OTTAWA EAVESTROUGHS

Soffit & Fascia

Soffit and fascia installation, repair, and replacement including aluminum wrapping, vinyl panels, ventilation requirements, fascia rot repair, and protecting the roof edge system.

17 Expert Answers from Gutter IQ

ottawaeavestroughs.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

Q1

Is my fascia strong enough to support new heavier-gauge eavestroughs on my Kanata home?

Your fascia board's ability to support heavier-gauge eavestroughs depends on the current condition of the wood, the age of your Kanata home, and the specific gauge upgrade you're considering. Most residential fascia boards in Kanata subdivisions built after 1980 use 2x8 or 2x10 pressure-treated lumber that can easily handle the weight difference between standard 0.027-inch and premium 0.032-inch aluminum eavestroughs.

The weight difference between gauge options is actually quite modest. Standard 0.027-inch aluminum weighs approximately 0.7 pounds per linear foot, while heavier 0.032-inch gauge weighs about 0.9 pounds per linear foot. Even with water loading during Ottawa's intense summer thunderstorms, the additional stress on your fascia is minimal. However, **the real concern isn't the static weight but the dynamic forces from Ottawa's extreme weather conditions** — ice loading, thermal expansion cycles, and the 50-plus freeze-thaw events each winter that stress mounting points.

In Ottawa's climate, fascia condition matters more than gauge weight capacity. Many Kanata homes from the 1980s and 1990s have fascia boards showing signs of moisture damage, particularly where old eavestroughs leaked or ice dams caused water backup. **Look for soft spots, dark staining, or areas where the wood feels spongy when pressed** — these indicate rot that compromises structural integrity regardless of eavestrough weight. Fascia boards on the south-facing side of your home often show more UV and thermal damage, while north-facing boards may have moisture issues from reduced drying.

Heavier-gauge eavestroughs actually reduce long-term stress on fascia boards because they resist denting from ladder contact and ice impact, maintaining proper slope and drainage longer. The 0.032-inch gauge also handles Ottawa's temperature swings better, with less expansion and contraction that can loosen hangers over time. If you're upgrading to copper eavestroughs, the weight difference is more significant — copper weighs roughly 1.5 pounds per linear foot compared to aluminum's 0.7 to 0.9 pounds.

Proper hanger spacing becomes critical with any gauge upgrade in Ottawa's snow belt. Hangers should be installed every 18 to 24 inches maximum, compared to 36 inches acceptable in milder climates. The additional mounting points distribute weight and stress more evenly across the fascia board. If your current eavestroughs use widely spaced hangers, upgrading to heavier gauge without adding more mounting points could create stress concentration at existing attachment points.

Before upgrading eavestrough gauge, have a contractor inspect your fascia boards for structural soundness. They can identify soft spots, measure board thickness, and assess whether additional blocking or fascia replacement is needed. This inspection is particularly important on Kanata homes built in the 1970s and early

1980s, when some builders used thinner fascia boards or non-pressure-treated lumber that may have deteriorated.

For professional assessment of your fascia condition and eavestrough upgrade options, you can connect with experienced contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com, where you'll find professionals familiar with Kanata-area construction methods and Ottawa's unique climate challenges.

Q2

How do I check for hidden water damage behind my aluminum fascia in Orleans?

Checking for hidden water damage behind aluminum fascia requires a systematic inspection approach that looks for subtle warning signs before the damage becomes visible from the ground level. In Orleans' clay-heavy soil and Ottawa's extreme freeze-thaw cycles, water damage behind fascia boards is particularly common because ice dams and poor drainage create persistent moisture problems that aluminum cladding can hide for years.

Start your inspection from inside the house by examining the attic space near the roof edge during daylight hours. Look for **water stains on roof sheathing, rafters, or insulation** near the eaves, which indicate that water has been penetrating behind the fascia system. Use a flashlight to check for **dark discoloration, soft spots, or white mineral deposits** on wood surfaces. Pay special attention to areas where you can see daylight through gaps, as these represent potential water entry points. In Orleans' newer subdivisions built in the 1980s and 1990s, many homes have aluminum-wrapped fascia that was installed over existing wood without proper moisture barriers.

From outside, examine the **aluminum fascia for subtle bulging, waviness, or separation at joints** that indicates the underlying wood has swollen or rotted. Check where downspouts connect to the eavestrough system, as these high-stress connection points often develop leaks that saturate the fascia board behind the aluminum cladding. Look for **rust stains or mineral deposits** appearing through the aluminum finish, which suggests moisture has been trapped behind the cladding. Orleans homes built on the clay soil common throughout the east end often experience foundation settling that can pull fascia systems out of alignment, creating gaps where water infiltrates.

Gently press against the aluminum fascia at various points to feel for soft spots or unusual give in the underlying structure. Healthy fascia should feel solid and rigid, while water-damaged wood will feel spongy or flex more than normal. Check the **soffit vents for proper airflow** by holding a tissue near the vents on a breezy day - blocked or damaged soffits often indicate moisture problems that affect the entire roof edge system. During Ottawa's winter months, look for **unusual icicle formation or ice buildup** along the fascia line, which often indicates that warm, moist air is escaping through damaged areas.

The most reliable method for detecting hidden damage is using a **moisture meter** designed for construction applications, which you can rent from tool rental shops in Orleans for about 30 to 50 dollars per day. These meters can detect elevated moisture levels in wood through thin aluminum cladding. Take readings at multiple points along the fascia, particularly near downspout connections, roof valleys, and areas where you've noticed exterior staining or interior attic moisture signs.

Professional assessment becomes essential when you discover soft spots, moisture meter readings above 20 percent, or visible water damage in the attic space. **Fascia replacement behind aluminum cladding typically costs 15 to 25 dollars per linear foot** in the Orleans area, but catching the problem early prevents the need for more extensive roof edge reconstruction. The Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com includes contractors experienced with aluminum fascia systems who can provide detailed assessments and coordinate any necessary repairs with your eavestrough maintenance.

Q3

Should soffit and fascia be replaced at the same time as eavestroughs on my Ottawa home?

Yes, replacing soffit and fascia together with eavestroughs is often the most cost-effective and practical approach for Ottawa homes, especially if your existing soffit and fascia show signs of wear, damage, or poor ventilation. This integrated approach ensures proper water management and attic ventilation that's crucial for surviving Ottawa's harsh winters and preventing ice dam formation.

