DECK BUILDERS OTTAWA

Costs & Pricing

What decks cost in Ottawa by material, the City permit fee, drawing prices, and which jobs have too few published prices to quote

17 Expert Answers from Deck IQ

deckbuildersottawa.ca/construction-brain

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Q1

Tearing out an old deck in Vanier: what does it cost?

We found no published Ottawa or Ontario builder prices for deck removal or demolition with enough sources to give a reliable range, so we cannot quote a figure here.

What a removal quote depends on includes the size of the deck, how it is framed and fastened, whether the footings need to be pulled or cut below grade, how high the deck sits above the ground, how much material needs to be hauled away, and how easy it is to get equipment into the yard. A deck that is bolted to the house with a ledger and set on concrete piers takes more work to take apart than a small freestanding platform. The volume of wood and hardware going to disposal adds to the cost because the City of Ottawa says construction and renovation waste, including pressure-treated lumber, is not collected with regular garbage and must be brought to a landfill such as Trail Road.

Before anyone digs to pull footings, whoever is doing the work must submit a locate request through Ontario One Call at least five business days before starting. That applies to a homeowner doing their own work as well as a hired crew. Private lines, including electrical runs to sheds or outdoor lighting and sewer and septic piping, are the homeowner's responsibility to have marked separately.

On the permit question: the City of Ottawa's Decks page addresses construction permits, and we found no City statement on whether demolishing a deck on its own requires one. The Building Code Act, 1992 section 8(1) covers demolition as well as construction, so it is worth confirming with the City's Building Code Services before the work starts rather than after.

A few things worth settling with any crew before signing:

- who submits the locate request and when
- how the footings are handled, whether cut, pulled or left in place
- where the debris goes and whether hauling is included in the price
- whether any part of the house connection, such as the ledger or flashing, needs patching after the deck comes off

If you are replacing the deck rather than just removing it, the permit rules for the new structure apply in full: the height above grade, whether it is attached to the house, and whether it provides principal access all determine whether a building permit is required. The person who applies for the permit and books the three City inspections, being excavation or foundations, framing and final, should be named in the contract before work begins, because that responsibility does not sort itself out on its own once the job is underway.
Ask any crew you are considering: exactly what happens to the old footings, and is that included in the price?

Q2

Budget for replacing a rotten deck in Gloucester?

For a replacement deck, published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices read in September 2026 run roughly $25 to $65 per square foot for pressure-treated wood, $45 to $80 for cedar, $45 to $95 for composite, and $59 to $110 or more for PVC. These are installed prices, and the spread is wide. Some published packages exclude railings and steps, so confirm what each quote covers before comparing.

What the total depends on for your job includes the size and height of the new deck, the board material you choose, the foundation type, whether stairs and guards are included, and whether the old deck needs to be removed. The City of Ottawa says construction and demolition waste, including pressure-treated lumber, cannot go out with regular garbage and must go to Trail Road Landfill or another landfill. We found no published Ottawa price for removal or disposal, so ask each builder to quote it as a separate line.

On permits, the City of Ottawa requires a building permit if the deck is attached to the house and its walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade. A permit is also required if the deck is an elevated deck providing principal access to the house. A new deck built in place of the old one is judged by those same rules. The City does not say whether replacing boards alone on existing framing needs a permit, so ask its Building Code Services if that is your plan. The permit fee is $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed value of the work, with a minimum of $117.00. Permit drawings, where needed, run about $399 to $2,500 per set on the published prices of three drafting and design firms. Both Zoning By-laws 2008-250 and 2026-50 apply to applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026, with the most restrictive provisions from each applying to your lot.

Before any digging starts for new footings, a locate request through Ontario One Call is required at least five business days before breaking ground. Private lines, including electrical feeds to outbuildings and your sewer or septic piping, are yours to have marked separately.

For the guards, the 2024 Ontario Building Code sets the minimum height at 900 mm for an exterior guard on a deck serving one dwelling unit where the walking surface is not more than 1 800 mm above finished ground, and 1 070 mm otherwise. Openings must prevent the passage of a 100 mm sphere. Ontario's no-climb rule applies to every required guard: no member or opening between 140 mm and 900 mm above the walking surface may facilitate climbing, and horizontal rails or cables in that zone can facilitate climbing, which is what the rule targets, so confirm any infill design with the City's Building Code Services.

Ask each builder to quote the foundation type separately, name the board material and its grade, include the guard and stair details, and break out removal and disposal of the old deck as its own line, so you can place two written quotes side by side and see exactly where the numbers differ.

Q3

What raises the price of a second-storey deck in Stittsville?

