



CITY OF MEDINA

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 16, 2025
TO: Medina Planning Commission
FROM: SCJ Alliance, Middle Housing Consultant
RE: Middle Housing Update and Discussion

Summary:

The work on the middle housing project continues to progress on schedule, with community engagement activities taking place in January leading up to a project deliverable due to the Department of Commerce by the end of the same month. With that in mind, the focus of this middle housing update will be three-fold: 1) Discussion on community forums and future engagement activities, 2) Review the proposed code amendments that have been drafted to date, and 3) Review timeline for adoption of the ordinance by the Commerce deadline.

As members of the Planning Commission are aware, two community forums were scheduled as follows:

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

Feedback from the forums will be discussed in person during the Planning Commission meeting.

In addition to the community engagement activities, staff has included the DRAFT middle housing ordinance that will be submitted to Commerce at the end of the month. As discussed in previous meetings, the middle housing legislation requires adoption of an ordinance demonstrating compliance by June 30, 2025.

A summary of the ordinance was shared with City Council during their regular meeting of Monday, January 13, 2025. Any feedback from the Planning Commission will be shared with City Council at their next meeting of January 27, 2025.

Middle Housing Ordinance

Exhibit #1 is an updated gap analysis developed in Excel as a matrix for a quick summary of the code amendments. Exhibit #2 is the code amendments in Word. For discussion purposes, the proposed code amendments are depicted in “Track Changes”. The document will be converted into ordinance format at a later date.

Summary of Proposed MMC Amendments

The following is a summary of the proposed changes in order of appearance in the Code Amendment document:

MMC 16.00.020(B)(2) Statement of Purpose

On pg. 3 of the code amendment document (Exhibit 2) the term “single-family” has been removed from the sentence to instead refer to protecting “the community’s residential nature...”. The term “single-family” will be removed in various sections of the code for compliance.

MMC 16.12 Definitions

The following definitions within the Medina Municipal Code are being revised, deleted, or added. The definitions depicted in the color **red** are definitions that are required to be included within the MMC pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.030 Definitions. All definitions are followed by a brief rationale for the amendment.

- **Accessory Building** (pg. 3)
This definition is being revised to provide a differentiation between “accessory building” and “accessory dwelling unit”.
- **Accessory Dwelling Unit** (pg. 3)
This definition is being revised to specify that an ADU that exceeds the size limitations of MMC 16.34.020 shall be considered a duplex (if attached) or a cottage (if detached).
- **Administrative Design Review** (pg. 3)
This is a new definition required pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.070.
- **Condominium** (pg. 7)
This is a new definition which duplicates the language of RCW 64.34.020(10). It is not required per the middle housing legislation but is relevant to the other housing related amendments to the code.
- **Cottage** (pg. 7)
This term is proposed for deletion and will be replaced with a new definition for “cottage housing”.
- **Cottage housing** (pg. 7)
This is a new definition, required pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.030, Definitions.
- **Courtyard apartments** (pg. 7)
This is a new definition, required pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.030, Definitions.
- **Duplex** (pg. 9)
This is a new definition agreed upon by City Council in a previous meeting. The new housing legislation requires that Tier 3 cities allow duplexes as a permitted use in residential zones, but allows the jurisdiction to craft their own definition.

- **Major Transit Stop** (pg. 10)
This is a new definition, required pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.030, Definitions.
- **Middle Housing** (pg. 11)
This is a new definition, required pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.030, Definitions.
- **Short Term Rental** (pg. 13)
This is a new definition proposed by City Staff for clarity. This is not a requirement of the middle housing legislation.
- **Single-family dwelling** (pg. 16)
This definition is proposed with a revision to clarify that the dwelling unit shall not meet the definition of an ADU.
- **Single-family zones** (pg. 16)
This is a new definition, required pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.030, Definitions.
- **Stacked Flat** (pg. 17)
This is a new definition, required pursuant to the middle housing legislation which amended RCW 36.70A.030, Definitions.
- **Tier 3 City** (pg. 19)
This is a new definition that has been provided by the State, but is optional. Staff recommends inclusion of the definition for clarity when describing Medina as a Tier 3 city.
- **Townhouses** (pg. 19)
This is a proposed new definition. The new middle housing legislation does not require Tier 3 cities to allow for townhouses, however, the inclusion of definitions for housing types not permitted can help provide differentiation and clarity between housing types.
- **Unit** (pg. 21)
This is a new definition provided by Staff in response to Council's request to provide a term. This definition was shared with City Council during the November 25 City Council meeting. This defined provides clarity in response to the State's use of the term "unit".
- **Unit density** (pg. 21)
This is a new definition recommended by the State for inclusion, but is one that the City may define.