The Case for Coordinated Replacement

When eavestroughs are removed for replacement, the fascia board becomes fully accessible for inspection and repair. Many Ottawa homes built before 1990 have **solid wood fascia boards** that may show rot, warping, or ice damage that wasn't visible behind the old gutters. Replacing damaged fascia before installing new eavestroughs provides a solid, level mounting surface that ensures proper eavestrough slope and prevents future sagging. **Aluminum or vinyl-wrapped fascia** eliminates the need for regular painting and resists Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycles that crack and peel paint on exposed wood.

Soffit replacement becomes especially important for **attic ventilation in Ottawa's extreme climate**. Proper soffit ventilation allows cold air to enter the attic space, while ridge or roof vents allow warm air to escape. This air circulation keeps the roof deck cold in winter, preventing the snow melt that creates ice dams. Many older Ottawa homes have solid soffit panels with inadequate ventilation, contributing to ice dam problems that damage

eavestroughs, shingles, and interior ceilings.

Coordinated replacement typically saves 20 to 30 percent compared to tackling these projects separately. Contractors can work more efficiently when accessing all three components at once, and you avoid the cost of multiple mobilizations, permits, and cleanup visits. The labour overlap means you're not paying for setup and takedown multiple times.

From a **seasonal timing perspective**, Ottawa's short construction season from May through October makes coordinated projects more practical. Scheduling separate fascia, soffit, and eavestrough projects across different seasons can be challenging, especially in fall when contractors are busiest with storm damage repairs.

Material coordination also matters significantly. When fascia, soffit, and eavestroughs are installed together, contractors can ensure proper color matching and thermal expansion compatibility. Aluminum eavestroughs expand and contract with Ottawa's 65-degree annual temperature swing, and properly matched fascia systems accommodate this movement without creating gaps or stress points.

For a typical Ottawa home, **combined soffit, fascia, and eavestrough replacement costs 18 to 35 dollars per linear foot** depending on materials chosen. Premium aluminum systems with proper ventilation run toward the higher end, while basic vinyl systems cost less but may not perform as well in Ottawa's climate. Copper eavestroughs with matching fascia and soffit can reach 45 to 60 dollars per linear foot.

However, if your existing fascia and soffit are in excellent condition with proper ventilation, replacing eavestroughs alone makes sense. Have the contractor inspect these components during the quote process to make an informed decision.

For this type of comprehensive exterior work, professional installation ensures proper integration between all components and compliance with Ontario Building Code ventilation requirements. You can browse experienced contractors who handle coordinated soffit, fascia, and eavestrough projects through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q4

Can I install new aluminum soffit directly over old wood soffit on my Ottawa bungalow?

Installing aluminum soffit over existing wood soffit is possible in many cases, but success depends on the condition of your wood substrate and proper ventilation planning. This approach can save time and disposal costs while providing excellent long-term performance in Ottawa's extreme climate.

The key consideration is the condition of your existing wood soffit. If the wood is solid, dry, and properly attached to the fascia and house wall, it can serve as an excellent backing for aluminum soffit panels. However, if you have any **rotted, warped, or loose sections**, those areas must be repaired or replaced before installing aluminum over top. Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycles and high humidity from summer storms can cause wood soffit to deteriorate, particularly on north-facing elevations that stay damp longer.

Ventilation is the critical factor that determines whether this installation method will work for your bungalow. Aluminum soffit panels come in solid, partially vented, and fully vented configurations. If your existing wood soffit provides adequate attic ventilation through existing vents, you can install solid aluminum panels over it. However, if you need to improve ventilation to prevent ice dams - a major concern in Ottawa where winter temperatures regularly hit minus 30 degrees - you'll need to cut ventilation slots in the wood backing or use fully perforated aluminum panels.

Under the Ontario Building Code, attic spaces require **one square foot of ventilation for every 300 square feet of attic floor area**, with intake vents at the soffit and exhaust vents at the ridge. Many older Ottawa bungalows have insufficient soffit ventilation, contributing to ice dam problems and summer heat buildup. Installing new aluminum soffit gives you an opportunity to upgrade your ventilation system.

The installation process involves securing aluminum soffit panels to the existing wood using aluminum trim coil and appropriate fasteners. **Panels typically cost 3 to 8 dollars per square foot installed** in Ottawa, compared to 8 to 15 dollars per square foot for complete wood removal and replacement. The aluminum won't rot, requires no painting, and handles Ottawa's 65-degree annual temperature swing without cracking.

However, this overlay method adds thickness to your soffit profile, which may require adjusting fascia trim or creating small gaps at corners. On heritage homes in neighbourhoods like the Glebe or New Edinburgh, the changed appearance might not be appropriate.

Professional installation is recommended for proper ventilation calculation, ensuring adequate fastening to handle wind loads, and achieving clean trim details. Multi-storey work definitely requires professional expertise for safety. You can connect with experienced soffit contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com to get multiple quotes and professional assessment of your specific situation.

Q5

Why does my fascia in Nepean keep getting stained even after new eavestrough installation?

Fascia staining after new eavestrough installation typically indicates water is still escaping the gutter system, either through improper slope, inadequate capacity during heavy rainfall, or installation issues that allow water to run behind the eavestrough. In Nepean's clay-heavy soil conditions and Ottawa's intense summer thunderstorms, even small drainage problems can quickly create visible staining on fascia boards.

The most common culprit is **insufficient eavestrough slope toward the downspouts**. Your new eavestroughs need at least one-quarter inch of fall per 10 feet of run to drain properly during Ottawa's heavy rainfall events. Many installations look level to the eye but lack adequate slope, causing water to pool and eventually overflow at the fascia. During intense summer storms that can dump 25 to 50 millimetres of rain in an hour, improperly sloped eavestroughs simply cannot handle the volume.

Undersized downspouts are another frequent cause of fascia staining in the Ottawa area. Standard residential downspouts are 2x3 inches, but homes with steep roofs, large drainage areas, or complex rooflines often need 3x4 inch downspouts or additional downspout locations. If your eavestrough fills faster than the downspout can drain during heavy rainfall, water will spill over the front edge and run down the fascia. This is particularly problematic in Nepean where many homes have large roof areas that collect substantial runoff.

Installation issues can also cause water to run behind the eavestrough and stain the fascia from the back side. **Improper hanger spacing, inadequate sealant at end caps, or eavestroughs that aren't tight against the fascia** allow water infiltration. In Ottawa's freeze-thaw climate, small gaps expand over the first winter as ice forms and melts repeatedly. The thermal expansion of aluminum eavestroughs during our 65-degree annual temperature swing can also open gaps that weren't apparent during installation.