A second-storey deck in Stittsville sits well above the ground, and several parts of the quote follow from that height. Published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices for installed decks run about $25 to $65 per square foot for pressure-treated, $45 to $80 for cedar, $45 to $95 for composite, and $59 to $110 or more for PVC, and those ranges cover all deck heights. These are published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices read in September 2026, and some published packages exclude railings and steps.

Several things pull the price upward on a raised deck, and none of them ranks above the others:

- Foundation depth and type: in clay or soils not clearly defined, the footing table sets 1.2 m but not less than the depth of frost penetration, and the floating-deck exemption in the 2024 Ontario Building Code does not apply once the joists are more than 600 mm (24 in.) above the ground. Where soil conditions involve filled ground or sensitive clay, the Code requires an engineered design. The drawings and the designer set footing sizes; we found no published Ottawa price for footings or piles.
- Guard height and infill: the 2024 Ontario Building Code requires guards on any side where the drop is more than 600 mm (24 in.) within 1.2 m of the edge. Where the walking surface is more than 1 800 mm above the ground, guards must be at least 1 070 mm high rather than the 900 mm allowed lower down. The Ontario no-climb rule means that no member, attachment or opening between 140 mm and 900 mm above the walking surface may facilitate climbing, and horizontal rails or cables in that zone can facilitate climbing, which is what the rule targets. Glass, aluminum or other manufactured guard systems outside the Code's prescriptive rules require the manufacturer's information and attachment details with the permit application. We found no published Ottawa price per foot for guards.
- Structural framing: taller posts and a connection to the house that the permit drawings must show in full. The designer or engineer sizes all of it.
- Stairs: a long stair run from the second storey to grade adds materials and labour. We found no published Ottawa price per step or per flight.
- Permit drawings and fees: a building permit is required because the deck is attached to the house and its walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade. Published prices for permit drawings from three drafting and design firms run about $399 to $2,500 per set. The City's permit fee is $12.75 per $1,000 or part thereof of the assessed value of the work, with a minimum of $117. The City lists a first review of 5 business days.
- Zoning: both Zoning By-law 2008-250 and Zoning By-law 2026-50 apply to applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026, with the most restrictive provisions of each applying. Setbacks and projections into yards

affect what the deck can look like. Confirm the rules for your specific lot with the City.

- Removal of an existing structure, access for equipment and disposal of old materials at Trail Road Landfill or another landfill also affect the quote; we found no published Ottawa price for removal.

Before you sign a contract, ask the builder to walk you through exactly what the foundation design will be and who is taking design responsibility on the Schedule 1 for the permit application.

Q4

What do permit drawings for a deck cost in Nepean?

Published prices from Ottawa and Ontario drafting and design firms read in September 2026 put permit drawings at about $399 to $2,500 per set. The range is wide, so ask each firm what its set covers.

What the City needs on the drawings is the same for every deck, and that list is the best way to compare what each firm offers.

The City of Ottawa's permit submission requirements set out what the drawings must include: a site plan showing the deck dimensioned to the house, other buildings, property lines and any septic system, with the municipal address; a foundation and framing plan covering footing or foundation type, size and location, helical pile layout and specifications if applicable, joists, beams, posts and decking with size, spacing, direction and span, the deck-to-house connection, and stair construction and location; and elevations showing the general appearance, the dimension from the walking surface to adjacent grade, footing depth where applicable, stair rise and run, and guard and handrail information. If the proposed decking is other than conventional lumber, the application also needs a material testing report, either a CCMC or BMEC report.

The City's permit application requires a Schedule 1 naming whoever is taking design responsibility. The Building Code allows a homeowner to take that responsibility for their own house, which means you can sign Schedule 1 yourself and prepare the drawings without hiring a designer, as long as it is a house you own and the building has no more than two dwelling units. If you prefer to hire someone, a BCIN designer or an engineer can sign instead. One drafting firm in the published prices lists engineering separately where it is needed, so if your lot has soil conditions such as filled ground or sensitive clay that require a Section 4.2 engineered design, that cost is on top of the drawing fee.

The City's first review target is five business days. The permit fee itself is $12.75 per $1,000 or part thereof of the assessed value of the work, with a minimum of $117. As an illustration of the formula: a $15,000 deck works out to $191.25 in permit fees, and a $40,000 deck to $510. Applications go through the My ServiceOttawa portal and payment accompanies the application.

Before you commit to a drawing firm or a builder who includes drawings in their quote, ask them exactly what the drawing set covers and whether engineering is included or billed separately if the City or soil conditions require it.

Q5

Are railings and stairs usually extra on Ottawa deck quotes?

Some published Ottawa and Ontario builder packages exclude railings and steps, so read each quote carefully to see what is and is not covered.

