



WHAT YOU NEED WITH YOU

- ▶ Quick Permit Application.
- ▶ Permit fee. Please refer to the building permit fee chart.
- ▶ A plat of survey showing the locations, dimensions, and setbacks of all existing and proposed improvements.
- ▶ Drawings that detail and dimension the manner in which the stairs, stoop, and/or ramps, including the landings, will be constructed and/or installed.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- ▶ No work can begin prior to a permit being issued.
- ▶ This quick guides only applies to single and two family houses.
- ▶ Stairs or stoops: landings with steps, open to the sky, which are necessary for access to a house.
- ▶ Ramp: a sloped structure necessary for persons who cannot otherwise access a house by stairs.
- ▶ Stairs, stoops, and ramps do not include decks, patios, porches, terraces, and/or balconies.
- ▶ No work can begin before a permit is issued.
- ▶ All projects are subject to zoning approval.
- ▶ If the property is a landmark or located within an historic district, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is required.
- ▶ Stairs, stoops, and landings shall be visually compatible with the house and are otherwise subject to the City's architectural review process.
- ▶ A pier inspection is required before concrete footings for landings and stairs are poured to verify compliant depth. Then a final inspection is required upon completion of the work. Contact the City of Elgin to schedule inspections.
- ▶ Many subdivisions have private covenants and restrictions which supersede City zoning requirements. The City does not enforce covenants and restrictions. It is recommended that property owner's check with their homeowner's association prior to starting construction.
- ▶ Complete requirements regarding stoops, stairs, and ramps are provided within the 2015 International Residential Code.



REQUIREMENTS

1. Location
 - a. Stairs, stoops, and ramps are permitted within any yard as long as they are open to the sky, no more than 5 feet wide, no more than 4 feet above the established grade, and at least 1 foot away from any lot line. Structures exceeding 5 feet wide or 4 feet above grade require the submittal of a Remodeling Permit Application.
2. Size and Relationship to the Door
 - a. The width of a landing shall not be less than the door served and not less than 36 inches wide.
 - b. The slope of a landing shall not exceed 2 percent.
 - c. Landings shall not be more than 1 ½ inches below required egress doors and not more than 7 ¾ inches below other exterior doors. Required egress doors are typically the primary door in and out of the house. Contact the Community Development Department if you are unsure.
3. Stairs
 - a. Steps shall not be more than 7 ¾ inches high (often referred to as the riser height), and the difference between the greatest riser height and the smallest riser height cannot exceed 3/8 of an inch.
 - b. The depth of steps shall be no more than 10 inches (often referred to as the tread depth) and the difference between the greatest tread depth and the smallest tread depth cannot exceed 3/8 of an inch.
 - c. Handrails are required along at least one side of stairs with 4 or more steps (risers). Handrails shall be between 34 and 38 from the top of each step or ramp. Handrails must comply with the grasp requirements of the building code. Handrails that are also guard rails (see below) shall not have openings that allow passage of a sphere 4 inches or more in diameter.
4. Guardrails are required along any open-sided walking surfaces, including stairs, ramps, and landings, more than 30 inches above grade. Guards shall be 36 inches. Guards shall not have openings that allow passage of a sphere 4 inches or more in diameter.
5. Ramps
 - a. Ramps must meet the door at a compliant landing.
 - b. The slope of a ramp leading to a required egress door shall not exceed 1:12 or 8.3 percent. Ramps to other doors exterior doors shall not exceed 1:8 or 12.5 percent. Required egress doors are typically the primary door in and out of the house. Contact the Community Development Department if you are unsure.
6. Footings
 - a. Stairs and landings must be supported upon 42-inch deep footings to prevent freeze-thaw heave. An inspection of the footing hole is required **before the concrete is poured** to verify depth.