Ice dam formation during Ottawa winters can cause water backup that stains fascia boards well after the ice melts. Even with new eavestroughs, **inadequate attic insulation and ventilation** allows heat to escape through the roof, melting snow that refreezes at the eaves. This ice backup forces water under shingles and behind the eavestrough system, creating staining that appears months later as the wood dries out.

Check your eavestrough slope using a level and measure the fall toward each downspout. Verify that water flows freely when you run a garden hose in the gutter. Look for any gaps between the eavestrough and fascia, particularly at corners and end caps. During the next heavy rainfall, observe where water is escaping the system. If the problem persists, your installation may need adjustment or you might require larger downspouts for your roof's drainage area.

For complex drainage issues or problems that involve accessing two-storey areas safely, consider consulting with eavestrough professionals through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com, where you can browse contractors experienced with Ottawa's challenging climate conditions.

Q6

Aluminum Soffit Cost Per Square Foot in Ottawa

Aluminum Soffit Installation Costs in Ottawa

Aluminum soffit installation in Ottawa typically costs **$8 to $16 per square foot installed**, including materials and labour. That works out to roughly **$12 to $25 per linear foot** when you factor in the standard soffit depth of 12 to 24 inches on most Ottawa homes. For a typical bungalow with approximately **200 to 300 square feet of soffit area**, expect a total project cost of **$1,600 to $4,800**. A two-storey home with **300 to 500 square feet of soffit** runs **$2,400 to $8,000**.

The price per square foot varies based on the type of soffit panel. **Vented soffit panels**, which have perforations that allow airflow into the attic space, are the standard choice for most Ottawa homes and cost **$8 to $12 per square foot installed**. Proper soffit ventilation is critical in Ottawa's climate because it helps prevent ice dams by keeping the attic cold and stopping heat from melting snow on the roof. The Ontario Building Code requires a minimum of **1 square foot of ventilation for every 300 square feet of attic space** when both soffit and ridge vents are used together.

Solid soffit panels are used in areas where ventilation is not needed, such as porch overhangs and covered entries. Solid panels cost slightly less at **$7 to $10 per square foot installed** because the material is less expensive to manufacture. Most Ottawa installations use a combination of vented and solid panels.

Concealed-fastener aluminum soffit in a smooth or wood-grain finish represents the premium end at **$12 to $16 per square foot**. These panels create a cleaner look with no visible nail heads and are popular on higher-end homes in neighbourhoods like Westboro, the Glebe, and Riverside South.

Labour accounts for roughly **50 to 60 percent** of the installed cost because soffit work requires careful cutting, fitting around corners and obstructions, and working overhead on ladders or scaffolding. Removing old damaged soffit adds **$2 to $4 per square foot** to the project if the existing material needs to come down first. Fascia board repair, which is often discovered once old soffit is removed, can add another **$8 to $15 per linear foot** for wood replacement or aluminum wrapping.

Ottawa's extreme temperature swings demand proper installation technique. Aluminum soffit panels must be installed with expansion gaps at joints and fasteners that allow the panel to slide slightly as it expands and contracts. A 12-foot soffit panel can shift by nearly **3 millimetres** between a minus-30 winter night and a plus-35 summer afternoon. Panels nailed too tightly will buckle and warp.

If your home is in one of Ottawa's heritage conservation districts — including Centretown, Sandy Hill, or Rockcliffe Park — your soffit materials, colour, and profile may need to conform to heritage guidelines. A heritage permit under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act may be required if the work alters the exterior appearance of a designated property. Contact 3-1-1 to check before proceeding.

The Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com lists soffit and fascia contractors who can provide on-site measurements and detailed quotes for your specific home.

Q7

Patch or Replace Rotted Soffit in Ottawa? How to Decide

Knowing when to patch versus fully replace rotted soffit on your Ottawa home comes down to **how far the damage has spread** and what caused it in the first place. A small area of rot — say under one or two panels — can usually be patched if the surrounding material and the fascia behind it are still solid. But if rot has spread across multiple panels, if the plywood or wood substrate underneath is spongy, or if you are finding damage in several different areas, full replacement is almost always the smarter investment.

How Ottawa's Climate Accelerates Soffit Rot

Ottawa's extreme climate is particularly brutal on soffit materials. The **65-degree annual temperature swing** from minus 30 in January to plus 35 in July causes constant expansion and contraction that opens seams and cracks in older wood and vinyl soffit panels. Once moisture gets into those gaps, Ottawa's **50-plus freeze-thaw cycles per winter** turn small water intrusion into aggressive rot. Water freezes in the crack, expands, widens the opening, thaws, and allows more water in — a cycle that can destroy wood soffit surprisingly fast.

When inspecting your soffit, push firmly on suspect areas with your finger or the handle of a screwdriver. If the material gives or feels spongy, the rot has penetrated beyond the surface. **Surface discolouration alone** — dark staining or mild peeling paint — does not necessarily mean the wood is rotted through, but it does mean moisture is reaching the material. Check the fascia board at the same time, because soffit rot and fascia rot almost always happen together. If your fascia is also soft or deteriorating, patching just the soffit will not solve the underlying moisture problem.

A patch repair in Ottawa typically costs **$150 to $400** depending on access height and the number of panels involved. You are cutting out the rotted section, treating the surrounding wood with a **wood hardener or preservative**, and installing a matching replacement panel. This works well for isolated damage caused by a one-time event like a clogged downspout that overflowed against the soffit, provided you have fixed the original cause.

Full soffit replacement makes more sense when damage covers **more than 20 to 25 percent of a wall face**, when rot has reached the structural substrate or rafter tails, when you are finding damage on multiple sides of the house, or when the existing soffit is original wood that has reached the end of its lifespan — typically **20 to 30 years for painted wood in Ottawa's climate**. Full replacement with **aluminum soffit panels** costs **$12 to $25 per linear foot** in Ottawa and gives you a material that will not rot, does not need painting, and handles the temperature extremes without cracking.

One critical factor many Ottawa homeowners overlook is **ventilation**. If your soffit rot was caused by inadequate attic ventilation — warm, moist attic air condensing on the cold underside of the roof deck and dripping onto soffit

panels — patching without fixing the ventilation will just lead to rot in the same spot again. Proper **vented soffit panels** allow airflow into the attic space, which is essential for preventing both moisture damage and ice dams.

