



Maricopa County

Planning & Development Department

Department Directive

Department Directive:
DD-2017-06

Effective: 8/14/17

Initiator: Darren Gerard – *DG*

Director: Carol Johnson – *CJ*

PURPOSE: Zoning Clearance will not be required for small, religious shrines in the Rural and Single-Family Residential Zoning Districts

REFERENCE: Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance (MCZO), Art. 1504.5; MCZO, Art. 501.2.15; & Art. 601.2.11

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

Roadside religious shrines are not uncommon throughout the country and other parts of the world. Maricopa County requires construction permitting for a principal building or to establish a primary use on a property.

MCZO, Art. 1504.5 requires a Zoning Clearance for any development activity with certain exceptions, including for “A non-habitable accessory building or structure that is a single story and no greater than 200 square feet in floor area.” MCZO, Arts. 501.2.15 & 601.2.11 respectively for the Rural and Single-Family Residential zoning districts state that accessory uses are permitted that are customarily incidental to the allowed primary uses for the respective zoning district. This Directive memorializes that religious shrines are considered customarily incidental to and thus accessory to all uses permitted in the Rural and Single-Family Residential zoning districts including farmland, whether or not fallow, and natural area open spaces.

For the purpose of this Directive a religious shrine is defined as a structure intended only for meditation, prayer or other religious rite but that is not otherwise occupied. The Department will not require zoning clearance for religious shrines under the following conditions:

- The structure is located on private property and not within a public right-of-way, private street, or road easement;
- The structure is no more than 200 sf;
- The structure if roofed is no greater than 12’ high, and if unroofed is no greater than 8’ high;
- The structure contains no plumbing, electrical or mechanical;
- There is no enclosed body of water that requires a pool barrier;
- The structure is not located within a retention basin, drainage way or floodplain;
- The structure meets the principal building envelope setbacks;
- The structure is intended only for meditation, prayer or other religious rite but will not otherwise be occupied; and
- There is no associated off-street parking.

Under these conditions, the Department will allow a religious shrine to be erected on a developed or vacant parcel (farmland, whether or not fallow and/or natural area open space) without requirement for permit/clearance.