



# CITY OF MEDINA

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 28, 2025  
TO: Medina Planning Commission  
FROM: SCJ Alliance, Middle Housing Consultant  
RE: Middle Housing Community Engagement & Next Steps

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### **Summary:**

The work on the Middle Housing project continues to progress on schedule, with two successful community forums that took place earlier in January on the following dates:

- Thursday, January 9, 2025, 6 - 8 pm  
St. Thomas Episcopal Church.
- Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 6 – 8 pm  
Medina City Hall

The Planning Commission and City Council put a great deal of thought into following the objectives of the adopted public engagement plan to ensure that Medina community members were made aware of the new Middle Housing mandates from the State, with a desire to provide meaningful opportunities for community input.

Outreach to the community about these events included two postcard mailers, posters, flyers, notification on the city website, and personal outreach by City Council members and Planning Commissioners.

Each event began with a welcome from the Mayor, followed by a formal PowerPoint presentation by SCJ Alliance staff to the attendees for the purpose of describing Middle Housing and the requirements specific to Medina. The presentation included information on the relevant House Bills and state guidance regarding the legislation. The local development standards from the Medina City Code were shared, along with graphics designed to depict how Middle Housing could potentially look in Medina.

Attendees were then afforded the opportunity to ask questions of staff and consultants, followed by time to take a survey via an online link or paper surveys available on-site.

The first forum at the church was offered as an in-person event, with the number of attendees estimated at 71. The second forum held at City Hall was in-person but also

offered an option for virtual attendance via Zoom. The number of attendees in person was 25, with approximately 50 participants attending online (excluding Council members and staff), for a total of 75.

As of Thursday, January 24, 2025, 36 surveys had been completed via the online link, with 15 of the surveys only partially completed. Three paper copies were completed and submitted at the events. No additional paper surveys have been submitted at City Hall as of that date. The survey is currently set to end on **Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>**. However, this date can be extended, based on Council direction.

A **report** of the survey results, for consideration by the Planning Commission, has been included in the packet as **Exhibit 1**. The survey responses will also be tabulated again on January 28<sup>th</sup> with updated results ready for dissemination during the PC meeting itself.

As of January 23<sup>rd</sup>, key takeaways from the survey are as follows:

- 65.7% of respondents reported that they were at least somewhat familiar with the term “Middle Housing” while 74.3% reported that they knew of the possible housing types this would entail.
- When asked about the level of concern over the impacts of Middle Housing legislation on Medina, more than 50% of respondents indicated that they were extremely concerned over topics such as property values and parking. 35% of respondents were extremely concerned about traffic, lighting, noise, tree preservation and safety. Other levels of concern over each topic varied, as depicted on page 4 of the survey results.
- When asked about the support for adopting design guidelines for all housing in Medina, 45.5% were in strong support, 36.4% slightly supported this, and 13.6% were neutral on the topic.
- When asked about using Middle Housing to achieve the State mandated affordability requirements, 59.1% of respondents said no, with 22.7% responding with a yes, and 18% were neutral.
- When asked to rank the possible options regarding a state requirement to update the zoning to meet regionally allocated affordability targets, the answers from 21 respondents ranked highest to lowest as follows:
  - 1 – Other
  - 2 – Middle Housing with additional subsidies
  - 3 – Multifamily Zoning
  - 4 – Tiny homes community.
- When asked about strategies for reducing traffic stress to preserve safe streets, the most support went toward utilizing traffic calming measures at 66.7%, with 42.9% of respondents supportive of increasing the active transportation network. 28.6% percent were in support of promoting or expanding public transportation. 33.3% responded with “other”.

- The graph on page 12 depicts the respondents' preferred actions for addressing changes in traffic patterns, with a high level of support for protected walkways, speed bumps, and wider walkways.
- Out of 22 respondents when asked if they would consider building an ADU, duplex or other Middle Housing on their lot, 36.4% responded with "maybe", 36.4% responded "no" and 27.3% said yes.
- Of the 6 respondents who reported yes, 5 were most interested in building an ADU, and 1 person indicated interested in cottage housing.
- Of the 8 respondents who reported "maybe", 5 reported that they would be most interested in developing ADU's, and 3 responded with an interest in cottage housing.

The survey also asked respondents which method they most likely engage with to provide feedback. Online surveys were the highest ranked method at 90.5%, followed by 57.1% in favor of town hall/forums, 47.6% in favor of focus group discussions, and 42.9% in favor of commenting at public meetings.

When asked how respondents would like to receive information and updates about changes in the City, 95.2% responded that email was the preferred option. 47.6% reported that mailers worked well, 47.6% utilize the City website, 28.6% look to social media and 9.5% preferred phone contact.

All of this feedback is very useful for informing policy decisions as the Middle Housing project continues to progress. It is also very helpful to better understand the ways in which the community members like to receive information and get engaged on topics that are important to them.

### **Next Steps:**

As previously reported, the City has a deadline to submit the draft Middle Housing ordinance to the Department of Commerce by January 31, 2025. Council will be reviewing the final version of the draft at their meeting on Monday, January 27, 2025.

In February, the Council will begin reviewing the unit lot subdivision / zero lot line ordinance that has been drafted by the City Attorney. Council will also begin reviewing other identified priority areas that could potentially be included in the final Middle Housing ordinance that is transmitted to Commerce in June. The Planning Commission will also review and provide feedback on each of the topics identified by City Council.

The amount of time for including additional topics will be limited as it will be necessary to comply with the standard steps required for adopting a code amendment ordinance. The Council is scheduled to hold a public hearing at their first meeting in June. A public hearing will also be held before the Planning Commission before forwarding a recommendation to City Council.

The City also needs to conduct SEPA review with opportunity for public comment, and the proposed ordinance must also be sent to the Department of Commerce for a formal 60-day review.

Given these various adoption stages, the City Attorney has indicated it would be advisable to have the final draft of the ordinance completed by March. A more detailed timeline, taking into account City Council and Planning Commission dates, will be developed by staff and shared at the next meeting.

**Exhibits:**

- Exhibit 1 – Online Survey Results, as of 1/23/25