

4. HOUSING ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires a housing element that ensures the vitality and character of established neighborhoods. This element includes:

1. An inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs;
2. A statement of goals, policies and objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences;
3. Identification of sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities; and
4. Adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.

In addition, King County countywide planning policies (CPP) require that each jurisdiction take actions that will collectively meet the expected growth in, and make housing available to, all economic segments of the county population. Medina's ability to participate at this level is limited by a lack of available and suitable building sites and the realities of the real estate market. However, the City participates in region-wide planning efforts to address affordable housing and homelessness through ARCH, A Regional Coalition for Housing, described further below.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

While Medina is an incorporated city, its character and function are more like that of a mature residential neighborhood within a larger community. According to the 2010 U.S. Census of Population and Housing, there are 1,162 total housing units in the City. Housing units are in the form of detached single-family units on individual lots. There are no multiple-family structures and current zoning does not allow such development. Medina is an established residential community that abuts single-family residential areas of Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, and Bellevue. Medina maintains a high percentage of owner-occupied units (89.1%) and a vacancy rate of 8.7 percent. Since 2000, the percentage of owner-occupied units has decreased from 98.7 percent, while the vacancy rate has increased from 4.6 percent. Medina's development pattern is consistent with that of neighboring communities.

Table 2. Medina Housing Statistics

Housing Measure	Value
Housing units	1,162
Vacant housing units	101 (8.7%)
Occupied housing units (households)	1,061
- Owner occupied	945 (89.1%)
- Renter occupied	116 (10.9 %)

Persons per household	2.80
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Source: 2010 U.S. Census

PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS

According to PSRC’s 2013 Land Use Targets dataset, Medina is expected to accommodate 81 additional households by the year 2035.

Given the projected population increase of 46 persons, this increase in households would occur through a gradual reduction of the current average household size from 2.80 persons per household to 2.64 persons per household, which is consistent with anticipated demographic changes (see discussion of Future Growth Issues in Land Use Element).

The adopted growth target for Medina is an additional 27 housing units by the year 2035. Therefore, the majority of the projected additional households would be accommodated through existing housing stock, increasing Medina’s occupancy rate to approximately 96 percent by the year 2035.

For a thorough study of Medina’s existing and projected housing needs, including housing affordable across a range of income levels, please refer to the *East King County Housing Analysis* (ARCH 2013).

HOUSING PLAN

Medina has several mechanisms to assist in the provision of affordable housing. These are as follows:

- Adult Family Homes are permitted within existing households as a home occupation. This provides housing opportunities for a segment of the population that often has difficulty obtaining reasonably priced, quality housing.
- Current regulations allow domestic employees to reside in separate units on the properties where they work.
- Additional detached units are allowed to be constructed on properties where there is sufficient lot size to meet the underlying, minimum zoning.
- Accessory dwelling units are permitted in all residential zoning districts subject to the requirements of the Medina Municipal Code.
- The City makes contributions to ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing), to support regional affordable housing. ARCH staff advises the City on addressing existing and projected housing needs, and administers Medina’s affordable housing programs. The ARCH trust fund helps create affordable housing for low- and very low-income households and people who have special needs or are homeless.

Beyond these mechanisms, the City may actively explore other reasonable means to address affordable housing issues. One consideration is to broaden the definition of accessory dwelling units to allow them to be built as separate structures on the same lot, but subject to other existing requirements. This would allow a measure of affordability without significantly changing the City's character, provided that other existing requirements of MMC Section 23.34.020 are met.

GOALS

- H-G1 The City shall preserve and foster housing development consistent with Medina’s high-quality residential setting.
- H-G2 The City shall explore affordable housing opportunities.

POLICIES

- H-P1 The City shall minimize changes to existing zoning designations except as to meet above goals when deemed necessary by citizens.
- H-P2 The City shall consider ways to restrict the size of homes in order to retain the character of the community.
- H-P3 The City shall seek to maintain the informal single family character of its neighborhoods, including preventing the intrusion of non-residential activities.
- H-P4 When a home is constructed such that it may potentially have no feasible resale market as a single family residence, the owners should be aware that this would not set the stage for a future conversion to a nonresidential use.
- H-P5 The City should work with cities and community representatives on countywide or subregional funding sources for housing development, preservation, and related services.
- H-P6 The City should continue participation in inter-jurisdictional organizations to assist in the provision of affordable housing on the Eastside.
- H-P7 The City shall continue to make contributions to agencies that support affordable housing.
- H-P8 The City shall explore additional affordable housing options that are compatible with the City’s high-quality residential setting.
- H-P9 The City shall not discriminate between a residential structure occupied by persons with handicaps and a similar residential structure occupied by a family or other unrelated individuals.
- H-P10 The City shall assure that zoning does not unduly restrict group homes or other housing options for persons with special needs by making reasonable accommodations in its rules, policies, practices, and services, when such accommodations may be necessary, to afford persons with disabilities equal opportunity to use or enjoy a dwelling.
- H-P11 The City shall permit group living situations that meet the definition of “family status”, including where residents receive such supportive services as counseling, foster care, or medical supervision, within a single family house.
- H-P12 To reduce the loss of households, the City should discourage lot aggregation that impacts the scale and character of the neighborhood.