For anything beyond a simple one-panel patch, having a professional assess the full extent of damage is worthwhile. Soffit work on two-storey homes involves ladder or scaffolding access that adds both cost and safety risk. The Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** can help you find contractors experienced with soffit and fascia work in Ottawa's demanding climate.

Q8

Best Soffit Material for Ottawa Homes to Stop Moisture & Pests

For Ottawa homes, **aluminum soffit panels** are the best overall material choice to prevent both moisture damage and pest intrusion. Aluminum does not rot, does not absorb moisture, will not crack in Ottawa's extreme cold, and provides a sealed surface that insects, squirrels, and raccoons cannot easily chew through — a real concern in neighbourhoods with mature trees like **Rockcliffe Park, the Glebe, and Westboro**.

Comparing Soffit Materials for Ottawa's Climate

Aluminum soffit comes in two main types: **vented and solid**. Vented panels have small perforations that allow airflow into your attic space, which is critical for preventing moisture buildup and ice dam formation. Solid panels are used in areas where ventilation is not needed, such as porch ceilings or areas where other ventilation is already adequate. Most Ottawa installations use a combination — vented panels along the eaves to draw in fresh air and solid panels in non-ventilated sections. Aluminum soffit costs **$12 to $25 per linear foot installed** in Ottawa, which sits about **10 to 15 percent below GTA pricing**.

Vinyl soffit is the budget alternative at **$8 to $15 per linear foot**, but it has significant drawbacks in Ottawa's climate. Vinyl becomes brittle below **minus 20 degrees Celsius** — a temperature Ottawa reaches regularly from December through February. When vinyl gets brittle, impacts from falling ice, blown branches, or even a stiff ladder can crack panels and create openings for moisture and pests. Vinyl also expands considerably in summer heat, causing panels to buckle or gap at the joints. That said, modern vinyl soffit has improved in durability and may work acceptably on single-storey homes with good attic ventilation and no overhanging trees.

Wood soffit is the traditional material found on many older Ottawa homes, particularly in **heritage districts like New Edinburgh, Centretown, and Lowertown**. Painted plywood or tongue-and-groove cedar has a classic appearance, but wood requires **repainting every 5 to 7 years** and is vulnerable to moisture absorption, rot, and pest damage. Carpenter ants are a persistent problem in Ottawa, and they are attracted to damp or rotting wood —

once they establish a colony in soffit or fascia, the damage spreads quickly. If your heritage home requires wood soffit to maintain its character, cedar is the better species choice over plywood because of its natural rot resistance, though it costs more at **$15 to $30 per linear foot installed**.

For pest prevention specifically, aluminum is the clear winner because it creates a continuous barrier with no organic material for insects to feed on and no soft surface for squirrels or raccoons to chew through. Ottawa homeowners in areas with heavy wildlife activity should ensure that soffit panels are properly secured at every joint, with no gaps larger than a quarter inch. **Raccoons** are surprisingly strong and can pry loose panels away from the fascia if the fastening is inadequate.

One overlooked factor in Ottawa is the role of soffit in **ice dam prevention**. Properly vented aluminum soffit allows cold outside air to circulate under the roof deck, keeping the roof surface cold and preventing the uneven melting that creates ice dams. This passive ventilation is far more effective than trying to manage ice dams after they form, and it costs nothing to operate once installed.

When upgrading or replacing soffit, have a contractor inspect your fascia and eavestrough hangers at the same time — the components work as a system, and addressing everything at once saves on labour costs. The Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** lists contractors experienced with soffit, fascia, and eavestrough work across the Ottawa area.

Q9

Signs Your Fascia Is Rotting Behind the Eavestroughs in Ottawa

Detecting fascia rot behind your eavestroughs can be tricky because the gutter itself hides the upper portion of the fascia board where damage typically starts. However, there are several **telltale signs** you can spot from the ground and during routine eavestrough maintenance that indicate your fascia needs attention before the damage gets expensive.

The most obvious sign is **eavestroughs pulling away from the house**. Your eavestrough hangers are screwed or nailed directly into the fascia board, so when that wood softens from rot, the hangers lose their grip. If you notice sections of gutter sagging, tilting outward, or separating from the roofline — especially after a heavy snowfall or ice loading — rotted fascia is a likely culprit. In Ottawa, this is extremely common because the **heavy snow loads and ice buildup** put tremendous stress on fascia-mounted hangers throughout winter. A single heavy wet snowfall can load **200 to 500 kilograms per cubic metre** onto your gutter edge, and soft fascia simply cannot hold.

What to Look for During Inspection

Paint that is **peeling, bubbling, or flaking** along the top edge of the fascia where it meets the drip edge or the back of the eavestrough is an early warning sign. Moisture is getting trapped between the gutter and the fascia, and the paint is failing because the wood underneath is absorbing water. **Dark staining or discolouration** running down the face of the fascia, particularly at seams or end caps of the eavestrough, suggests water has been leaking at those points for some time.

When you clean your eavestroughs in spring or fall, take a moment to press firmly on the fascia board behind the gutter with a screwdriver or awl. Healthy wood feels solid and resists penetration. **Rotted wood will feel spongy** and the tool will push in easily, sometimes crumbling. Pay special attention to areas around **downspout outlets, inside corners, and anywhere two sections of eavestrough meet** — these are the highest-moisture zones.

From the ground, look for **wavy or uneven fascia lines**. Rot causes wood to swell and warp, creating a visible irregularity in what should be a straight horizontal line. Also check for **small holes or sawdust-like debris** on or below the fascia, which indicates carpenter ant or woodpecker activity — both are attracted to moisture-damaged wood, and both are common in Ottawa's heavily treed neighbourhoods.

Ottawa's climate is particularly hard on fascia boards. The constant **freeze-thaw cycling** — over 50 cycles per winter — works moisture deeper into any existing cracks or paint failures. Ice that forms behind the eavestrough exerts tremendous pressure on the fascia surface, and meltwater has nowhere to go except into the wood grain. Many Ottawa homes built in the **1960s through 1980s** still have original wood fascia that was only protected by paint, and after 40-plus years, much of it is at or past its useful life.

Replacing rotted fascia in Ottawa costs **$12 to $25 per linear foot** depending on the extent of damage, access height, and whether you are replacing with new wood or upgrading to **aluminum fascia capping** over new wood. Aluminum capping adds about **$5 to $10 per linear foot** but eliminates future rot concerns by sealing the wood completely. Since the eavestroughs typically need to come down to replace fascia, many Ottawa homeowners combine fascia replacement with new eavestrough installation to save on labour.

