from each fixture in a plumbing system to the vent stack.
Vent Stack	A vertical vent pipe installed for the purpose of providing circulation of air to and from any part of a drainage system.
Vent System	In plumbing, a system to provide a flow of air to or from a drainage system or to provide circulation of air within such system to protect traps seals from siphonage and back pressure.
Ventilation	The process of supplying and removing air by natural or mechanical means to or from any space.
Ventilator	Device installed on the roof for the purpose of ventilating the interior of the building.
Venting	The process of installing roof vents in a roof assembly to achieve natural ventilation or relieve vapor pressure.
Verge Board	The board which serves as the eaves finish on the gable end of a building.
Vermiculite	An inorganic mineral product that expands several times its initial volume when exposed to a high temperature (about 1000°F).
Vestibule	A small lobby or entrance room.
Vestry	A room in, or attached to, a church where the clergy put on their vestments and where these robes and other sacred objects are stored; synonymous with a sacristy.
Viscosity	The internal frictional resistance offered by a fluid to change of shape or to the relative motion or flow of its parts.

Terms	Description
Visible light transmittance	The percentage of visible light (390 to 770) nanometers) within the solar spectrum that is transmitted through glass.
Visual mock up	Small scale demonstration of a finished construction product.
Vitreous	Pertaining to a composition of materials that resemble glass.
Vitrified tile	A pipe made of clay, baked hard, then glazed so it is impervious to moisture; used particularly for underground drainage.
Voltage	The driving force behind the flow of electricity somewhat like pressure is in a water pipe.
Voltmeter	A device that measures the voltage flowing through a circuit. The circuit must be closed to allow the voltage to flow.
Volume	The amount of space occupied by an object, measured in cubic units.
Vousoir	Any one of the wedge shaped block used to form an arch.
Wainscot	The lower part of an interior wall when its surface finish is different from that of the upper.
Waiver or Linen	An instrument by which a person or organization who has or may have a right of mechanic's lien against the property of another relinquishes such right. Waivers of linen are provided to the owner by the general contractor and his sub-contractors & suppliers, at the time a pay request is submitted.
Walkways	Designated areas for foot traffic.
Wall	Vertical enclosure of a building or occupancy separation, usually load bearing.
Wall Bearing Construction	A structural system in which the floor and roof systems are carried directly by the masonry walls rather than by structural framing system.
Wall Board	Large rigid sheets usually made of gypsum, vegetable pulp or other similar materials, which may be fastened to the frame of a building to provide a finish surface.
Wall Covering	Flexible materials such as paper, vinyl, foil, fabric, felt cork, carpet or veneers applied to a wall
Warm Air System	A heating system in which furnace-heated air moves to living space through a series of ducts, circulated by natural convection (gravity system) or by a fan blower in the ductwork (forced system) to registers in the floor, walls or ceilings.
Warp	Any change from a true or plane surface.
Warranty Deed	A guarantee that the property is as promised.
Warren Truss	A type of truss in which vertical web members inclined to form equilateral triangles. May be be recognized by diagonal members which appear to form a series of alternating "V" and "A" shapes (without the crossbar) along the length of the truss when viewed in profile. Often the triangles are bisected by vertical members to reduce the length of the members of the top chord. Compare to Pratt truss and Howe truss.
Wash	The slant on a sill, capping, etc., to allow water to run off.
Water Closet	Commode
Waste stack	A vertical pipe in a plumbing system which carries the discharge from any fixture.
Water repellent coating	Transparent coating or sealer applied to the surface of concrete and masonry surfaces to repel water.
Water Table	Similar to a drip cap in function, sometimes found around the perimeter of a house near the ground line.
Water vapor	Moisture existing as a gas in air.
Water-Cement ratio	The strength of a concrete mixture depends on the water cement ratio. The water and cement form a paste. If the paste is made with more water, the concrete becomes weaker. Traditionally, concrete mixes have been identified in terms of

