

ZONING INTERPRETATION RECORD

Subject of Interpretation:

Visibility of exterior lighting in the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance (ELSO) district.
Note: This interpretation replaces all previous zoning interpretation records regarding the section indicated below and the 9/03/96 interpretation of ELSO that was adopted in 1991.

Zoning Ordinance Section Number:

Section 6.1070.G.1.f

Exterior lighting should be low scale and directed downward, recessed or shielded so that the light source is not visible from residential development in the area or from a public viewpoint.

Title of Section:

G. Site and Structure Development Design Standards

1. Within the ESL district

Cause for Interpretation:

Light fixtures with clear glass sides have been cited by Scottsdale code enforcement inspectors due to a lack of compliance with the ESL exterior lighting standards. This interpretation is intended to clearly define acceptable exterior lighting sources and fixtures. Additional clarity will ensure more uniform understanding and enforcement of ESL lighting provisions and will more adequately accommodate new types of lighting sources and fixtures that are currently available. Lighting distributors, contractors, and homeowners want a clear understanding of what is and is not acceptable.

Interpretation:

Exterior lighting definition: Exterior lighting includes any lighting that is mounted outside of livable building areas such as in landscaping, parking areas, along walkways and paths, on the outside of building walls, under eaves and patio covers, under open shed covers and within three (3) feet of the openings in buildings where the opening is not regularly closed (such as breezeways and entry courts).

To achieve low scale requirements - Exterior lighting can either be:

1. Low in physical height, i.e. mounted or placed generally below eye level (six (6) feet); or
2. Low in lighting intensity that includes the total of all lamps supported by a fixture, i.e. the maximum capacity of a fixture utilizing one or multiple lamp(s) that are:
 - a. an incandescent lamp source(s) not exceeding a total of 60-watts and 825 initial lumens,
 - b. compact florescent lamp source(s) not exceeding a total of 13 watts and 825 initial lumens,
 - c. a halogen lamp source(s) not exceeding a total of 20 watts and 6500 initial candelas,
 - d. a LED lamp source(s) not exceeding a total of five (5) watts, or
 - e. a High Intensity Discharge lamp source(s) not exceeding a total of 825 initial lumens.

To insure minimum light pollution, reduce glare and minimize light trespass on to neighboring properties - Exterior lighting is to be directed downward, recessed or shielded so that:

1. the opening for the light is directed down, not sideways,
2. the lighting source is hidden from view from off the property by the fixture design or by building structures such as fascia on eaves, walls, pillars, etc.; and
3. the lighting fixture includes a device or feature such as vanes, louvers, fins, etc. that direct the light downward.
4. the lighting fixture includes frosted lenses that are semi-opaque and eliminate the view of the lamp source;

To minimize light trespass - Exterior lighting must shield the light bulb so it cannot be seen from residential development (properties zoned R or used as residential) or from public viewpoints. Translucent and colored glass are not viable options unless the opacity fully blurs or hides the shape and nature of the light source. Public viewpoints include public or private streets, public schools or parks, and any open space accessible to the public.

Examples:

The following are generally acceptable:

1. Soffit-mounted lighting;
2. Bollard lighting with square caps, that contain louvers and have a solid opaque housing around the lamp source;
3. Directional fixtures that are located and shielded so that the light source is not visible from off the property (the fixture may utilize external louver, honeycomb louver, etc. to limit and screen the light source).
4. Light sources that direct light downward or are placed under an eave; and
5. In-ground landscape lighting.

The following are generally NOT acceptable:

1. Bare bulb fixtures;
2. Fixtures with clear or nearly clear glass or plastic faces;
3. Fixtures with lenses that scatter light; and
4. Flood lights, excluding only vintage landscape lighting.

Exceptions:

The following exceptions apply:

1. Any exterior lighting that is visible only from properties zoned and used for commercial, office, industrial or utility purposes;
2. Sport courts, and sports fields. Single family residential sport courts and sports fields shall require a staff approval. All other sport courts and sports fields shall be reviewed on an individual basis by the Development Review Board;
3. Security lighting that is activated by motion sensors; is on for no more than 15 minutes; and is located where it does not come on frequently due to regular outdoor traffic or activity; and
4. Lighting located within a fully enclosed courtyard and placed below the height of the surrounding building or walls.

Interpretation By

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Date

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