When you are comparing quotes, it helps to know what the Code requires, because that shapes what any quote must account for. Under the 2024 Ontario Building Code, a guard is required on any open side of a deck where the drop is more than 600 mm (24 in.) within 1.2 m of the edge. For a deck serving a single dwelling unit, that guard must be at least 900 mm high where the walking surface is not more than 1 800 mm above finished ground, and at least 1 070 mm high above that height. The infill between 140 mm and 900 mm above the walking surface must be designed so no member or opening facilitates climbing, and horizontal rails or cables in that zone can facilitate climbing, which is what the rule targets. On stairs, a handrail is not required if there are three risers or fewer on an exterior stair serving one dwelling unit, but is required for more than three risers.

The per-square-foot ranges published by Ottawa and Ontario builders are: pressure-treated about $25 to $65, cedar about $45 to $80, composite about $45 to $95, and PVC about $59 to $110 or more. Those are published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices read in September 2026, and the spread is wide. We found no published Ottawa price range for railings or stairs on their own, so we cannot give you a per-foot or per-step figure.

When you get quotes, here is what to check on each one:

- does the price include guards and handrails, or are they priced separately
- what material and infill style is being quoted for the guard
- are stairs included, and if so how many risers
- who applies for the building permit and books the three required City inspections (excavation or foundations, framing, and final)
- is removal of an existing deck included if there is one

If your deck will be attached to the house and its walking surface will be more than 600 mm (24 in.) above grade, or if it provides the main raised entrance to the house, a building permit is required under the City of Ottawa's rules. The permit application must include scaled drawings showing the guard height, infill detail, stair rise and run, and the deck-to-house connection, among other things.
Before you sign, ask each builder: can you show me exactly which line items are included in this price, and give me a written breakdown of anything that would be quoted separately?

Q6

Why do two Barrhaven deck quotes for the same size differ so much?

When two quotes for the same size differ a lot, start with what each builder actually included in the price.

Published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices run about $25 to $65 per square foot for pressure-treated wood, $45 to $80 for cedar, $45 to $95 for composite, and $59 to $110 or more for PVC, all labelled as published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices read in September 2026. Two quotes can also diverge when one builder has priced a complete job and the other only the boards and framing.

Here is what quotes often differ on, without any of these being more important than the others: the board material chosen, the foundation type (concrete piers versus helical piles), the height of the deck above grade and how many levels it has, the stair configuration and number of risers, the railing type and infill design, removal and disposal of an existing deck (the City of Ottawa says wood from demolition is not collected with regular garbage and goes to the Trail Road Landfill Site or another landfill), permit drawings (about $399 to $2,500 per set on the published prices of three drafting and design firms), the City building permit fee itself, and who applies for the permit and books the three required inspections (excavation or foundations, framing, and final). Some published packages exclude railings and steps entirely, so a lower headline number may simply be a shorter scope.

The permit question matters here. Under the City of Ottawa's rules, a deck attached to the house with a walking surface more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade requires a building permit, as does an elevated deck providing principal access to the building. The City's first review takes 5 business days. The permit fee is $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed valuation of the work, with a minimum of $117. As an illustration of the formula: a $15,000 deck works out to $191.25. Where the decking material is other than conventional lumber, the permit application also needs a material testing report (CCMC or BMEC). Both Zoning By-laws 2008-250 and 2026-50 apply to applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026, with the most restrictive provisions from each governing setbacks and projections: confirm the rules for your specific lot with the City.

Soil conditions vary by lot, and where a builder or engineer finds peat, filled ground or sensitive clay including Leda clay, the 2024 Ontario Building Code requires an engineered foundation design rather than the standard prescriptive approach. One quote may assume straightforward soil; another may have already priced for something more involved.

To make the two quotes comparable, ask each builder to give you a written, itemised scope that lists the board material and grade, the foundation type and depth, the guard height and infill design, stair count, what happens to the old deck if there is one, and whether drawings and permit applications are included. Once the scopes match, the price difference tells you something real.

Before you sign, ask each builder to walk you through exactly what triggers a change order on their quote and what is not covered.

Q7

PVC or composite decking: which costs more for an Ottawa build?

PVC decking published prices run about $59 to $110 or more per square foot installed, while composite runs about $45 to $95 per square foot installed. Both ranges come from published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices read in September 2026, and the spread within each category is wide. On those figures, PVC tends to sit higher, though the top of the composite range overlaps with the lower end of PVC.

What moves a quote within or beyond those ranges includes the height of the deck above grade, whether the framing is new, the type of foundation, the number of stairs and the railing system chosen. Some published packages exclude railings and steps, so confirm exactly what a quote covers before comparing numbers.

