J: Standard Decision-Making Process

Step 1: Pre-application Conference. The applicant discusses the proposed permit application with a committee of planning staff members and others. The committee may meet several times.

Step 2: Application Submittal. The applicant submits the permit application for the planner to review.

- Step 3: Statutory Review Period. The planner reviews the permit application. During the review the planner also determines the permit application’s environmental effects:
  - Categorical Exclusion (CATEX),
  - Environmental Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
  - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Step 4: First Staff Report. The planner reviews the permit application, then, writes a staff report that explains the facts in the matter.

Step 5: First Public Notice Posting. The planner sends the permit application and the environmental finding out for public review. The general public is given an opportunity to review and comment.

Step 6: Public Hearing Packet. The planner sends a packet containing the permit application, the environmental finding, any comments received, and the staff report, to the planning commission.

Step 7: Planning Commission Public Hearing. The planning commission has a duel role in decision-making:

- Advisory Body. For some planning proposals the planning commission acts as an advisory body to the city council by recommending which course of action the city
council should take. Examples: (GPA) General Plan Adoption or Amendment, (ZOA) Zoning Ordinance Adoption or Amendment.

- **Decision-Making Body.** For other proposals, the planning commission acts as a decision making body by making a final decision on the proposal. Examples: (CUP) Conditional Use Permit, or a (VAR) Variance.

  If the planning commission holds a decision-making public hearing on the environmental finding, then on the permit application, the planning permit process ends with this step.

**Step 8: Second Staff Report.** The planner again reviews the permit application, the environmental finding, and any additional comments received, then writes a revised staff report that includes any new evidence.

**Step 9: Second Public Notice Posting.** The planner sends out for public review; a revised permit application, an amended environmental finding, and an amended staff report. The general public is given a second opportunity to review and comment.

**Step 10: City Council Hearing Packet.** The planner sends the city council a packet containing the revised permit application, any additional comments received, the amended environmental finding, and the amended staff report.

**Step 11: City Council Public Hearing.** The city council holds a decision-making public hearing on the amended environmental finding, then on the revised permit application.

**Step 12: City Council Action.** The city council makes a decision on the amended environmental finding, then on the revised permit application. The city council may order conditions of approval and mitigation measures.