If you suspect fascia rot, getting a professional assessment sooner rather than later saves money — rot spreads, and once it reaches the **rafter tails or roof sheathing**, the repair cost jumps significantly. The Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** is a helpful resource for finding contractors who handle fascia, soffit, and eavestrough work in the Ottawa area.

Q10

Vented vs Solid Soffit Panels for Ottawa Homes and Attic Airflow

For proper attic airflow on an Ottawa home, you need **both vented and solid soffit panels** installed in the right locations — the key is getting the balance right for your specific roof design. Vented soffit panels along the eaves are the intake side of your attic ventilation system, and they are absolutely essential in Ottawa's climate where **ice dam prevention** depends on keeping the roof deck cold and evenly temperatured throughout winter.

The standard approach in Ottawa is to install **vented (perforated) soffit panels along the entire eave overhang** where the soffit runs parallel to the exterior walls. This allows cool outside air to enter the attic space, flow upward along the underside of the roof deck, and exit through ridge vents, gable vents, or roof vents at the peak. Solid soffit panels are used in areas where ventilation is not needed or not possible — typically **porch ceilings, enclosed areas, gable-end overhangs, and decorative sections** that do not connect to the attic space.

Why Ventilation Matters So Much in Ottawa

The Ontario Building Code requires a **minimum 1:300 ratio** of net free ventilation area to insulated ceiling area, meaning for every 300 square feet of attic floor, you need at least one square foot of ventilation opening. This requirement exists for good reason in Ottawa's climate. During winter, warm moist air from inside your home rises into the attic through ceiling penetrations, light fixtures, and gaps around plumbing stacks. Without adequate ventilation, that moisture condenses on the cold roof deck, soaking the sheathing and eventually rotting it from the inside out.

More immediately relevant to Ottawa homeowners, **proper soffit ventilation is the single most effective defence against ice dams**. When attic air stays cold because ventilation is working correctly, snow on your roof melts evenly or not at all. When ventilation is poor, heat trapped in the attic warms the upper roof, melting snow that refreezes at the cold eaves — forming the ice dams that cause **thousands of dollars in damage** to Ottawa homes every winter. With over **50 freeze-thaw cycles per winter**, even minor ventilation deficiencies get magnified.

A common mistake in Ottawa renovations is **blocking soffit vents with insulation**. When attic insulation is added or upgraded — which many Ottawa homeowners do to improve energy efficiency — the blown-in or batt insulation can push right up against the roof deck at the eaves, covering the soffit vents and eliminating intake airflow. **Rafter baffles** (also called ventilation chutes) must be installed in every rafter bay between the top plate of the wall and the roof deck to maintain a clear air channel from the soffit vents into the attic. These cost only **$2 to $4 per baffle** and are one of the most cost-effective upgrades for any Ottawa attic.

For new soffit installation in Ottawa, **aluminum vented panels** are the preferred choice at **$12 to $25 per linear foot installed**. They provide consistent perforation patterns for reliable airflow, will not clog with paint like vented

wood soffit can over time, and resist Ottawa's temperature extremes without cracking or warping. The perforations in quality aluminum vented soffit are small enough to keep out most insects while allowing adequate airflow.

If your home currently has solid soffit everywhere with no visible ventilation openings, upgrading to vented panels along the eaves should be a priority — it will improve your attic moisture management, help prevent ice dams, and can even extend the life of your roof shingles by reducing heat buildup in summer. A professional can assess your current ventilation and determine the right mix of vented and solid panels. The Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** is a good place to start looking for soffit and ventilation contractors in the Ottawa area.

Q11

Aluminum Fascia Capping for Ottawa Homes: Cost & Protection

Yes, **aluminum fascia capping** is one of the best investments you can make to protect wood fascia from Ottawa's punishing climate. Fascia capping involves wrapping your existing wood fascia boards with pre-formed aluminum sheeting, creating a weather-tight seal that prevents moisture, ice, and UV damage from reaching the wood underneath. In a city where the annual temperature swing exceeds **65 degrees Celsius** and fascia boards endure over **50 freeze-thaw cycles per winter**, this protective layer makes a dramatic difference in fascia lifespan.

The capping process starts with inspecting and repairing the existing wood fascia. Any sections that are rotted, soft, or severely warped need to be replaced with new wood before capping — aluminum capping preserves good wood but it cannot restore damaged wood. Once the surface is sound, the installer custom-bends aluminum coil stock to match your fascia profile using a portable brake, then fits it tightly over the wood, securing it at the top edge under the drip edge and at the bottom with a clean hemmed edge. The result is a seamless, painted aluminum surface that sheds water and requires zero maintenance.

Cost and Value in Ottawa

Aluminum fascia capping in Ottawa costs **$8 to $15 per linear foot for the capping alone**, or **$15 to $30 per linear foot if combined with fascia board replacement**. For a typical Ottawa home with 120 to 160 linear feet of fascia, you are looking at roughly **$960 to $2,400 for capping** over sound wood, or **$1,800 to $4,800 if replacement is needed** in some sections. Compare this to the cost of **repainting wood fascia every 5 to 7 years** — at **$4 to $8 per linear foot for professional painting**, you will spend nearly the same amount over 15 years with none of the permanent protection.

The value proposition is strongest in Ottawa because of how aggressively the local climate attacks exposed wood. Summer UV and rain degrade paint coatings, fall brings leaf debris that traps moisture against the fascia behind the eavestrough, winter packs ice directly against the wood surface, and spring meltwater saturates any cracks or paint failures that developed over the preceding seasons. Once water penetrates wood fascia in Ottawa, the freeze-thaw cycling works it deeper with every cycle, accelerating rot far faster than in milder climates.

Aluminum capping comes in **over 30 factory-baked colours** that match virtually any exterior colour scheme. The factory finish on quality aluminum capping is far more durable than field-applied paint on wood — expect **25 to 30 years** before any colour fading becomes noticeable, and even then the aluminum itself continues protecting the wood indefinitely.

There are a few things to be aware of. Capping must be done correctly to avoid **trapping moisture** behind the aluminum. If water gets behind poorly installed capping through gaps at the top edge or at joints, the rot actually accelerates because the moisture cannot evaporate. Quality installation includes proper overlap at joints, sealant at penetration points, and tight integration with the drip edge above and the soffit below. In Ottawa's **heritage conservation districts** — Centretown, Rockcliffe Park, New Edinburgh, Sandy Hill — aluminum capping may need to match the original fascia appearance, so check with Heritage Planning through **3-1-1** before proceeding on a designated heritage property.