On the permit side, the City of Ottawa requires that where the proposed decking is other than conventional lumber, the building permit application must include a material testing report, either a CCMC or BMEC report, for that product. Both PVC and composite fall into that category. Whether a permit is required at all depends on the deck's height and how it relates to the house: if the walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade and the deck is attached to or adjacent to the house, a permit is required. A raised deck that provides principal access to the house as an elevated structure also requires a permit regardless of size.

On warranties, composite manufacturers publish 25- and 30-year limited product warranties, with fade and stain warranties. Some PVC lines carry a lifetime limited product warranty and a 50-year fade and stain warranty. Read the full warranty document for each product before choosing, because the terms vary. For care and maintenance, follow the manufacturer's guide for whichever product you select.

Zoning applies to both materials equally. Building permit applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026 must comply with both Zoning By-law 2008-250 and Zoning By-law 2026-50, with the most restrictive provisions from each applying. Setbacks and yard projections depend on your specific lot, so confirm the rules with the City of Ottawa's Building Code Services before finalising the design.

The form on this page sends your request to local deck builders listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory.

Have the permit drawings, the issued permit and a written contract in hand that spells out the exact board product, the scope of the framing work, what is included in the price, and the payment schedule.

Q8

Is $95 a square foot fair for a composite deck in Orleans?

$95 a square foot sits at the top of the published range for composite decks, which runs from about $45 to $95 per square foot based on published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices read in September 2026. So the quote is not out of range, but it is at the ceiling, and what you get for that price matters as much as the number itself.

Quotes can differ on the deck's height above grade, the foundation type, the number of levels and stairs, and the guard and railing style. The specific composite product matters too: capped wood-plastic composite lines carry 25- and 30-year limited product and fade-and-stain warranties from manufacturers, while some cellular PVC lines carry a lifetime limited product warranty and a 50-year fade-and-stain warranty. Those are manufacturer warranty terms, not guaranteed lifespans, and you should read the full warranty before choosing a product. Note that if the decking is anything other than conventional lumber, the City of Ottawa requires a material testing report (a CCMC or BMEC report) as part of the building permit application.

On permits: if the deck is attached to the house and its walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade, a building permit is required. The same applies to an elevated deck that provides principal access to the house. The City's first review takes 5 business days, and three inspections are required: excavation and foundations, framing, and final. The homeowner or the builder books each one 48 hours in advance. The permit fee is $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed project value, with a minimum of $117. As an illustration of the formula, a $15,000 project works out to $191.25 and a $40,000 project to $510. Before any digging starts, a locate request through Ontario One Call is required by law, and it is free.

Zoning in Orleans falls under both Zoning By-law 2008-250 and Zoning By-law 2026-50, with the most restrictive provisions of each applying to permit applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026. Setbacks from lot lines, yard projections, and whether the deck counts toward soft-landscaping requirements all depend on your specific lot and zone. Confirm those details with the City.

When you compare this quote against others, ask what is included: the permit drawings and application, removal of any existing structure, the foundation type and depth, the guard height and infill design, stair construction, and who books the three required inspections. Some published packages exclude railings and steps, which would make a $95-per-square-foot figure look different depending on what it covers.

The most useful thing to ask this builder before you sign is exactly what the quoted price includes and excludes, line by line, so you can compare it fairly against any other quotes you receive.

Q9

Is a composite deck worth the extra money in an Ottawa climate?

Whether composite is worth the extra cost depends on how you weigh upfront price against ongoing maintenance, and the honest answer is that the numbers cut both ways.

Published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices put pressure-treated decking at roughly $25 to $65 per square foot installed, and composite at roughly $45 to $95 per square foot installed, with some published packages excluding railings and steps. Those are wide ranges, and where a specific quote lands depends on the size of the deck, its height above grade, the foundation type, the number of stairs, the guard style, whether an old deck needs to come out, and the cost of drawings and the permit. So the gap between a pressure-treated and a composite quote for the same deck can be significant or modest depending on those variables.

On the maintenance side, the USDA Forest Products Laboratory says the most common reason wooden decks get replaced is checking and splitting, not decay, and that keeping water beading on the surface is the best way to slow that down. For a wood deck, penetrating finishes are recommended over film-forming ones, and the FPL's US figures put semitransparent stain at two to three years on new boards and three to six years on weathered boards, with a water-repellent preservative lasting one to two years. Those intervals mean regular upkeep. The FPL also notes that naturally durable and preservative-treated woods perform quite comparably in above-ground uses like decking boards.

For composite and PVC, manufacturers publish 25- and 30-year limited product warranties on composite lines, with fade and stain warranties, and some PVC lines carry a lifetime limited product warranty with a 50-year fade and stain warranty. Read the full warranty document before treating those numbers as a guarantee. For care, follow the manufacturer's guide; we found no neutral cleaning or upkeep interval for composite or PVC.