Terms	Description
	the ratio of cement to fine aggregate to coarse aggregate. For example, the ratio 1:2:4 refers to a mix which consists of 1 cu. ft. of cement, 2 cu. ft. of sand and 4 cu. ft. of gravel. Cement and water are the two chemically active elements in concrete and when combined, form a paste or glue which coats and surrounds the particles of aggregate and upon hardening binds the entire mass together.
Waterproofing	A procedure to make a material impervious to water or dampness, designed to resist a head of water (water pressure).
Watt	A unit of electrical energy.
Wattage	The electrical unit of power. A kilowatt (kW) is 1000 watts and electric customers are billed on how many kilowatts of power they have used.
Weathering	The mechanical or chemical discoloration and disintegration of a surface of the exterior of a building. Weatherstrip: A strip of metal or fabric fastened along the edge of windows and doors to reduce drafts and heat loss.
Weathering Steel	Steel designed to rust to a certain extent on its surface, and then stop rusting -- Cor-Ten is one manufacturer's trade name for weathering steel.
Weather Strip	A thin strip of metal, felt, wood, etc., used to cover the joint between a door or window sash and the jamb, casing, or sill; to keep out air, dust, rain, etc.
Weep Hole	A hole which allows for drainage of entrapped water from masonry or glazing structures.
Weep Screed	Tool used to drain moisture from concrete.
Weld	The joining of components together by fusing. In thermoplastics, refers to bonding together of the membrane using heat or solvents.
Well opening	A floor opening for a stairway, elevator, etc.
Wet seal	Application of an elastomeric sealant between the glass and sash to form a weather tight seal.
Window Types	<p><u>Double Hung</u> - Two sash, vertical sliding</p> <p><u>Casement</u> - Side hinged</p> <p><u>Awning</u> - Top hinged</p> <p><u>Hopper</u> - Bottom hinged</p> <p><u>Oriel</u> - Windows that generally project from an upper story, supported by a bracket.</p> <p><u>Picture Window</u> - Fixed sash</p> <p><u>Jalousie</u> - Glass slats, Venetian blind principle</p> <p><u>Horizontal sliding</u> - two or more sash designed to slide over one another</p> <p><u>Bay</u> - Extends beyond the exterior face of the wall</p> <p><u>Bow</u> - Projected window with a curved surface often in the glass itself.</p> <p><u>Combination</u> - The integration of two or more of the above into one unit.</p>
Wind uplift	The upward force exerted by wind traveling across a roof.
Wing Walls	Extensions of a retaining wall as part of an abutment; used to contain the fill of an approach embankment
Wire size	Conductors for building wiring are available in AWG (American Wire Gauge) sizes ranging from No. 14 to 4/0. The larger the number size, the smaller the diameter. For example #10 is smaller than #8. The larger the diameter of a wire, the lesser the resistance.
Wood	Use the term for solid softwoods only, otherwise use the terms "hardwood," "plywood," or "particle board."
Wood fiber plaster	Consists of calcified gypsum integrally mixed with selected

Terms	Description
	coarse cellulose fibers which provide bulk and greater coverage. It is formulated to produce high-strength base coats for use in highly fire-resistant ceiling assemblies.
Work life	The time during which a curing sealant (usually two compounds) remains suitable for use after being mixed with a catalyst.
Wrought iron	A soft, pure form of iron easily molded into bars and worked into ornamental shapes; widely used for decorative railings, gates and panels.
Wythe	A vertical layer of masonry one masonry unit thick.
Yard	A unit of length equal to 3'0" or 36"
Yarn	Continuous strand for tufting, weaving or knitting
Yoke	The top horizontal board of a window frame.
Zone	A zone is defined as a space or group of spaces in a building having similar heating and cooling requirements throughout its occupied area so that comfort conditions may be controlled by a single thermostat.
Zoning	Building restrictions as to size, location, and type of structures to be built in specific areas.
Zoning ordinance	The control by a municipality of the use of land and buildings, the height and bulk of buildings, the density of population, the relation of a lot's building coverage to open space, the size and location of yards and setbacks, and the provision of any ancillary facilities such as parking. Zoning, established through the adoption of a municipal ordinance, is a principal instrument in implementing a master plan.