

Initiative, Referendum, and Recall Information

Proponents of an initiative, referendum or recall effort must apply with the City Clerk's Office for an official petition serial number. The City Clerk's Office provides a packet of information containing necessary forms and helpful information relating to these public processes. Please contact the City Clerk's Office at 520-458-3315 or email us at jill.adams@sierravistaaz.gov for additional information or to schedule a time to meet and review this material.

In all of the following public processes, state law requires a statement of organization must be filed with the City Clerk's Office prior to beginning any political activity pertaining to initiative, referendum or recall efforts.

Initiative is the power, reserved to registered voters, to propose new laws, amend existing laws, or propose charter or code amendments, by a petition process. If the required number of signatures is obtained by petition, the Mayor and Council must either adopt the initiative within twenty (20) days after the date of certifying the petition for sufficiency, or call an election at which time the initiative is submitted to the voters. City of Sierra Vista initiative petitions must be filed with the City Clerk within the two year election cycle the petition serial number was obtained. An application for an initiative petition serial number along with a description and complete text of the measure must be filed with the City Clerk before circulating the petition.

Referendum is the power, reserved to registered voters, to submit a petition to require the Mayor and Council to demand the reconsideration and repeal of a specific ordinance, except an emergency measure, before it becomes effective. If the required number of signatures is obtained by petition within 30 days of the Mayor and Council action, the Mayor and Council must then reconsider the ordinance, and either repeal it or call an election at which time the ordinance is submitted to the voters for approval or rejection. The measure does not become law unless it is approved by the voters. An application for a referendum petition serial number along with a 100-word description and a copy of the measure must be filed with the City Clerk before circulating the petition.

Recall is the power, reserved to registered voters, to demand the removal of an elected official. If the required number of signatures is obtained by petition, the officer may resign or have the issue of retention of office submitted to the voters via a recall ballot. The Mayor and Council are the only elected officers of the City of Sierra Vista. An elected official is not subject to recall until the officer has actually held office for at least six (6) months from first assuming office. A Petition for Recall Affidavit, not to exceed 200 words stating the grounds for recall, an endorsement setting forth the names and addresses of the petitioners, and a deposit for the printing of the petition sheets, must be filed with the City Clerk before circulating the petition.