Capping is best done at the same time as eavestrough replacement, since the gutters need to come down to wrap the fascia properly. This combination saves on labour and ensures the eavestrough hangers are seated against a clean, flat surface. For finding contractors experienced with aluminum capping in Ottawa, the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** is a helpful starting point.

Q12

Why Fascia Warps and Pulls Away on Ottawa Homes

Fascia boards warping and pulling away from the roof edge is one of the most common exterior problems on Ottawa homes, and the causes are almost always linked to **moisture damage, structural stress, or a combination of both** made worse by the city's extreme climate. Understanding what is driving the problem is essential before spending money on repairs, because if you fix the symptom without addressing the cause, the new fascia will fail the same way.

The primary cause is **moisture penetration into the wood fascia**. When paint fails, cracks develop, or sealant degrades at the drip edge, water gets into the wood grain. In milder climates this leads to gradual rot over many

years. In Ottawa, the process is dramatically accelerated by **freeze-thaw cycling**. Water absorbed into the wood freezes and expands, physically pushing wood fibres apart. When it thaws, even more water enters the now-larger spaces. With over **50 freeze-thaw cycles per winter**, this mechanical process can warp and distort fascia boards in just two or three seasons. The warping creates gaps between the fascia and the roof edge or rafter tails, which allows even more water in — a self-accelerating cycle of damage.

Snow, Ice, and Eavestrough Weight

Ottawa's **heavy snow loading** is the second major factor. Eavestroughs filled with ice and packed snow can weigh hundreds of kilograms along a single wall face. That weight pulls directly on the fascia board through the eavestrough hangers. If the fascia is already softened by moisture, or if hangers are spaced too far apart — more than **24 inches in Ottawa's snow belt** — the combined load physically pulls the fascia away from the rafter tails. This is why many Ottawa homeowners first notice the problem in **late winter or early spring**, after months of sustained snow and ice loading.

Ice dams create a particularly destructive form of stress. Ice building up behind the eavestrough presses outward against the fascia from behind while the weight of the ice-filled gutter pulls from the front. This two-directional force can lever fascia boards away from the roof edge even when the wood is still relatively sound. Homes in Ottawa neighbourhoods with heavy tree cover and older insulation — areas like the **Glebe, Old Ottawa South, and Westboro** — are especially prone to ice dam damage because shaded roofs retain ice longer.

Inadequate fastening is another common issue, particularly on homes built in the **1960s through 1980s**. Fascia boards installed with nails rather than screws lose holding power over time as the nails work loose from repeated thermal cycling. Each expansion-contraction cycle rocks the nail slightly in its hole, gradually enlarging it. After decades, the nails no longer grip the rafter tails, and the fascia drifts away under its own weight plus eavestrough loading.

Poor attic ventilation contributes indirectly but significantly. When warm attic air cannot escape properly, it heats the underside of the roof deck unevenly, creating **condensation that drips onto the top edge of fascia boards** and along the rafter tails. This chronic moisture exposure from the inside — combined with weather exposure on the outside — rots the wood from both sides simultaneously.

Repair costs in Ottawa depend on severity. **Re-securing fascia** that has pulled away but is still structurally sound runs **$150 to $400** for a professional to refasten with proper screws. If the wood is warped or rotted, replacement costs **$12 to $25 per linear foot** including new wood and aluminum capping to prevent recurrence. Having the underlying cause addressed at the same time — improving ventilation, re-spacing eavestrough hangers, or adding drip edge flashing — is essential. Contractors specializing in fascia and eavestrough work can be found through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com**.

Q13

Upgrading Wood to Aluminum Soffit and Fascia in Ottawa: Worth It?

Upgrading from wood to aluminum soffit and fascia is one of the most worthwhile exterior investments for Ottawa homeowners, and the payback is stronger here than in most Canadian cities because of **how aggressively Ottawa's climate destroys wood exteriors**. The upfront cost is higher than simply repainting, but when you factor in the elimination of recurring maintenance, the durability advantage over a 30-plus year horizon makes the math compelling.

Wood soffit and fascia on an Ottawa home typically needs **repainting every 5 to 7 years** to maintain weather protection. Professional exterior painting for soffit and fascia runs **$4 to $8 per linear foot** in Ottawa, so a home with 150 linear feet of soffit and 140 linear feet of fascia would cost **$1,160 to $2,320 per repaint cycle**. Over 25 years, that is three to five repaint cycles totalling **$3,500 to $11,600** — and that assumes no rot repair is needed, which is rarely the case. Wood rot repairs between paint cycles typically add **$500 to $2,000** per occurrence, and Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycling guarantees that any paint failure leads to rapid moisture damage.

The Aluminum Advantage in Ottawa's Climate

Aluminum soffit and fascia installation in Ottawa costs **$12 to $25 per linear foot** for soffit and **$15 to $30 per linear foot** for fascia with aluminum capping. For the same home described above, a full upgrade runs approximately **$3,900 to $10,250** — roughly equivalent to the lifetime repainting cost of wood, but you pay it once and then have **zero maintenance for 30 to 40 years**. The factory-baked enamel finish on quality aluminum does not peel, blister, or crack in Ottawa's temperature extremes, and the metal itself cannot rot, no matter how much moisture Ottawa's weather throws at it.

Beyond maintenance savings, aluminum provides superior **pest resistance**. Carpenter ants, which thrive in Ottawa's wooded neighbourhoods, cannot establish colonies in aluminum. Squirrels and raccoons — persistent nuisances in areas like **Rockcliffe Park, the Glebe, and Old Ottawa South** — cannot chew through aluminum soffit to access attic spaces. Woodpeckers, which regularly attack wood fascia looking for insects in the Ottawa area, have no interest in aluminum.

Aluminum vented soffit panels also provide **more consistent and reliable attic ventilation** than vented wood soffit. Wood soffit vents tend to clog with paint during repainting, gradually reducing airflow with each cycle. This reduced ventilation contributes to ice dam formation and attic moisture problems — two of Ottawa's biggest homeowner headaches. Aluminum perforations remain clear permanently.

The one scenario where wood makes more sense is on **heritage-designated properties** in Ottawa's conservation districts. Centretown, New Edinburgh, Rockcliffe Park, Sandy Hill, and several other neighbourhoods have heritage

guidelines that may require maintaining original materials and appearances. Even in these areas, aluminum that closely matches the original wood profile is sometimes accepted — check with Heritage Planning through **3-1-1** before assuming you must keep wood.

