



September 18, 2026

El Paso County Planning and Community Development

2880 International Circle, Suite 110
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Attn: Kari Parsons — Planning and Community Development

Re: Site Development Plan PPR2615 — Honor Charter Academy, Bent Grass Meadows Drive, Peyton, CO

Landscape Review — Request for Approval of Alternative Landscaping Plan under El Paso County Land Development Code § 6.2.2(A)(4)

Dear Kari Parsons:

Thank you for your review comments on the Honor Charter Academy landscape plan. We acknowledge that the project is not exempt from the landscaping standards of Land Development Code § 6.2.2, and we are revising Sheet LP-1 to remove the "Project is Zoning Exempt" note that appeared on the buffer landscape calculations.

In its place, and as you invited in your comment, we respectfully request that the Planning and Community Development Director approve an alternative landscape design for the north, east, and west buffer areas pursuant to LDC § 6.2.2(A)(4). That section authorizes the Director to approve landscaping that does not meet the Section's specific numeric requirements where the proposed design still meets the Section's purpose, promotes the concepts of the Landscaping and Planting Manual, and provides the community and environment a benefit equivalent to strict compliance. We believe the revised plan, together with the justification below, satisfies that standard, and we ask that this letter be treated as the justification to be carried onto the LP-1 landscape calculation table.

Why an Alternative Design Is Appropriate for This Site

A K-8 school does not fit the regular development pattern that most landscape formulas are intended for — an issue Colorado addresses directly in C.R.S. § 22-32-124. As a community asset, the school serves an essential public function, which is a very different relationship to zoning than a typical commercial, industrial, or multifamily use. In keeping with the spirit of the landscape requirements — creating a cohesive, uniform look for the neighborhood — we placed the school forward on the site, closer to Bent Grass Meadows Drive, matched the right-of-way landscaping, and exceeded the parking lot tree requirement. We also increased our setback from the PUD's 15-foot minimum to 25 feet, matching the County's request, and upgraded the screening fence — at the County's request — to a solid wood picket privacy fence that matches the surrounding neighborhood.



Honor Charter Academy is a nonprofit educational organization that directs the majority of its budget toward educating students, leaving limited resources for long-term landscape maintenance. Our design reflects that reality: we've focused on durable, low-maintenance improvements that we believe return more community benefit per dollar than additional buffer trees would along fence lines that are already fully screened.

The Plan Substantially Exceeds Code Landscaping Minimums Elsewhere on the Site

Rather than treat the buffer areas in isolation, we ask that the Director consider the landscape plan as a whole. The revised plan provides:

- Internal landscape area of 290,626 SF (74.3% of the 391,129 SF site), against a requirement of 19,557 SF (5%) — nearly 15 times the Code minimum.
- Live groundcover of 244,712 SF (12 times of the 5,867 SF / 30% requirement).
- 8 parking lot trees against a requirement of 6 (1 per 15 spaces across 82 spaces) — exceeding the standard by a third.
- A uniform streetscape planting rhythm along the full 631 LF of Bent Grass Meadows Drive frontage, sized and spaced around the utility separations and vision triangle noted on the plan, so the corridor's visual character stays consistent with its neighboring parcels — directly serving § 6.2.2(A)(1)'s purpose of a "positive image and visual appeal" along the road.

Buffer-Area Justification (North, East, and West Property Lines)

North and west buffers (adjacent residential parcels). In place of the buffer tree count, the Owner has (1) increased the building/landscape setback from the 15-foot minimum established under the site's Bent Grass PUD (PUD142) entitlement to a 25-foot setback — exceeding what the site's own zoning requires — and (2) is installing a new, solid 6-foot wood picket privacy fence continuously along the north property line and along the west property line (tying into the existing 6-foot opaque wood fence), replacing the barbed-wire condition shown on the prior plan. A continuous, fully screened fence at a widened setback gives the adjacent homes on Lots 15 and 16 an immediate, permanent visual and privacy buffer — the outcome § 6.2.2(A) is designed to achieve — without waiting years for buffer trees to mature to screening height.

