CITIZEN INITIATED LEGISLATION
(PETITION PROCESS)

Any proposed ordinance, which the City Council itself might adopt, may also be submitted to the Council by a citizen petition. This is called an “initiative petition.”

1. Citizens draft a petition that articulates their proposed city ordinance. The proposed ordinance can only be related to issues over which the City has jurisdiction. Special rules govern how such a petition must be written and structured. Therefore, any group or individual citizen wishing to pursue this initiative petition strategy needs to check with the City Clerk’s office for information.

2. A draft of the full, proposed ordinance must be submitted to the City Clerk first. The City Attorney then prepares the official title and summary of the proposed ordinance for uniform identification. Signatures in support of the petition are gathered. To qualify for presentation to the Council, the petition must be signed by registered voters of the City in an amount equal to 15% of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for the office of Mayor in the last general municipal election.

3. The petition is filed with the City Clerk. All signatures must have been collected within a period of 120 days before filing. The Clerk verifies the signatures.

4. The petition is sent to the full Council. The Council can then (a) vote to adopt the petition, with no changes, as a new city ordinance or (b) place the petition before City voters in a special election or at the next regular election.