The best time to upgrade is when your existing wood soffit or fascia needs major repair or repainting, or when you are replacing your eavestroughs. Combining the work saves significantly on labour because the eavestroughs need to come down for fascia access anyway. Getting **three quotes from different contractors** is important because pricing varies considerably depending on the installer's efficiency with aluminum brake work. The Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** is a useful resource for finding soffit and fascia contractors serving the Ottawa area.

Q14

How Soffit Ventilation Prevents Ice Dams on Ottawa Roofs

Proper soffit ventilation is the **most effective and cost-efficient defence** against ice dams on Ottawa roofs, and understanding why it works helps you appreciate why this seemingly minor component of your roof system has such an outsized impact on winter performance. Ice dams cause some of the most expensive water damage Ottawa homeowners face, and the fix starts not with your eavestroughs but with the airflow beneath your roof.

Ice dams form when heat escaping from your living space warms the upper portion of the roof deck, melting the snow sitting on top. That meltwater flows downhill under the remaining snow cover until it reaches the **eave overhang** — the section of roof that extends past the exterior wall and has no heated space beneath it. At the cold eave, the water refreezes, forming a ridge of ice. As the cycle repeats, the ice dam grows larger and water pools behind it, eventually backing up **under shingles and into the roof structure, walls, and ceilings**.

How Soffit Ventilation Breaks the Ice Dam Cycle

Soffit ventilation works by introducing **cold outside air** at the lowest point of the attic — right at the eaves where ice dams form. This cold air flows upward along the underside of the roof deck, exits through ridge vents or roof vents at the peak, and carries away any heat that has escaped from the living space below. The result is a roof deck that stays at or near the same temperature as the outside air, which means **snow does not melt unevenly** and meltwater does not form to create ice dams.

In Ottawa, this ventilation is critical because the city experiences over **50 freeze-thaw cycles per winter** and receives more than **200 centimetres of snow annually**. Even a well-insulated attic loses some heat through ceiling penetrations — pot lights, bathroom fans, attic hatches, and plumbing stacks. Without soffit ventilation to

flush that heat out before it warms the roof deck, even small amounts of heat loss accumulate and trigger the melt-freeze cycle.

The Ontario Building Code specifies a **minimum ventilation ratio of 1:300** — one square foot of net free ventilation area for every 300 square feet of insulated ceiling. Critically, this ventilation must be **balanced** between intake (soffit vents) and exhaust (ridge or roof vents). Many Ottawa homes have adequate exhaust ventilation at the ridge but insufficient intake at the soffit, which creates a negative pressure situation where air is drawn in through gaps and cracks rather than through the intended intake path. This imbalance actually makes ice dam problems worse in some cases.

The most common soffit ventilation failure in Ottawa occurs when **attic insulation blocks the soffit vents**. When insulation is blown into an attic or new batts are installed, the material can fill the narrow space where the roof deck meets the top plate of the exterior wall, covering the soffit vent openings entirely. **Rafter baffles** — lightweight plastic or foam channels installed in each rafter bay — maintain a clear air path from the soffit vent to the attic space. These cost only **$2 to $4 per baffle** and should be in every rafter bay where soffit ventilation exists. This is one of the highest-value, lowest-cost improvements any Ottawa homeowner can make.

Upgrading from solid soffit to **vented aluminum soffit panels** costs **$12 to $25 per linear foot installed** in Ottawa and dramatically increases intake ventilation across the entire eave line. Combined with adequate attic insulation — **R-60 is the current Ontario standard for attics** — and proper exhaust ventilation, this creates a complete cold-roof system that keeps your roof deck cold and ice dams at bay. For an assessment of your current soffit ventilation and ice dam risk, the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** lists contractors who handle soffit, ventilation, and eavestrough work across the Ottawa region.

Q15

Choosing Soffit and Fascia Colours for Your Ottawa Home

Choosing the right colour for your fascia and soffit is both an aesthetic decision and a practical one, and in Ottawa the **factory-baked finish on aluminum** gives you over 30 colour options that hold up far better than paint in the local climate. The right choice depends on your home's siding colour, roofing colour, window trim, and the overall look you want to achieve — but there are some reliable principles that work well across Ottawa's diverse housing stock.

The most popular approach in Ottawa is to match the **soffit to the lighter trim colour** and the **fascia to the darker accent or roof colour**. For example, a home with grey siding and a charcoal roof might use white soffit panels with

dark grey fascia. This creates clean visual definition between the roof edge and the underside of the overhang. White and off-white remain the most popular soffit colours across Ottawa because they **reflect light upward** under the overhang, brightening the area beneath the eaves and making the home feel more open.

Matching Ottawa's Common Home Styles

Ottawa's housing stock spans a wide range of styles, and colour selection varies accordingly. In newer subdivisions like **Barrhaven, Stittsville, and Riverside South**, where homes typically feature vinyl or engineered wood siding in greys, blues, and tans, the most common combination is **white soffit with colour-matched fascia** that picks up either the siding or the window trim colour. Many builders in these areas use **sandstone, clay, or dark brown** fascia to coordinate with composite trim packages.

In established neighbourhoods like **Westboro, Alta Vista, and Manor Park**, where brick homes dominate, brown and dark bronze fascia tones work well because they complement the warm red and buff brick tones common in Ottawa's mid-century housing. White or almond soffit against brown fascia creates a classic look that suits these homes perfectly.

For **heritage homes** in Centretown, the Glebe, Rockcliffe Park, and New Edinburgh, colour selection may be guided or restricted by **heritage conservation district guidelines**. Heritage properties often require colours that match or closely approximate the original historic colour scheme. Before selecting colours for a heritage-designated property, contact Ottawa's Heritage Planning staff through **3-1-1** to confirm any requirements under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

From a practical standpoint, there are a few Ottawa-specific considerations. **Darker fascia colours** show less dirt and staining from Ottawa's clay-heavy soil splashing up during rain, and they hide minor water marks better than white. However, darker colours absorb more solar heat, which can accelerate thermal expansion cycling in summer. For soffit, **lighter colours are always preferable** because they maximize light reflection under the overhang and make it easier to spot wasp nests, paint peeling, or moisture staining during visual inspections.

One important note: the colour you see on a small sample chip looks different when applied across an entire fascia run. Most Ottawa eavestrough and soffit contractors will let you see **full-sized panel samples or visit a recent installation** in a similar colour. Viewing the colour on an actual home in daylight, ideally one facing the same direction as your home, gives a much better sense of the final appearance than a two-inch chip.

