



DRAPER CITY HALL

Community Development | 1020 E. Pioneer Rd. Draper, UT 84020

July 10, 2026

*Draper City Planning Division
Administrative Interpretation*

RE: Academy Plaza, 2026-0120-ZVL

This letter evaluates the landscape buffer standards for an office/warehouse building in the DPMU-CSD (Draper Point Mixed Use Commercial Special District) zone. The property is located at 421 W 13490 South, parcel number 33-01-128-030. The property owner has applied for a site plan in order to build four office/warehouse buildings and one mixed use building on the property. The property is adjacent to existing residential uses and is part of a larger master planned development. Some of the site improvements were installed in 2015 under a previous site plan for Academy Mortgage, which included one office building, three pad sites for a future office building and retail uses, plus drive aisles and landscaping. Two of the pad sites were never developed. The property owners site plan application includes those two pad sites and some of the already improved infrastructure.

At the time the site was developed in 2015, Draper City Municipal Code (DCMC) Section 9-18-080(D) had minimal landscape buffer standards. It required parking to be screened and residential developments to comply with Chapter 9-23. Office/warehouse was not a contemplated use in the zone at that time. The adjacent residential development was built with 5-feet of landscaping along the common property line and the office site was built with 11-feet to 24-feet of landscaping along the common property line. This has created an existing landscape buffer of 16-feet to 29-feet in width between the sites.

2015 DCMC Section 9-18-080: Draper Pointe Mixed Use Commercial Special District

D. Landscape Standards:

- 10. Parking shall be screened with landscaping when possible.*
- 12. All multi-family projects shall submit a landscaping plan in accordance with Chapter 23, "Landscaping and Screening", of this title.*
 - i. Landscaping shall be used as a land use buffer where appropriate.*
 - ii. Detention basins shall be adequately landscaped and maintained.*
 - iii. Drought tolerant landscaping is highly encouraged.*

In 2019 the City amended its code to add clarifying language and requirements on the

establishment of CSD zones. This amendment introduced a criterion for CSD zones to include language about complying with development standards within other titles and chapters of code that are not being modified by the CSD. This includes the landscaping Chapter 9-23. This language has not been added to the DPMU-CSD.

DCMC 9-18-010: ESTABLISHMENT OF (CSD) COMMERCIAL SPECIAL DISTRICT ZONES:

A. Establishment Of CSD Zones: Each CSD zone is intended to allow a master planned, architecturally designed development where customized zoning requirements apply in order to permit flexibility and initiative in site development. The following requirements shall apply to the establishment of any CSD zone:

2. To establish a CSD zone, a petition shall be submitted for a text and zoning map amendment as provided in section 9-5-060 of this title. The following materials shall be included:

b. Proposed zone text which shall include:

(F) Requirement for compliance with standards in this code covering development standards that are not being modified by the proposed CSD language. Chapters in this title that shall be included are chapters 20, 22, 23, 25, and 32. Titles 7, 8, 11, 12, 16, and 18 of this code shall also be referenced.

In 2024 the applicant submitted an application to amend the DPMU-CSD zone to add in office/warehouse uses and mixed-use buildings. They obtained a text amendment to modify the concept plan for the site and include the new uses. This amendment also modified the code standards, including landscape buffer standards. DCMC Section 9-18H-040(L) requires office/warehouse buildings to have a 25-foot wide landscape buffer adjacent to residential uses.

9-18H-040: LANDSCAPE STANDARDS:

L. Plan Submitted: All multi-family, office/warehouse and vertical mixed use projects shall submit a landscaping plan in accordance with chapter 23, "Landscaping And Screening", of this title.

1. Landscaping shall be used as a land use buffer where appropriate.

2. To minimize the noise impacts of truck traffic on the nearby residential units, a landscaped buffer of twenty-five feet (25') in width shall be planted along the shared boundary of the office/warehouse and residential areas based on the following criteria:

a. Evergreen hedges such as Emerald Green Arborvitae and shrubs such as Wintergreen Boxwood or similar varieties approved by the Planning Division shall be planted at a four foot (4') foot minimum height and spaced at ten feet (10') on center along the length of the landscaped area.

b. Evergreen trees such as Norway Spruce, kindred spirit, or similar varieties approved by the Planning Division shall be planted at a minimum height of

six feet (6') and spaced twenty feet (20') on center along the length of the landscaped area.

Based on the code history, the existing parking lot landscape buffer complied with the code when it was built in 2015. Existing landscaping is legal conforming for office and retail uses. The applicant is proposing office/warehouse uses on the site, which is a use that requires 25-feet of landscaping buffer. They have requested approval for a reduction of landscape buffer standards, as found in DCMC Section 9-23-110(C). While 9-18H-040(L) is more specific to the site, Section 9-23-110(C) does allow for reductions in landscaping buffer requirements.

9-23-110: LAND USE BUFFERS:

Except for developments exempted under section [9-23-020](#) of this title, land use buffers shall be provided along the side and rear property lines of commercial, multifamily, and industrial properties to enhance community appearance and welfare by protecting residents and visitors from the traffic, noise, glare, trash, activity, vibration, odor, visual disorder and other adverse or harmful effects typically associated with such land uses.

C. Reductions:

1. The zoning administrator or designee may reduce land use buffer requirements based on the character of specific uses, building orientations, topographic features, or other unique characteristics of adjoining uses. A reduced buffer shall consist of a minimum ten foot (10') wide landscape buffer and an eight foot (8') tall, solid, sight obscuring fence in compliance with all other specifications of [9-23-110\(A\)\(5\)](#). In approving reductions under this section the zoning administrator shall not reduce the tree and plant requirements of subsections [9-23-110 \(A\)\(3\)](#) and (4).

The new use of office/warehouse to the property is triggering the landscaping improvements to be 25-feet wide next to the existing residential development. The standards for a reduction may be approved based on the character of specific uses, building orientations, topographic features, or other unique characteristics of adjoining uses. The request to utilize this section by the applicant did not include the standard under which the Zoning Administrator may approve a reduction in landscape buffer width. Before a reduction could be approved by the Zoning Administrator, the applicant would need to outline under which standard their request falls under and explain why a reduction may be appropriate given the character of specific uses, building orientations, topographic features, or other unique characteristics of adjoining uses.

The applicant should be aware that any reduction in buffer standards does not reduce the tree and planting requirements, and would result in a requirement to comply with DCMC Section 9-23-110(A)(3) and (4).

9-23-110: LAND USE BUFFERS:

A. Land Use Buffer Requirements: The amount of landscaping and type of fencing required for a land use buffer shall be as follows:

3. Trees within the buffer area described in 9-23-110(A)(1) and (2) above shall be planted at one tree per four hundred (400) square feet of buffer area.

a. Trees may be grouped.

b. At least one buffer tree shall be planted between commercial, office, multi-family and industrial uses and each single-family residential lot. Trees shall be arranged to provide linear coverage between commercial, office and industrial uses and adjacent residential units.

4. The rest of the buffer area shall consist of ground covers, shrubs and planting beds, wherein a maximum of seventy five percent (75%) of the buffer area may be planted with ground covers.

Please submit an analysis outlining why a reduction in landscape buffer should be allowed based on the standards found in DCMC Section 9-23-110(C).

There are a couple options available to you if you wish to pursue this matter further. You may seek a text amendment in order to change the code, or you may appeal this determination. An appeal is subject to DCMC Section 9-5-180 and shall be made within 10 days of the decision which is appealed. Applications for all options can be found on the city's website.

If you have further questions, please contact me at jennifer.jastremsky@draperutah.gov or at 801-576-6328.

Respectfully,



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