



CITY OF KETTERING  
Planning and Development Department

## Zoning Standards for Residential Decks, Patios, and Porches

### Quick Reference Guide

There are several provisions of Kettering's Zoning Code (KZC) applicable to decks, patios, and porches. All three of these items are viewed differently and are subject to different zoning standards. These items defined in the KZC as follows:

#### **Deck**

*An outdoor, unenclosed, and uncovered platform made from wood or a composite material, either freestanding or attached to a building, that is built above the ground, and intended for recreational use.*

#### **Patio**

*An outdoor, unenclosed, and uncovered level, landscaped, and/or surfaced area, usually made of concrete, brick, or other masonry material that is at or within 6" of the finished grade and not covered by a permanent roof and intended for recreational use.*

#### **Porch**

*A roofed open area, which may be screened using common woven fiberglass or aluminum insect screening, attached to or part of and with direct access to or from a building. A porch becomes a room when the space enclosed is heated, air conditioned or if glazed. Porches shall not be screened using temporary materials, such as but not limited to fabric sheets, tarps, visqueen, or sheathing.*

**The first step in determining which standards will be applicable to a Deck, Patio, or Porch project is to determine what definition the project falls within.** Generally, decks and patios are uncovered and considered accessory structures whereas porches are considered a part of the principal structure and must be roofed with a roof structure that is architecturally consistent with the house. Decks are permitted in the side and rear yards whereas building additions meeting the definition of "Porch" can be located in any yard (front, rear, side, street-side) provided that all applicable setback and architectural requirements are met. Patios are permitted in front, side, street-side, and rear yards.

**Note:** *This document is not an exhaustive list of all applicable standards relating to decks, patios, and porches contained in Kettering's Codified Ordinances and other regulatory documents such as the Ohio Building Code (OBC). This document is meant to serve as a general guide for residents considering constructing such items.*

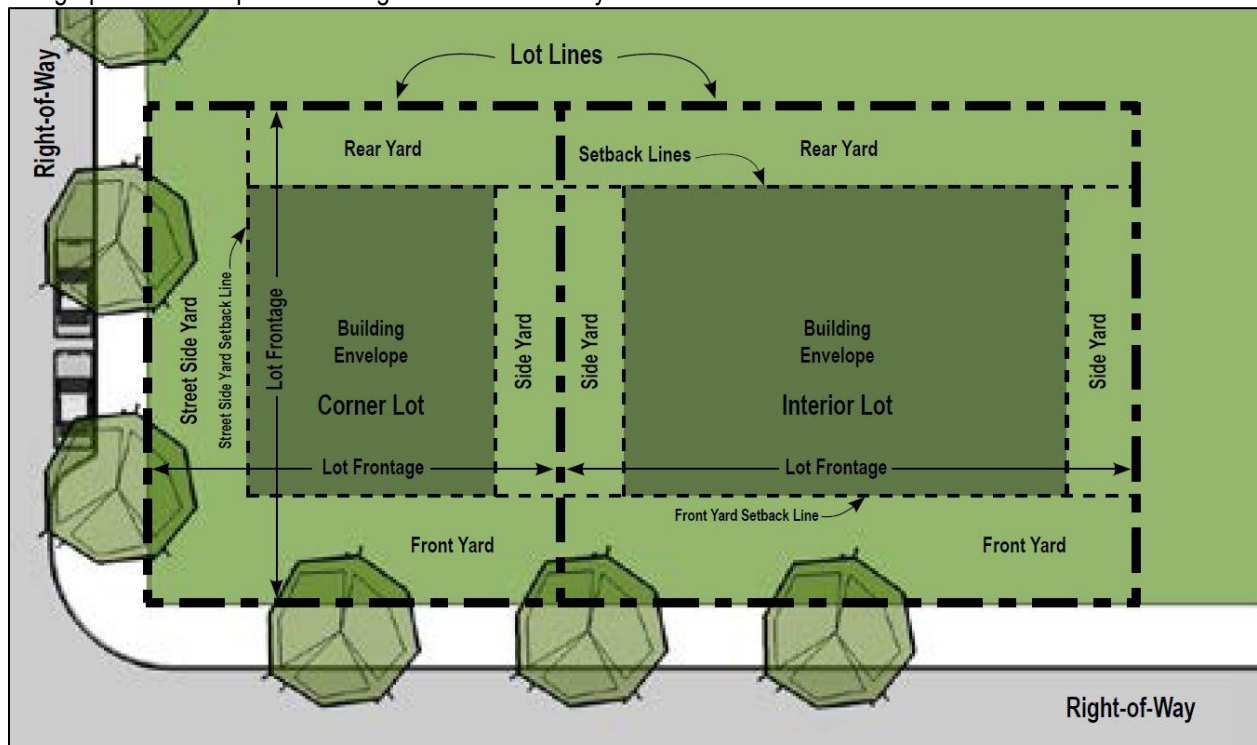
## Permitted Locations

When determining if a proposed deck, patio, or porch would be permitted, the **second** step is determining which yard area the proposed structure will fall within. Decks are permitted in rear and side-yard areas while Porches and Patios are permitted in all yard areas, but are subject to stricter design requirements.