One Ottawa-specific point worth knowing: if you apply for a building permit and the decking is anything other than conventional lumber, the City of Ottawa requires a material testing report, either a CCMC or BMEC report, as part of the permit application. Your builder or the product supplier can tell you whether the product you are considering has one.

A 2007 US industry survey put wood decks at about 20 years; that figure comes with the caveat that it is a US survey, not an Ottawa measurement, and the FPL notes that a wooden deck can give 40 or more years of service when water is kept beading, which is conditional on that upkeep.

The question is really whether you prefer a lower starting price with a regular finishing schedule, or a higher starting price with the board manufacturer's care routine instead. Neither choice is wrong; it depends on your budget and how much time you want to spend on the deck over the years.

Whichever you choose, get the permit drawings, the issued permit and a written contract that sets out the full scope, the materials specified by product type, and the total price.

Q10

How does Ottawa calculate the building permit fee for a deck?

The City of Ottawa uses a value-based formula for deck building permits. The fee is $12.75 per $1,000 or part thereof of the assessed valuation of the work, with a minimum fee of $117.00, based on the January 1, 2026 fee schedule.

Valuation covers the total value of all materials, labour, overhead and professional fees for the project. To illustrate how the formula works: a $15,000 deck produces a fee of $191.25, and a $40,000 deck produces a fee of $510. Your actual fee will sit somewhere on that scale depending on what your project is worth in total.

A few things are worth knowing before you apply. Applications go through the My ServiceOttawa portal, and payment must accompany the application. The City lists a first review period of 5 business days. The permit application needs a completed digital form, a full set of scaled and dimensioned drawings, and a Schedule 1 naming who is taking design responsibility, which can be a BCIN designer, an architect, an engineer, or you as the homeowner under the homeowner design exemption. If your decking is anything other than conventional lumber, you also need a material testing report (CCMC or BMEC). If your guards are a pre-engineered or manufactured system outside the Code's prescriptive rules, the manufacturer's information and attachment details go in as well.

The drawings the City asks for cover three areas: a site plan showing the deck dimensioned to the house, property lines and any septic system; a foundation and framing plan showing footing type, size and location, joists, beams, posts, decking direction and span, the deck-to-house connection, and stair construction; and elevations showing the height above grade, footing depth where applicable, stair rise and run, and guard and handrail information.

Three inspections are required once the permit is issued: an excavation and foundations inspection before backfill for in-situ piers and pads, a framing inspection at completion of structural framing and guards, and a final inspection at completion of framing, stairs and guards. The homeowner or builder books each one at least 48 hours in advance.

If your project is a pool enclosure rather than a deck, the permit fee is a flat $257 instead of the formula above.

Ask each builder whether their quote includes the permit fee and drawings, and check that each one spells out what the foundation type and depth will be, which board material is included, how the guards and stairs are specified, and whether removal of an existing deck is part of the price or an add-on.

Q11

What will the permit fee be on a $15,000 Ottawa deck?

The City of Ottawa's permit fee for a $15,000 deck works out to $191.25, based on the "all other construction" rate of $12.75 per $1,000 or part thereof of assessed valuation, with a minimum fee of $117.00. That rate applies to the total value of all materials, labour, overhead and professional fees combined.

The City values the work, not us or your builder, so treat $191.25 as an illustration of the formula: the valuation is based on the total value of all materials, labour, overhead and professional fees for the project.

A few things can affect whether a permit is needed at all, and therefore whether this fee applies. The City of Ottawa requires a permit when a deck is attached to or adjacent to the house and its walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above the adjacent grade, regardless of size. A permit is also required for an elevated deck that provides principal access to the building, regardless of height. A freestanding deck in the middle of the yard needs a permit only when it is both more than 10 square metres (approximately 108 square feet) in area and more than 600 mm above grade. A deck under 600 mm that is not a main entrance may not need a permit, though the City notes that exempt projects must still comply with the Ontario Building Code and any applicable zoning by-law, and that heritage properties are not subject to the exemptions.

If a permit is required, the application goes through the My ServiceOttawa portal and payment accompanies the application. The City lists a first review of 5 business days. The application needs a completed digital form, scaled and fully dimensioned drawings, and a Schedule 1 naming who is taking design responsibility, which can be the homeowner for their own house under the Building Code's homeowner exemption. If the decking material is anything other than conventional lumber, a CCMC or BMEC material testing report is also required.

If any footing holes need to be dug for this deck, a locate request through Ontario One Call is required before any digging starts; it is free and the law requires it at least 5 business days before work begins.

Before you move forward, confirm with the City's Building Code Services whether your specific deck triggers the permit requirement, so you know exactly what the application needs to include.

