



# Maricopa County

## Planning & Development Department

### Department Directive

Department Directive:  
DD-2013-07

Supersedes: DD-2000-77

Effective: Immediately

Initiator: Tom Ewers

Director: *Debra W. Stark*

**PURPOSE:** To clarify golf course driving ranges and golf course club houses (as they pertain to liquor licenses) as an accessory use to a golf course in the Rural and Residential zoning categories.

**References:** Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance Section 501.2.11  
Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance Section 601.2.9  
Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance Section 1301.1.3

#### **POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

Sections 501.2.11 and 601.2.9 of the Zoning Ordinance allow the following in Rural and Residential zoning categories: "Golf courses including club houses located thereon, but not including miniature courses or practice driving tees operated for commercial purposes." Section 1301.1.3 allows "Amusement parks, arcades, drive-in or outdoor theaters, miniature golf courses, and golf driving ranges" as a Special Use Permit in any zoning category. The intent of the ordinance is to separate out driving ranges that are directly related to a golf course and a driving range that "stands alone" and has a use more closely associated with entertainment types such as arcades and amusement parks.

The county is continually approached by developers regarding how to process driving ranges that appear to be directly related to a golf course and are not "stand alone" driving ranges without the surrounding golf course use. Is a driving range tied to a golf course a use allowed in the Rural and Residential zoning categories or does such a use require a Special Use Permit? The language and apparent intent of the ordinance seems to allow driving ranges when they are directly related to a golf course but not if a driving range stands alone as its own commercial venture. Therefore, the following policy is established.

**POLICY:** Driving ranges that are an integral part of an existing or proposed golf course (within the boundaries of the existing or proposed golf course) will be considered an allowed use in the Rural and Residential zoning categories. Those driving ranges that are "stand alone" ranges with little or no relation to an existing or proposed golf course will be considered a use that requires a Special Use Permit.

Sections 501.2.11 and 601.2.9 also allow club houses as a use in Rural and Residential zones if associated with a golf course. It seems logical to equate the ability to serve food and alcohol with the club house use if accessory to the golf course. There may be instances where a proposed club house is actually a higher commercial use such as a sports bar or restaurant serving a majority of clients that are not golfers of the golf course. Because this department reviews liquor license applications for the Clerk's office, it stands to reason that applications for a liquor license for a club house associated with a golf course should get an approval from this department as far as its use if it is accessory to the golf course. Staff has the right to interpret a proposed restaurant/liquor use as a use that requires commercial zoning if it is determined that the use is not directly accessory to the club house use. Therefore, the following policy is established.

**POLICY:** In terms of reviewing liquor license applications for club houses that are directly related to golf courses, this department will recommend approval as it relates to the use of the property. There may be extenuating circumstances other than land use that direct staff to recommend denial of an application. Further, those uses not directly related to the golf course may be denied if it is found that commercial zoning is required.