

Site Plan Comparison: 2025 vs. 2026

<https://gemini.google.com/app/9b483c5410295657>

User prompt: provide are two site plans. An original from 2025 and a reissued from 2026. Compare the two plans and outline in detail the differences. Create a table to clearly outline the differences.

Response: Here is a comparison of the site plans from 2025 and 2026, outlining the key differences in the development's scope, size, and layout.

Table of Site Plan Differences

Metric	2025 Site Plan	2026 Site Plan
Building Gross Area (Metric)	16,974 sqm	16,348 sqm
Building Gross Area (Imperial)	182,707 sqft	375,972 sqft
Front Yard Setback (Provided)	0m	3m
Building Height (Provided)	9 storeys (28.3m)	8 storeys
Floor Space Index (Provided)	3.4	3.3
Total Number of Units	226	178
Total Number of Bedrooms	250	257
Residential Parking (Provided)	196	178
Amenity Area (Required)	1250 m ²	1285 m ²
Amenity Area (Provided)	1629 m ²	1539 m ²

Detailed Breakdown of Changes

- **Building Size and Scale**
 - The overall building gross area was reduced in metric measurements from 16,974 sqm to 16,348 sqm.
 - The provided Floor Space Index (FSI) decreased slightly from 3.4 to 3.3.
 - The building's height was reduced from 9 storeys, initially noted as 28.3m, down to 8 storeys.
- **Property Setbacks**
 - The provided front yard setback was increased from 0m to 3m.
- **Residential Units and Bedrooms**

- The total number of units decreased significantly from 226 to 178.
 - Despite the drop in units, the total number of bedrooms increased from 250 to 257.
 - **Parking Configuration**
 - The provided residential parking spaces dropped from 196 to 178.
 - The 2025 plan had a total of 212 provided parking spaces.
 - The 2026 plan explicitly notes 11 provided visitor parking spaces.
 - **Amenity Space Allocation**
 - Due to the increase in bedrooms, the required amenity area rose from 1250 m² to 1285 m².
 - The provided amenity area was reduced from 1629 m² to 1539 m².
 - The ratio of provided amenity space per bedroom decreased from 6.5m² to 5.8m².
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User prompt: the old plan specifically gave a total height along with the storeys (9m 28.3m) what is the new purposed height now that it is 8 storeys?

Response: Based on the provided 2026 site plan, the new proposed building height is listed only as **8 storeys**. Unlike the 2025 plan, the 2026 document does not explicitly provide the total proposed height in meters.

For context, the 2026 plan does note the *required* height maximums as 12m (Zoning) or 24m (Official Plan), but it leaves the metric height for the *provided* 8 storeys blank.

User prompt: find the zoning bylaws for Downtown Cobourg and compare the 2026 SitePlan against them to outline what changes are being asked in order to approve this development

Response: Based on the "SitePlan 2026.pdf" document, the project falls under the Town of Cobourg's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law No. 85-2003, specifically within the **MC-16** (Main Central Commercial) zoning designation and site-specific zoning **SP 77.8**.

The site plan explicitly outlines the required zoning regulations compared to what the developer is proposing. To get this development approved, the developer is asking for significant exceptions (variances or by-law amendments) in two primary areas:

1. Building Height

- **Zoning Requirement:** The MC-16 zoning by-law strictly limits the building height to **4 storeys (12 meters)**.
- **Official Plan (OP) Limit:** The broader Official Plan allows for a maximum of **6 storeys (24 meters)**.

- **Proposed Change:** The 2026 Site Plan is asking for **8 storeys**.
- **Approval Needed:** The developer is requesting an approval to exceed the zoning by-law limit by 4 storeys and the Official Plan limit by 2 storeys.

2. Floor Space Index (FSI)

- **Zoning Requirement:** The maximum permitted Floor Space Index (which dictates the allowable density and gross floor area relative to the lot size) is **2.0**.
- **Proposed Change:** The 2026 Site Plan is asking for an FSI of **3.3**.
- **Approval Needed:** The developer is requesting to build a substantially denser and larger building than the property's base zoning allows, requiring an amendment to increase the density limit by 1.3 FSI.

Areas Meeting Compliance

In contrast to the height and density, the site plan indicates that the proposed development does meet or exceed the following municipal requirements:

- **Front Yard Setback:** A minimum of 0m is required, and 3m is provided.
- **Rear Yard Setback:** A minimum of 6m is required, and 6m is provided.
- **Side Yard Abutting Street Setback:** A minimum of 0m is required, and 0m is provided.
- **Amenity Space:** A minimum of 1285 m² is required based on the bedroom count, and 1539 m² is provided.

User prompt: provide a complete outline of the difference and zoning discrepancies in a document to be shared to the public

Response: Your PDF document is ready

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I have prepared a comprehensive public briefing document that outlines the evolution of the development at 1202 2nd St, Cobourg.

The document highlights the key changes between the 2025 and 2026 site plans, specifically noting the reduction in height from 9 storeys (28.3m) to 8 storeys, the drop in unit count from 226 to 178, and the slight decrease in the Floor Space Index (FSI) from 3.4 to 3.3.

Crucially, it also details the primary zoning discrepancies where the developer is seeking municipal approval. Under the property's MC-16 zoning, the maximum permitted height is 4 storeys (12m), and the maximum FSI density limit is 2.0. The document clearly communicates to the public that the 8-storey, 3.3 FSI proposal requires significant exemptions to proceed. Areas where the developer meets the town's by-laws, such as setbacks and minimum amenity space, are also included for a balanced overview.