Q12

What should I budget for a cedar deck in Kanata?

For a cedar deck, budget from the published range: Ottawa and Ontario builder prices run about $45 to $80 per square foot installed, read in September 2026. That range is wide, and some published packages exclude railings and steps, so your actual quote may sit above or below it depending on what is included.

Several things move a cedar quote within or outside that range. Height above grade matters: a deck whose walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above the adjacent grade, and is attached to or adjacent to the house,

requires a building permit from the City of Ottawa, which adds a permit fee and the cost of drawings. The City's permit fee is $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed value (materials, labour, overhead and professional fees combined), with a minimum of $117.00. Published prices for permit drawings from three drafting and design firms run about $399 to $2,500 per set. Size, number of levels, stair configuration, the type of guard or railing, and whether an old deck needs to come down all shift the total as well.

On the structure side, the 2024 Ontario Building Code requires a guard on any side where the drop is more than 600 mm within 1.2 m of the edge. Exterior guards on a single dwelling unit may be 900 mm high where the walking surface is not more than 1 800 mm above finished ground, and 1 070 mm in all other cases. The Code's no-climb rule applies to every required guard in Ontario: no member, attachment or opening between 140 mm and 900 mm above the walking surface may facilitate climbing. In clay or soils not clearly defined, the Code's footing table sets 1.2 m but not less than the depth of frost penetration, unless the deck meets all five conditions of the floating-deck exemption: not more than one storey, not more than 55 square metres, not more than 600 mm from finished ground to the underside of the joists, not supporting a roof, and not attached to another structure unless it can be demonstrated that differential movement will not adversely affect that structure. If the soil on your lot turns out to be sensitive clay (including Leda clay), the Code requires an engineered footing design: a builder or engineer can tell you whether that applies to your lot.

Zoning is a separate check. Both Zoning By-law 2008-250 and Zoning By-law 2026-50 apply to permit applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026, and the most restrictive provisions of the two govern. Setbacks from lot lines, yard projections and soft-landscaping requirements all depend on your specific lot and zone. Confirm the current rules with the City of Ottawa's Building Code Services before finalising the design.

When you get quotes, ask each builder to spell out what is included: the foundation type and depth, guard height and infill design, stair rise and run, removal of any existing structure, permit drawings, and who applies for the permit and books the three required City inspections (excavation or foundations, framing, and final). Ask too what finish they recommend and how often it will need refreshing.

If your deck will require any digging for footings, request a locate through Ontario One Call at least five business days before work starts: it is free and required by law.

Before you sign, ask each builder to show you the line items for foundation, framing, decking, guards and stairs separately, so you can compare quotes that may otherwise look similar but cover very different scopes.

Q13

How much does a pressure-treated deck cost per square foot in Ottawa?

Published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices for a pressure-treated deck run about $25 to $65 per square foot, installed. The spread is wide, so read what each quote covers.

What moves a quote up or down within that range includes the height of the deck above grade, whether it is attached to the house or freestanding, the foundation type, the number of stairs and landings, the guard style, whether an old deck needs to come out first, and whether permit drawings are included. Some published packages exclude railings and steps, so it is worth confirming exactly what a quote covers before comparing numbers.

A few Ottawa rules affect the final cost. If the walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade and the deck is attached to or adjacent to the house, a building permit is required. A permit is also required for an elevated deck that provides principal access to the building. The City of Ottawa's permit fee is $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed valuation of the work, with a minimum of $117.00; as an illustration of the formula, a $15,000 deck works out to $191.25. Permit drawings, where needed, run about $399 to $2,500 per set on the published prices of three drafting and design firms. The City requires three inspections: excavation and foundations, framing, and final. The homeowner or builder books each one at least 48 hours in advance.

Zoning also shapes what can be built and where. Building permit applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026 must comply with both Zoning By-law 2008-250 and Zoning By-law 2026-50, with the most restrictive provisions of both applying. Setbacks and yard projections depend on the specific lot, so confirming the rules for your property with the City is the right step before finalising a design.

Before any footing holes are dug, a locate request must be submitted through Ontario One Call at least five business days in advance. Under the Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012, anyone who digs is required to do this, and the locate is free.

You can request quotes from local deck builders through the form on this page; they are listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory.

Before signing, ask whether the quote includes the permit application, all three City inspections, and the drawings, or whether those are billed separately.

Q14

How much does a new deck landing cost in Riverside South?

A landing is priced like any new deck: published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices for pressure-treated run about $25 to $65 per square foot installed, cedar about $45 to $80, composite about $45 to $95, and PVC about $59 to $110 or more. Those are published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices read in September 2026, and the spread is wide even for a small landing.