East buffer (adjacent to vacant land / ongoing offsite drainage). The east property line is adjacent to vacant land rather than a residence, and the site is addressing a pre-existing, ongoing offsite stormwater condition by constructing a drainage swale along the north and east property lines. While a stormwater swale is not itself a landscape setback, it occupies and permanently preserves the same open, undeveloped strip along the east line that a buffer would otherwise require, provides the same separation



between the school's active use and the adjoining parcel, and delivers a genuine stormwater and community benefit beyond what strict buffer compliance alone would provide. We ask that this improvement be recognized as serving the function of the required buffer along that property line.

Requested Action

We respectfully request that PCD accept the above as the justification required under LDC § 6.2.2(A)(4) for the alternative buffer landscape design, and that the Director approve the landscape plan as revised.

Thank you for your continued guidance on this application.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Mulroney

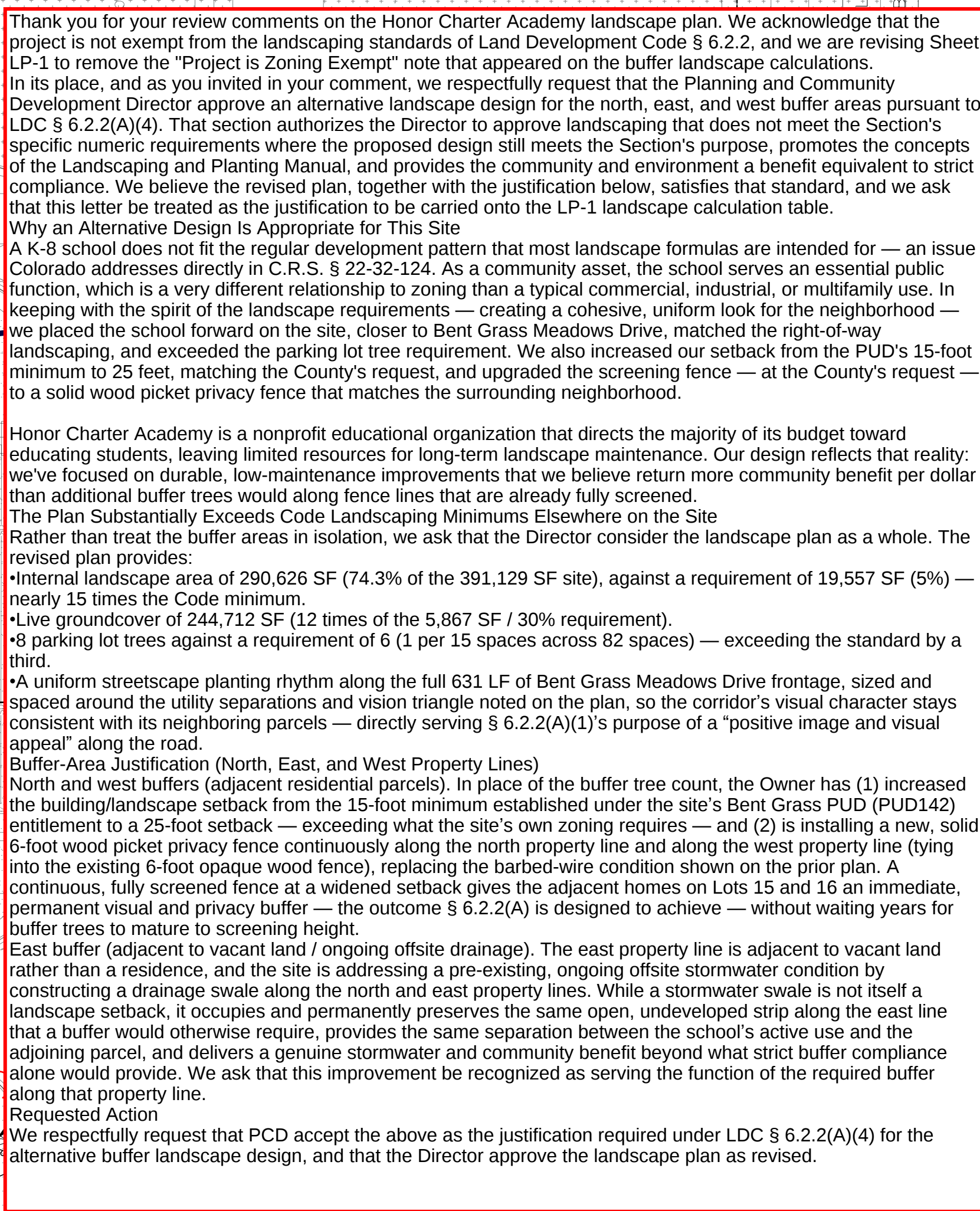
Waltz Construction

On behalf of Honor Charter School (Owner)

cc:

Tammy Sweeris, Highmark schools

Brian Campbell, TAIT & Associates, Inc



LP-1

V3_Landscape Plan drawings.pdf Markup Summary

dsdparsons (12)



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Author: dsdparsons
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TAIT RESPONSE:
PLEASE SEE ATTACHED LETTER FOR THE
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN
ALTERNATIVE LANDSCAPING PLAN.

Tammy-

It looks like the landscape plan didn't address comments; it does not meet the standards in the Code for buffers, roadway and internal landscape.

There is mention of tree credits? We don't have tree credits that I am aware of. A school is not exempt from zoning as indicated on the Plan. Are you proposing an alternative/substitute landscape plan? If so, you will need to state the justification in the table on the Plan. I am sending you my comments on the landscape plan via email so you don't have to wait until the remainder comments on other documents are published, so you can make adjustments.

6.2.2. Landscape Requirements

