



City Hall  
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## City Council

### Approval of Ordinance to Clarify the Process for Initiative and Referendum

**Agenda Date:** 4/25/2017  
**Agenda Item Number:** 4.N  
**File Number:** 17-0393

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**Type:** ordinance **Version:** 2 **Status:** Passed

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**Title**

Approval of Ordinance to Clarify the Process for Initiative and Referendum

**Recommended Action**

**Committee Recommendation:**

Not referred to a committee.

**City Manager Recommendation:**

Move to approve on second reading the ordinance amending Olympia Municipal Code Section 1.16.010 relating to clarification of the process for initiative and referendum.

**Report**

**Issue:**

Whether to approve the proposed ordinance updating the Olympia Municipal Code to clarify the initiative and referendum process.

**Staff Contact:**

Annaliese Harksen, Deputy City Attorney/Police Legal Advisor, 360.753.8338

**Presenter(s):**

None - Consent Calendar Item

**Background and Analysis:**

Background and analysis has not changed from first to second reading.

The Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) provides for the powers of initiative and referendum to be exercised in the manner set forth for the commission form of government, which was the original form of government for the City of Olympia. In 1977, the City adopted the classification of non-charter code city and retained the commission form of government. In 1978, the City chose to retain the powers of initiative and referendum as a non-charter code city pursuant to RCW 35A.11.080, which requires those powers to be exercised in the manner provided in a commission form of government as modified by RCW 35A.11.100.

RCW 35A.11.100, provides, *“Except as provided in RCW 35A.11.090, and except that the number of*

*registered voters needed to sign a petition for initiative or referendum shall be fifteen percent of the total number of names of persons listed as registered voters within the city on the day of the last preceding city general election, the powers of initiative and referendum in non-charter code cities shall be exercised in the manner set forth for the commission form of government in RCW 35.17.240 through 35.17.360 as now or hereafter amended.” This modification requires a lesser number of registered voters to sign a petition for initiative and referendum than a commission form of government that is not operating as a non-charter code city under the optional municipal code.*

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

None known

**Options:**

1. Approve on second reading the proposed ordinance amending OMC Section 1.16.010 relating to clarification of the process for initiative and referendum.
2. Direct staff to make different or additional amendments to the proposed ordinance.
3. Do not approve the proposed ordinance and leave OMC Section 1.16.010 as currently written. This could lead to confusion in the event the powers of initiative or referendum are exercised.

**Financial Impact:**

None

**Attachments:**

Ordinance