What the price depends on for a landing specifically comes down to a few things: how high above grade the landing sits, whether it is attached to the house or freestanding, what material you choose for the boards, what kind of foundation is needed, and whether guards and stairs are included. Some published packages exclude railings and steps, so check whether guards and a stair to grade are in each quote.

Permit and Code rules that apply in Riverside South

A landing attached to or adjacent to the house with a walking surface more than 600 mm (24 in.) above grade requires a building permit from the City of Ottawa. If it is a raised deck providing principal access to the house, a permit is required regardless of size. A freestanding landing needs a permit only if it is both more than 10 square metres (approximately 108 square feet) in area and more than 600 mm above grade. Even a landing that does not need a permit must still comply with the 2024 Ontario Building Code and the Zoning By-law. For applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026, Ottawa applies both By-law 2008-250 and By-law 2026-50, with the most restrictive provisions applying, so confirm the setbacks for your property with the City.

If the landing needs a permit, the City's fee is $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed value of the work, with a minimum of $117. The application goes through the My ServiceOttawa portal with scaled drawings, a site plan, a foundation and framing plan, and elevations. A homeowner may take design responsibility for their own home under the Building Code's homeowner exemption, or you can hire a designer; published prices for permit drawings from three drafting and design firms run about $399 to $2,500 per set.

Guards are required on any side where the drop is more than 600 mm within 1.2 m of the edge. Exterior guards on a landing serving one dwelling unit may be not less than 900 mm high where the walking surface is not more than 1 800 mm above finished ground; otherwise the minimum is 1 070 mm. Openings must not pass a 100 mm sphere, and the Ontario no-climb rule applies to every required guard: no member or opening between 140 mm and 900 mm above the walking surface that would facilitate climbing.

Before any footing holes are dug, a locate request must go through Ontario One Call at least five business days in advance. It is free and it is required by the Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012.

The City requires three inspections for permitted work: excavation and foundations before backfill, framing at completion of structural framing and guards, and a final inspection, each booked 48 hours in advance.

Ask each builder to spell out the foundation type and depth, the board material and grade, exactly what guards and stairs are included, and whether removal of any existing structure is part of the price.

Q15

Does a deck on piles cost more than one on footings in Kanata?

Published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices cover new decks at about $25 to $65 per square foot for pressure-treated, $45 to $80 for cedar, $45 to $95 for composite, and $59 to $110 or more for PVC, but those ranges do not break out foundation type separately. We found too few published Ottawa prices to give a standalone figure for helical piles versus concrete footings, so any number a builder quotes you for that difference deserves a line-by-line look rather than a benchmark comparison.

What drives the foundation choice, and its cost, is the soil and the deck itself. A deck that qualifies for the floating-deck exemption under the 2024 Ontario Building Code, meaning it is one storey, not more than 55 square metres, has joists no more than 600 mm above grade, carries no roof, and is either freestanding or where differential movement can be shown not to affect the attached structure, does not need footings dug to frost depth. Once any of those five conditions is not met, the Code's footing-depth rules apply, and the depth must be established on the basis of local experience with frost penetration in that soil.

Soil conditions are lot by lot. Where a builder or engineer finds filled ground, peat, or sensitive clay including Leda clay on a lot, the 2024 Ontario Building Code requires an engineered design under Section 4.2 rather than the standard Part 9 prescriptive rules. Helical piles are a deep-foundation option that falls under that same Section 4.2 design requirement. Whether your lot calls for that is something a builder or geotechnical engineer can tell you after looking at the soil; we found no City of Ottawa map that identifies which lots have sensitive soils.

Before any digging starts, whoever is doing the work, whether a builder or a homeowner, must submit a locate request through Ontario One Call at least five business days before breaking ground. That applies to private property and is required by the Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012.

A few things worth confirming with any quote you receive:

- whether the price includes the permit drawings and the City of Ottawa permit fee (calculated at $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed value, minimum $117)
- what foundation type is proposed and why, given your specific lot and deck height
- whether the soil has been assessed or whether that assessment is part of the scope
- what the deck-to-house connection looks like if it is attached, since that must appear on the permit drawings

The City of Ottawa requires three inspections: excavation or foundations before backfill, framing at completion of structural framing and guards, and a final inspection. Book each one 48 hours in advance.
Before you sign a contract for this deck, ask the builder to put in writing who is responsible for applying for the City permit, who books each of the three inspections, and what happens if the foundation design needs to change after

the soil is opened up.

Q16

Railing cost on a composite deck in Findlay Creek?

We found too few published Ottawa prices for railings and guards to give a reliable per-foot or per-panel range, so no number would be meaningful here. What we can tell you is what quotes differ on and what the 2024 Ontario Building Code requires, so you can read a quote intelligently.