Permitted Locations					
Item	Yard	Rear Yard	Side Yard	Street-Side Yard	Front Yard
Porch		Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Patio		Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Deck		Permitted	Permitted	Not permitted	Not permitted

Note: Decks, patios, and porches are all subject to certain design and setback requirements depending upon the location and design.

The graphic below depicts the designations of different yard areas for interior and corner lots:



If permitted in the subject yard area, it must be determined whether the proposed Deck, Patio, or Porch will meet the required setbacks and architectural design requirements.

## **Required Setbacks**

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Porches are considered additions to a house and are subject to the minimum setback requirements for principal structures and the projection standards of Section 1149.03.15 of the KZC, which permits porches to project into required front, rear, and street-side yard setback areas by up to 8'. Decks and patios are considered accessory structures and are subject to less stringent setback requirements. The table below depicts the setback requirements for all three items:

<b>Required Setbacks</b>					
<b>Item</b>	<b>Yard</b>	<b>Rear Yard Setback</b>	<b>Side Yard Setback</b>	<b>Street Side Yard Setback</b>	<b>Front Yard Setback</b>
<b>Porch</b>		Varies*	Varies*	Varies*	Varies*
<b>Patio</b>		3'***	3'***	Varies**	Varies**
<b>Deck</b>		3'***	3'***	Not permitted in street SY	Not permitted in FY

\*The setback requirements for porches depend upon the existing setbacks of the structure and the proposed size of the porch. Porches are permitted to encroach up to 8' into required front, street-side, and rear yard setbacks but no closer than 10' from any front or rear lot line or 3' from any interior side lot-line, or 6' from any street-side lot line (KZC 1149.03.15.A).

\*\*When located in front and street-side yards, patios are permitted to encroach up to 8' into the required front yard setback. Patios in these areas must also meet the following requirements:

- 1.) Patios shall be separated from any driveway or parking space by at least 3' and with a permanent physical barrier capable of preventing a vehicle from traversing over said barrier. Example barriers include, but are not limited to, knee walls and landscaping boulders.
- 2.) Patios shall not be used for parking.

\*\*\*Any decks or patios located closer than 8' from any lot line shall be screened with an evergreen hedge or fence (not attached to the structure) not less than 4' in height. Further, any deck positioned higher than 36" in floor deck height above the adjoining grade shall not encroach into any required setback and shall adhere to the setbacks required for principal structures (KZC 1139.03.9).

## ***Architectural Design Requirements***

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### **Porches**

Porches are subject to the strictest design requirements out of decks, patios, and porches since they are considered to be additions to the principal structure. Section 1149.03.10 of the Kettering Zoning Code lists the general requirements for both new houses within existing neighborhoods and additions to existing houses. Sections 1149.03.10.C and 1149.03.10.D read as follows:

*When required, residential structures that are not part of a New Housing Development shall adhere to the following standards:*

- C. Additions shall generally match their principal or attached structures in color; this includes, but is not limited to, siding material, trim work, doors, window frames, and roofing materials.*
- D. Additions shall generally match their principal or attached structure's design. In order to accomplish this, additions shall match their Principal Structure with any two of the following features:*
  - 1. Architectural Style: this includes, but is not limited to, the overall proportions as well as the proportions of architectural details, roof pitch and overhang, window and door styles, trim features, and other architectural features;*
  - 2. Materials: this includes, but is not limited to, siding, roofing, trim work, doors, and windows;*
  - 3. Visual character: this includes, but is not limited to, dimensional sizes of brick or stone, sizing and orientation of lap board and board and batten siding, and texture of materials chosen.*

Since porches are considered additions, they must meet the **highlighted** sections above. This means that porches must be clad or finished with a material that matches the house. This generally prohibits the use of bare pressure treated pine for porch materials.