(A)General.

(1)Purpose. The landscape requirements are intended to provide uniform standards for the development and maintenance of the landscaping of private property and public rights-of-way to achieve a balance between the individual right to develop and the general benefit and welfare of the community. The benefits to be achieved and the overall purposes of the landscaping required by this Section are: (1) to create a positive image and visual appeal both along the road which is highly visible and internal properties which provide a working, shopping and living environment; (2) to decrease the scale of parking lots, provide shade, and reduce heat, glare and noise; (3) to separate circulation systems; to soften and reduce the mass of buildings; to screen and buffer lower intensity uses from higher intensity uses and protect residential privacy; and (4) to create an overall pleasant and attractive surrounding.

(2)Applicability.

(a)Applies to All Land Uses. The requirements of this Section shall apply to all uses. PUD's may have their requirements modified subject to the individual PUD.

(b)New Use Established or Use Changed.

Landscaping areas shall conform to this Section for a new building or use of previously vacant land, uses in an enlarged building, and all uses in a building when any use is changed that requires a change of occupancy to be approved by the Building Department or by the PCD.

SEE ATTACHED LETTER FOR
PLANT SCHEDULE

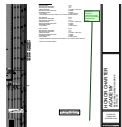
(4)Authority of Director to Approve Substitute Landscape Designs. The PCD Director may approve landscaping that does not meet the specific requirements of this Section provided the proposed landscaping meets the purpose of this Section, promotes the concepts contained in the Landscaping and Planting Manual, and provides an equivalent benefit to the community and environment as would otherwise be achieved by meeting the specific requirements of this Section. This authority shall not allow the PCD Director to eliminate the requirement for landscaping or to decrease the total landscaped area required by this Section.

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TAIT RESPONSE:
PLEASE SEE ATTACHED LETTER FOR THE
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN
ALTERNATIVE LANDSCAPING PLAN.