User prompt: compare the purposed 2026 height against Cobourg's Victoria Hall

Response: While the exact metric height of the proposed 2026 building is not listed on the site plan, we can make a strong comparison based on the number of storeys and the data provided in the previous plan.

The 2025 site plan indicated that a 9-storey building at that location would have been **28.3 meters** tall. The revised 2026 plan proposes an **8-storey** structure, which would likely sit just a few meters shorter than the 28.3m mark, but still well above the 12-meter zoning maximum.

In comparison, **Victoria Hall**—Cobourg's iconic mid-19th-century Town Hall—is a **three-storey** stone building. While Victoria Hall features a prominent clocktower that adds to its overall height, the primary living/working structure of the historic building is only three storeys.

Therefore, comparing the primary structures, the proposed 8-storey residential development would be more than double the storey-height of Cobourg's Victoria Hall.

User prompt: what is the height in meters of Victoria Hall (including the bell tower)

Response: While the exact overall height in meters of Victoria Hall—including its prominent clock and bell tower—is not explicitly documented in the available architectural and historical records, we can estimate its height based on a few key details:

- **Building Structure:** The main structure of Victoria Hall is a large, three-storey stone building.
- **Interior Scale:** The building was designed with massive interior proportions; for example, the Grand Concert Hall features a ceiling that is 35 feet (approximately 10.6 meters) high.
- **Comparative Height:** During a recent public meeting regarding the initial 2025 development proposal across the street, the developers stated that their 9-storey building would be "inline with the middle of the bell-tower at Victoria Hall".

Since the 2025 site plan explicitly noted the 9-storey proposed building would be 28.3 meters tall, this indicates that the midpoint of Victoria Hall's bell tower is roughly 28.3 meters high. Therefore, the absolute peak of the tower extends considerably higher than 28.3 meters.

User prompt: the purposed development is on the North East corner of Albert and Second street. is there a under ground river or waterway below the current parking lot and if so what impact would there be to any future development

Response: Yes, there is an underground waterway flowing beneath the current parking lot at the proposed development site (202 Second Street). It is known locally as **Midtown Creek**.

The Underground Waterway

Midtown Creek originally flowed openly into a bay near Lake Ontario, but it now flows mostly underground through the center of downtown Cobourg. The creek is currently channeled through a culvert—parts of which are over a century old—that runs directly beneath the Covert Street parking lot, under commercial buildings on King Street, and straight through the development lot at 202 Second Street before eventually emptying near the harbor.

Impact on Future Development

The presence of this underground creek directly impacts the proposed development. An 8-storey residential building cannot safely or legally be constructed over an aging, active municipal water culvert.

To resolve this issue and allow the development to proceed, a major infrastructure project is required:

- **Culvert Realignment:** The Town of Cobourg and the developer are undertaking the "Midtown Creek Culvert Realignment" project. This will physically redirect the flow of the underground creek away from the private property at 202 Second Street, shifting it towards the Henley Arcade area.
- **Cost-Sharing Agreement:** In July 2025, the Cobourg Town Council approved an agreement with the developer (202 Second Street Inc.) to share the costs of moving the creek infrastructure.
- **Financial Contribution:** The developer agreed to contribute \$350,000 to front-end the design and engineering costs for the realignment. The Town of Cobourg is expected to cover the remaining construction costs (estimated between \$1.5 million and \$2 million) as part of its 2026 capital budget.

By realigning Midtown Creek, the underground waterway will be fully removed from the property's footprint. This clears the land of its major physical constraint, paving the way for the proposed condominium project to be built.

User prompt: provide sources for these agreements

Response: The details regarding the cost-sharing agreement for the Midtown Creek culvert realignment are documented in local municipal news reports covering the Cobourg Town Council meetings in July 2025.

Here are the specific sources and the details they confirm:

- **93.3 myFM News:** "Cobourg council backs cost-sharing plan for Midtown Creek culvert realignment" (Published July 18, 2025).
- **Today's Northumberland:** "Cobourg Council Approves Cost-Sharing Agreement for Midtown Creek Culvert Realignment" (Published July 17, 2025).

From these reports, the specific terms of the agreement are outlined as follows:

- During a special meeting on July 16, 2025, the Town Council approved a cost-sharing agreement with 202 Second Street Inc. (the developer) to realign the Midtown Creek culvert.
 - The developer agreed to contribute \$350,000 toward the project, which will fund the culvert's design work and provide a full construction cost estimate.
 - Town staff estimated the municipality's remaining construction costs to be between \$1.5 million and \$2 million.
 - The council's approved motion recommended that the town's portion of the project be considered for approval in the 2026 capital budget.
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User prompt: give me the urls for these reports

Response: Here are the URLs for the municipal news reports regarding the Midtown Creek culvert realignment:

- **93.3 myFM News (July 18, 2025):** "Cobourg council backs cost-sharing plan for Midtown Creek culvert realignment"
<https://northumberlanddaily.ca/2025/07/18/cobourg-council-backs-cost-sharing-plan-for-midtown-creek-culvert-realignment/>
 - **Today's Northumberland (July 17, 2025):** "Cobourg Council Approves Cost-Sharing Agreement for Midtown Creek Culvert Realignment"
<https://todaysnorthumberland.ca/2025/07/17/cobourg-council-approves-cost-sharing-agreement-for-midtown-creek-culvert-realignment/>
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