### **Patios**

To be considered a patio, a project must meet the following definition: *An outdoor, unenclosed, and uncovered level, landscaping, and/or surface area, usually made of concrete, brick, or other masonry material that is at or within 6" of the finished grade and not covered by a permanent roof and intended for recreational use.*

### **Decks**

To be considered a deck, a project must meet the following definition: *An outdoor, unenclosed, and uncovered platform made from wood or a composite material, either freestanding or attached to a building, that is built above the ground, and intended for recreational use.*

## *Other Considerations*

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Since this is not an exhaustive document covering all of the requirements applicable to decks, patios, and porches, other considerations while designing such features include:

- Ensuring compliance with the Residential Code of Ohio (RCO)
- Screening – patios and decks located closer than 8' from any lot line must be screened with an evergreen hedge or fence (not attached to the structure) not less than 4' in height (KZC 1139.03.9.A).
- Setbacks for decks higher than 36" in floor deck height above adjoining grade shall not encroach into any required setback and shall adhere to the setback requirements for principal structures (KZC 1139.03.9.B).
- Materials – Materials for structures built in front and street-side yard areas must match the principal structure. This usually prohibits the use of aluminum roof structures in front and street-side yard areas since few, if any, homes in Kettering are constructed out of these materials. This also often prohibits the use of uncladded or untreated wooden materials in the front or street-side yard areas.
- Colors – Regardless of yard location, the colors of roof structures must match the principal structure. For example, if a house has gray siding with white trim and a homeowner is applying to construct an aluminum patio cover in the rear yard, the colors of the patio cover (columns, roof structure, trim, etc...) must be either white or gray to match the house.



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## Photo Examples

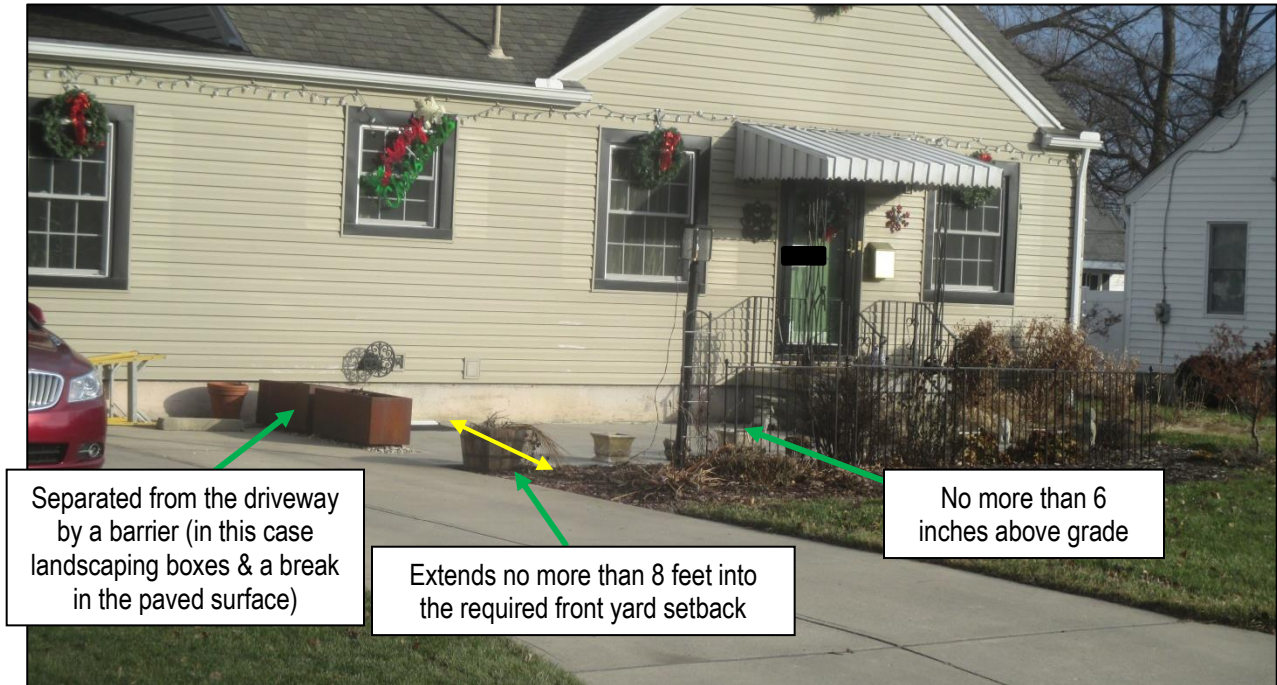
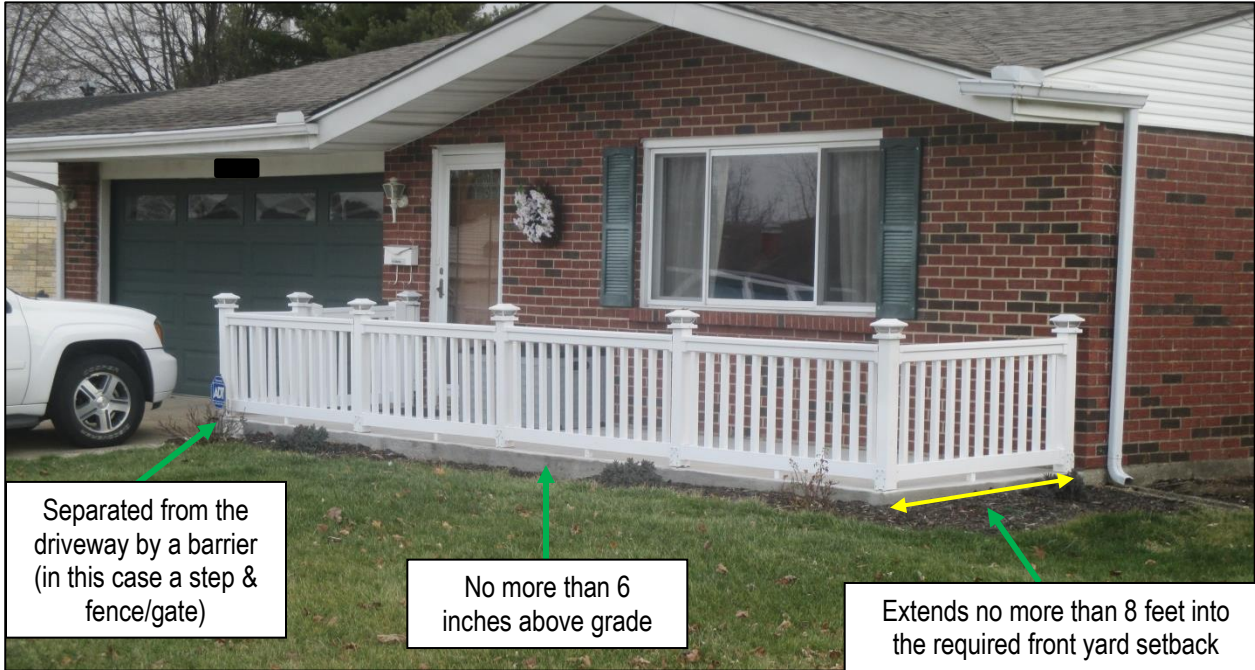
### Example Decks (permitted within side and rear yard areas)





