APPLICATION PROCESS – Zoning Permit Application with a Public Hearing

LOS ANGELES COUNTY – DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING

PHASE I
INITIAL REVIEW

START: Consultation and conceptual review with planning staff is recommended before submitting an application. Applicants are advised to allow approximately 10 to 12 months processing time. Complex projects or proposals that require environmental analysis should allow additional time.

Applicant submits application, plans, or other required documents and fees. Planner determines if application is complete for submittal.

- Initial Review conducted within 30 days of submittal.
- Filing package incomplete.
- Applicant provides requested information or corrections.
- Applicant notified of incomplete application.
- Routed to other county departments for review, if applicable.

Following the application intake at the public counter, an “initial review” is conducted to determine completeness. Plans may be routed to Fire, Health, Parks, Public Works, Sheriff or other agencies. When the application is deemed complete for assignment, the application will be assigned to a Case Planner.

PHASE II
EVALUATION

Project assigned to Case Planner.

- Initial Study begins, if applicable.
- Routed to other county departments for review, if applicable.
- Project redesign? YES

The project is evaluated by the Case Planner to determine if additional information, reports or special studies are required. The Planner may meet with the applicant to discuss the project and to explain the need for additional information, studies or plan revisions. The Initial Study for the environmental assessment will begin, if required.

When the Planner has received other department comments, the project may be deemed satisfactory and the final environmental review may be completed. However, further redesign may be required. If changes are required, revisions may be rerouted to the appropriate department for clearance. Allow 45-days to review plan revisions, 60-days if plans are routed to other departments. Additional meetings with the applicant may be required.

Special studies may include: Acoustical, Air, Biological, Fiscal Impact, Geological, Historical, Paleontological, Quality, Traffic, Sewer, or Slope. Not all studies are required for every project. Special studies will be routed to the appropriate department for review.

- Applicant notified with request for additional information or corrections.
- Optional staff/applicant or community meeting.
- Staff report prepared.

PHASE III
CONSIDERATION

Public hearing scheduled. Hearing notice published at least 30-days prior to hearing.

The project is ready for the public hearing. The Case Planner will prepare the staff report and ensure all conditions of approval by other departments or agencies are included the draft conditions. The Case Planner will finalize the environmental documents, if required.

Regional Planning Commission or Hearing Officer determination made.

- Project approved or denied.
- Determination effective, unless appealed within in 14-days.
- If approved, applicant submits recorded affidavit, conditions and inspection fees to Case Planner.
- The final plans are approved. Applicant may proceed to building permit phase.
Why do I need a Conditional Use Permit or other discretionary permit?

- Some land uses, although allowed in a particular zoning district, are only permitted under certain conditions. These uses require a discretionary permit, such as a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). In order to make a decision, the Regional Planning Commission or Hearing Officer must review these applications through a public hearing process.

- Once you have submitted a complete application, you are encouraged to work with the case planner to provide any additional information. Prior to the public hearing, you may be asked to revise your project or plans so they are consistent with the General Plan, the zoning ordinance, or other county codes in order to mitigate potential impacts.

- The application and plans may be routed to the Fire Department, Public Works, Public Health, Parks and Recreation, the Sheriff, or other county, state or federal agencies for review and comment.

- The case planner will notify you of the public hearing date. The applicant is responsible for posting the hearing notice on the subject property describing the request, with the time and location of the public hearing. Nearby property owners are notified by mail, and a legal advertisement is published in the local newspaper. Public hearing and case information is available at http://planning.lacounty.gov/case.

- The case planner prepares a staff report and makes a recommendation to the Commission or Hearing Officer. The applicant will receive a copy of the staff report prior to the hearing. You or your representative must attend the public hearing. As the applicant, you will be given an opportunity to speak and may be asked to clarify questions raised by the Commissioners, the Hearing Officer, or other persons present at the hearing.

- The decision to approve or to deny a request will be made only after considering the evidence and facts provided by the applicant, neighbors, planning staff, other county departments, and any other interested party. It is the applicant’s responsibility (not staff) to substantiate the project and the Burden of Proof.

- The Commission or Hearing Officer, in approving a request, may impose conditions which are deemed necessary to ensure that the project will be in accordance with the Burden of Proof and is compatible with the surrounding area. Conditions imposed may involve any pertinent factors affecting the establishment, or operation and maintenance of the requested use, including but not limited to:
  - Special yards, open spaces, buffer areas, fences, and walls.
  - Landscaping and maintenance of the property.
  - Materials, colors and styles.
  - Parking facilities, including vehicular ingress and egress, and surfacing.
  - Street and highway dedications and improvements, including sidewalks, curbs and gutters
  - Water supply and fire protection.
  - Regulation of nuisance factors such as noise, vibrations, smoke, dust, dirt, odors, gases, noxious matter, heat, and glare.
  - Regulation of operating hours and days.
  - Sign regulations.
  - A specified timeframe in which development must commence.
  - Other conditions found necessary to ensure the project supports the policies and goals of the General Plan or applicable Community Plan, and the Zoning Ordinance.

- The Hearing Officer decision may be appealed to the Regional Planning Commission. The Regional Planning Commission decision may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors. Appeals must be received within 14-days of the public hearing decision. If an appeal is not received, the decision is effective on the 15th day of the public hearing decision.

- Applicants are advised to allow approximately 10 to 12 months processing time. Complex projects or proposals that require environmental analysis should allow for additional time.