Aluminum soffit and fascia colours are **factory-applied enamel finishes** that resist fading for **25 to 30 years** in Ottawa's climate — far longer than painted wood, which needs refreshing every 5 to 7 years. The colour you choose today will look virtually the same a decade from now, so take the time to get it right. Most suppliers offer a standard palette of 20 to 35 colours, with custom colour matching available at additional cost for unusual requirements. A contractor experienced with exterior finishing can bring samples to your home for comparison —

the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** lists contractors who specialize in soffit, fascia, and eavestrough work across Ottawa.

Q16

Can Squirrels or Raccoons Enter Through Damaged Soffit in Ottawa?

Yes, damaged soffit is one of the most common entry points for squirrels, raccoons, and other wildlife into Ottawa attics, and this problem is far more widespread in the region than many homeowners realize. Ottawa's abundant urban wildlife population — particularly Eastern grey squirrels and raccoons — are constantly searching for warm, sheltered nesting sites, and even a small gap or deteriorated section of soffit gives them the access they need.

How Wildlife Exploits Soffit Damage in Ottawa

Aluminum and vinyl soffit panels that have pulled away from the fascia, cracked from Ottawa's extreme freeze-thaw cycles, or rotted at their connection points create openings that animals can widen quickly. Raccoons are strong enough to peel back damaged aluminum soffit with their paws, while squirrels gnaw through compromised wood and even intact vinyl in a matter of hours. **Once inside, these animals cause serious damage** — they chew electrical wiring (creating fire hazards), tear apart insulation, contaminate attic spaces with urine and feces, and can compromise the structural integrity of your roof edge system.

Ottawa neighbourhoods with mature tree canopies are especially vulnerable. Areas like **Rockcliffe Park, the Glebe, Old Ottawa South, Westboro, and Alta Vista** have large maples, oaks, and pines that give wildlife direct access to roof edges. If tree branches hang within **1.5 to 2 metres** of your roofline, squirrels can jump directly onto your fascia and soffit. Ottawa's climate accelerates soffit deterioration because the **65-degree annual temperature swing** causes expansion and contraction that loosens fasteners and opens seams over time.

The connection between eavestrough damage and wildlife entry is often overlooked. When eavestroughs pull away from the fascia — a common problem in Ottawa where heavy snow loads stress hanger connections — they expose the soffit-to-fascia junction. This gap is the single most exploited entry point for raccoons in the Ottawa area. Similarly, clogged eavestroughs that cause water overflow saturate the fascia board, leading to wood rot that makes it easy for animals to break through.

To protect your home, **inspect your soffit at least twice a year** — once in spring after winter ice damage and again in fall before animals seek winter shelter. Look for gaps at the soffit-to-fascia joint, cracked or missing panels, and any signs of gnawing or clawing. Ensure your eavestroughs are properly secured to the fascia with hangers spaced no more than **24 inches apart**, keeping the gutter tight against the fascia and eliminating gaps. Trim tree branches back at least **2 metres from your roofline** to reduce wildlife access.

Repair costs for damaged soffit in Ottawa typically run **$12 to $25 per linear foot** for aluminum soffit replacement, and addressing a wildlife entry point before it becomes a full attic infestation is far cheaper than the **$500 to $2,000** that professional wildlife removal and attic remediation can cost. If you notice damaged soffit or suspect wildlife

entry, getting the soffit repaired and the eavestrough system tightened up should be a priority. Homeowners can browse soffit, fascia, and eavestrough contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** to find professionals who handle both the repair and wildlife-proofing in one visit.

Q17

Aluminum Soffit and Fascia Lifespan in Ottawa's Climate

Aluminum soffit and fascia are the most popular choice for Ottawa homes, and with proper installation you can expect a functional lifespan of 25 to 40 years before replacement becomes necessary. That is an impressive range for a material exposed to Ottawa's extreme climate, where temperatures swing over 65 degrees Celsius between winter lows of minus 30 and summer highs above 35. The actual lifespan you get depends heavily on installation quality, the gauge of aluminum used, and how well the underlying wood structure holds up.

<h2>Factors That Shorten or Extend Lifespan in Ottawa</h2>

The baked-on enamel finish on quality aluminum soffit and fascia is the first line of defence, and it is what determines the aesthetic lifespan versus the structural lifespan. Premium factory-finished aluminum retains its colour and resists chalking for 15 to 25 years. South-facing and west-facing fascia fade faster due to UV exposure, and you may notice colour differences between sun-exposed and shaded sections after 10 to 15 years. This fading is cosmetic — the aluminum underneath remains structurally sound long after the finish shows wear.

The gauge of aluminum makes a meaningful difference in Ottawa. Standard soffit panels come in 0.019-inch gauge, which is adequate for protected soffits but can dent from ice chunks falling off the roof edge. Premium 0.024-inch gauge soffit and 0.028-inch gauge fascia cost roughly 15 to 25 percent more but resist impact damage significantly better. For fascia in particular, which takes direct hits from ice, ladder pressure, and wind-blown debris, the heavier gauge is worth the extra investment. Soffit and fascia installation in Ottawa runs $12 to $25 per linear foot depending on material quality and complexity.

The hidden killer of aluminum soffit and fascia lifespan in Ottawa is moisture damage to the underlying wood. Aluminum is a cladding — it wraps over the existing wood soffit boards, fascia boards, and sometimes the frieze board. If moisture from ice dams, eavestrough overflow, or inadequate ventilation rots the wood underneath, the aluminum will buckle, warp, and pull away from fasteners even though the metal itself is fine.

Ottawa homes in older neighbourhoods like Centretown, Sandy Hill, and Vanier are particularly susceptible because original wood fascia may already have moisture damage hidden behind the aluminum wrapping.

Proper soffit ventilation is essential for longevity. Vented soffit panels allow airflow into the attic, which reduces moisture buildup and helps prevent ice dams. If your soffit vents are blocked by insulation pushed too close to the roof edge — a common problem found during Ottawa energy retrofits — both the soffit and the eavestrough system suffer. Ensuring clear airflow from soffit vents to roof ridge vents is one of the most effective things you can do to extend the life of your entire roof edge system.

Plan for a professional inspection of your soffit and fascia every 5 to 7 years, or immediately after any ice dam event or storm damage. An experienced contractor can identify wood rot behind the aluminum before it becomes a major problem. Repairing a few rotted fascia boards at $300 to $800 per section is far less expensive than a full replacement. Browse the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com to find soffit and fascia professionals who can assess your system's current condition and remaining lifespan.