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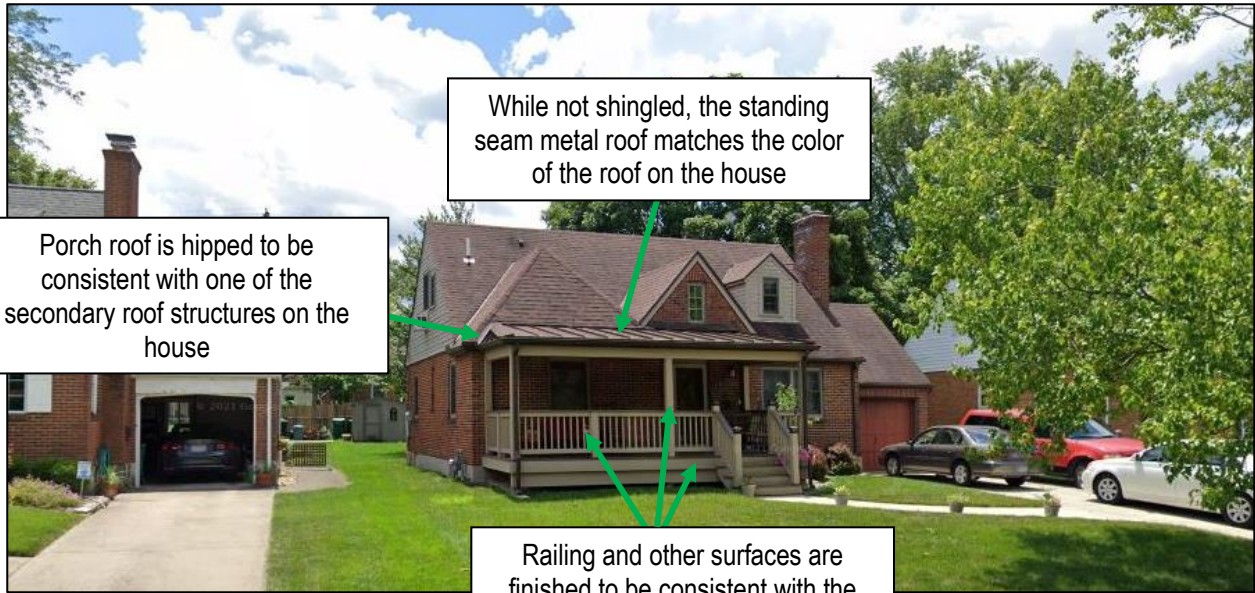
**Example Patios (permitted within front, side, street-side, and rear yard areas)**