What shapes the price on a composite deck guard

Guard quotes can differ on the length of guard, its height, the infill style, and whether it is a wood-framed system or a manufactured aluminum or glass system. Manufactured systems sit outside the Code's prescriptive rules, so the permit application for those must include the manufacturer's information and attachment details. That adds a step to the permit.

The Code sets the minimum height at 900 mm for an exterior guard serving a single dwelling unit where the walking surface is not more than 1 800 mm above finished ground, and at 1 070 mm in all other cases. A guard is required on any open side where the drop is more than 600 mm within 1.2 m of the edge, measured from the walking surface to the adjacent surface. Openings through the guard must prevent the passage of a 100 mm sphere. In Ontario, every required guard must be built so that no member, attachment or opening between 140 mm and 900 mm above the walking surface will facilitate climbing. This is an Ontario-wide requirement on every required guard, not just those at greater heights. Horizontal rails and cable infill in that zone can facilitate climbing, which is what this rule targets, so confirm the proposed infill style with the builder and the City's Building Code Services before ordering materials.

Where the deck is attached to the house and the walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade, a building permit is required. The guard is inspected at the framing stage and again at the final inspection. The City asks for 48 hours' notice before each inspection.

When you are comparing quotes, look at whether each one includes:

- the guard posts, top rail, infill and bottom rail as a complete assembly
- the manufacturer's documentation if the system is not a standard lumber build
- permit drawings that show the guard height, infill detail and attachment method

Some published packages exclude railings and steps from the base price, so ask each builder to itemise the guard separately so the quotes are comparable.
On the permit side, confirm in writing which party, you or the builder, applies for the City of Ottawa building permit and books the three required inspections: excavation or foundations, framing, and final. That responsibility belongs in the contract before anyone signs.

Q17

Composite deck quote at $45 a square foot in Nepean: too low?

$45 a square foot sits at the very bottom of the published range for composite decks in Ottawa and Ontario, which runs from about $45 to $95 per square foot installed. A quote at the bottom of the range is worth checking line by line, so the first job is to find out exactly what it covers.

Published Ottawa and Ontario builder prices, read in September 2026, show a wide spread for composite work. A quote at the floor of that range is not automatically wrong, but several things can explain it.

What the quote may or may not include:

- The composite board line and whether it is a capped wood-plastic product
- Guards and railings, and stairs: some published packages leave these out
- Removal and disposal of an existing deck (the City of Ottawa says wood from demolition, including pressure-treated lumber, is not collected with regular garbage and goes to the Trail Road Landfill Site or another landfill)
- Footings or helical piles and the foundation type suited to your lot
- Permit drawings and the City of Ottawa building permit fee (calculated at $12.75 per $1,000 of assessed project value, minimum $117)

A few Ottawa-specific rules will affect the final cost regardless of the quote. If the deck's walking surface is more than 600 mm (24 in.) above adjacent grade and it is attached to the house, a building permit is required. Where composite decking is proposed, the City requires a material testing report (CCMC or BMEC) with the permit application. Guards on a deck serving one dwelling unit must be at least 900 mm high where the walking surface is not more than 1 800 mm above finished ground, and at least 1 070 mm in other cases, under the 2024 Ontario Building Code. In Ontario, no member, attachment or opening between 140 mm and 900 mm above the walking surface may facilitate climbing, and horizontal rails or cable infill in that zone can facilitate climbing, which is what that rule targets, so confirm any such design with the City.
Zoning also applies. For applications deemed complete on or after March 11, 2026, Ottawa applies both Zoning By-law 2008-250 and By-law 2026-50, with the most restrictive provisions from each applying. Setbacks from lot lines depend on the deck's height above grade, whether it is attached or freestanding, and which yard it sits in. Confirm the rules for your specific lot with the City before finalising the design.

Ask the builder for a written, itemised quote that names every component: the board product and its grade, the framing species and size, the foundation type, guards, stairs, removal, drawings and permit. The Consumer Protection Act, 2002 requires that if an agreement includes an estimate, the supplier may not charge more than 10 per cent above it, so a clear written scope protects both sides.

The contract should name who applies for the City of Ottawa building permit and who books the three required inspections: Excavation/Foundations before backfill, Framing at completion of structural framing and guards, and Final at completion of the deck, stairs and guards. The City says to book inspections 48 hours in advance, and naming who does it in the contract removes any doubt about whose job it is.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Deck Builders Ottawa. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa's Building Code Services) before starting any deck project. Decks in Ottawa are built under the 2024 Ontario Building Code (O. Reg. 163/24) and the City's permit and zoning rules. Information is current as of November 15, 2026 and may change. Visit **deckbuildersottawa.ca** for the latest answers.