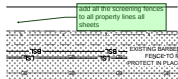
(4)Authority of Director to Approve Substitute Landscape Designs. The PCD Director may approve landscaping that does not meet the specific requirements of this Section provided the proposed landscaping meets the purpose of this Section, promotes the concepts contained in the Landscaping and Planting Manual, and provides an equivalent benefit to the community and environment as would otherwise be achieved by meeting the specific requirements of this Section. This authority shall not allow the PCD Director to eliminate the requirement for landscaping or to diminish the total landscaped area required by this Section.



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Provide the alternative justification for each area you are omitting landscape from please

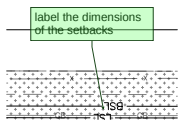
TAIT RESPONSE:
PLEASE SEE ATTACHED LETTER FOR THE
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ALTERNATIVE LANDSCAPING PLAN.



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add all the screening fences to all property lines all sheets

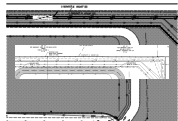
TAIT RESPONSE:
SCREEN FENCES WERE INCORRECTLY PORTRAYED ON THE SITE PLANS AND SITE PLANS HAVE BEEN UPDATED TO MATCH THE LANDSCAPE PLANS. FENCE ALONG THE NORTH PROPERTY LINE WILL REMAIN TO BE THE EXISTING BARBWIRE FENCE. A SOLID WOOD SCREEN FENCE IS BEING SHOWN ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE DRAINAGE SWALE ALONG THE NORTH SIDE OF THE SITE.



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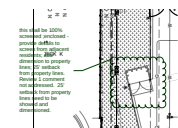
label the dimensions of the setbacks

TAIT RESPONSE:
THE SETBACKS HAVE BEEN ADJUSTED TO MATCH THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS. THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS HAVE THE SETBACKS LABELED AS "25' BSL" AND "15' LSL".



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TAIT RESPONSE:
THIS SCREENSHOT OF THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS SHOWED THE SCREEN FENCE IMPROPERLY. THE SCREEN FENCE IS BEING PROVIDED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE DRAINAGE SWALE.

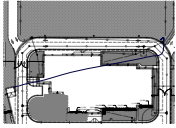


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this shall be 100% screened ;enclosed - provide details to screen from adjacent residents; add dimension to property lines; 25' setback from property lines.

Review 1 comment not addressed. 25' setback from property lines need to be showed and dimensioned.

TAIT RESPONSE:
THE SETBACKS HAVE BEEN ADJUSTED TO MATCH THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS. THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS HAVE THE SETBACKS LABELED AS "25' BSL" AND "15' LSL". THE TRASH ENCLOSURE HAS BEEN ROTATED AND SHIFTED TO KEEP OUTSIDE OF THE 25' BSL.



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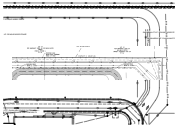
Add screening fence detail

TAIT RESPONSE:

THE SCREEN FENCE DETAIL IS ON THE PROVIDED ARCHITECTURAL PLANS AND THOSE PLANS HAVE BEEN REFERENCED ON SHEET LP-2.



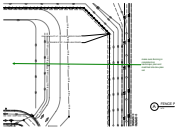
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TAIT RESPONSE:

THIS SCREENSHOT OF THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS SHOWED THE SCREEN FENCE IMPROPERLY. THE SCREEN FENCE IS BEING PROVIDED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE DRAINAGE SWALE.

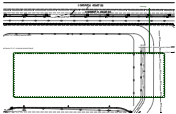


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make sure fencing is consistent on landscape plan and matched site dev plan set

TAIT RESPONSE:

THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN HAS BEEN ADJUSTED TO MATCH THE LANDSCAPE PLANS. THIS SCREENSHOT OF THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS SHOWED THE SCREEN FENCE IMPROPERLY. THE SCREEN FENCE IS BEING PROVIDED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE DRAINAGE SWALE.



Subject: Planner
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fencing