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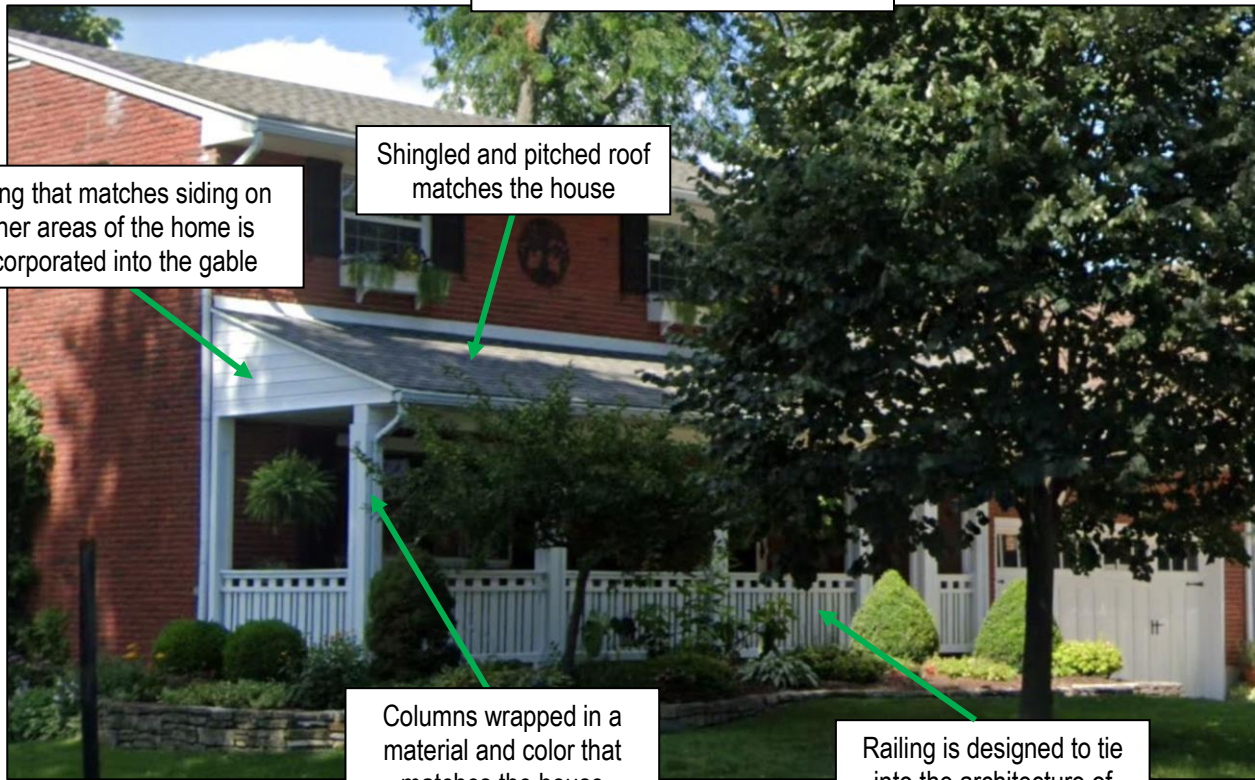
Example Porches (permitted within front, side, street-side, and rear yard areas)



While not shingled, the standing seam metal roof matches the color of the roof on the house

Porch roof is hipped to be consistent with one of the secondary roof structures on the house

Railing and other surfaces are finished to be consistent with the colors of the house



Shingled and pitched roof matches the house

Siding that matches siding on other areas of the home is incorporated into the gable

Columns wrapped in a material and color that matches the house

Railing is designed to tie into the architecture of the house





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**Aluminum Covers (permitted only in rear yard areas)**

Since aluminum covers almost never meet the architectural requirements of Section 1149.03.10 of the Kettering Zoning Code, these structures are not permitted in the front or side yards unless modified to incorporate architectural features that match the house. These structures are permitted as patio covers within rear yards provided the colors are consistent with the house and the other applicable standards are met.