MMC 16.20.010 Comprehensive Plan and Zoning (pgs. 22-23)

- Subsection A is proposed for amendment to remove the term "single-family" and instead refer only to the "residential" setting of the community.

- Table 16.20.010 is a table which includes a description of the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations in the first column, with the associated Implementing Zone Designations in the second column. The term “single-family residential” is being removed and replaced with the simplified term “residential”.

MMC 16.20.020(B) Adoption of official zoning map (pg. 24)

This section of the code provides a description of each of the zoning districts. The term “single-family” has been removed from each of the residential zones (R-16), (R-20) and (R-30).

MMC 16.21.030 Use Table (pgs. 26-27)

The use chart is an important tool within the development code to help users of the code determine which uses are permitted or prohibited within each of the various zoning districts. With the middle housing legislation requirements, the required middle housing types have been added to the chart, including:

- Duplex
- Cottage Housing
- Stacked Flats.
- Courtyard apartments

Additional uses have been added as placeholders, but have not yet been identified as to which zoning districts in which they will be allowed. These uses include “low-rise apartments”, “short-term rental” and “townhouses”

Finally, an additional footnote has been added under the Shoreline Use, to provide a reference to the limitations specific to middle housing.

MMC 16.21.060 Maximum dwelling units on a lot (pgs. 28-29)

This section of code has been updated significantly to comply with the State requirements found in RCW 36.70A.635(5). This section previously stated that only one dwelling unit was allowed per lot, with the exception of ADUs.

- This section of code has been amended to provide more specificity about the allowance of two units per lot, including language describing the exemptions to the 2-unit per lot requirement.
- A new subsection (C) has been added to clarify that the unit density standard does not apply to lots after subdivision below 1,000 square feet.
- A possible subsection (D) has also been added for Council’s consideration. This section, if included, would provide direction that any other modifications to the unit density standards would only be allowable through the implementation of a Development Agreement.

MMC 16.30.060 Residential Off-Street Parking (pg. 41)

A new subsection (2) has been incorporated to specify the off-street parking requirements for middle housing dwellings. This language is being included for compliance with RCW 36.70A.635(6).

The additional provisions are as follows:

- No off-street parking will be required within one-half mile walking distance of a major transit stop
- A maximum of one off-street parking space per unit shall be required on lots greater than 6,000 square feet before any zero-lot subdivisions or lot splits.

MMC 16.30.090 Cottage Housing (pg. 42)

No additional text has yet been added, but this is being reserved as a placeholder for the location of the performance standards for the cottage housing that is required to be included in the code as an allowed use. The recommendation from the Planning Commission on November 18 was to limit the maximum gross size to 1,200 square feet. This potential size maximum has also been shared with City Council, but not decisions have yet been made.

MMC 16.30.100 Medium Density Housing (pg. 42)

No additional text has yet been added, but this is being reserved as a placeholder for the future discussion on the zoning districts that might accommodate medium density housing in compliance with mandated affordable housing targets.

MMC 16.34.020 Accessory Dwelling Units (pgs. 42-44)

While the term middle housing does not include “Accessory Dwelling Units” the City of Medina is also including legislation (required by House Bill 1337) related to ADU’s in the middle housing update. The code amendments within this section of the code are as follows:

- Subsection (A) - ADU’s will now be included in the density and minimum lot area requirements, where they were previously excluded.
- Subsection (C) now allows for up to two (2) ADU’s on a lot per each single-family dwelling located on the same lot, provided that the unit density standards are not exceeded. This section goes on to further state that if a lot is developed with a duplex, or with two units classified as middle housing, then no ADU is permitted on that lot.
- Subsection (D) Development Standards has also been updated to comply with HB 1337. A summary of the proposed new language is as follows:
 - ADU’s will only be allowed on lots that meet the minimum lot size requirements for the principal unit.
 - ADU’s will not be allowed on lots with critical areas, lots that are not connected to a public sewer system, or lots that are within the shoreline jurisdiction.
 - ADU’s may not be used as “short term rentals”.
 - The maximum gross floor area of an ADU is set at 1,000 square feet. (Although the maximum may be higher, it cannot be less than 1,000 square feet.)
 - The maximum roof height of an ADU is 25 feet, or the maximum height allowed for the primary unit (whichever is less).
- Subsection (E) now includes language about the exception to ADU parking requirements, which is not applicable when the ADU is located within one-quarter mile of a transit stop.
- Subsection (F) previously included a brief statement that garage space could be converted into an ADU. Two revisions are being proposed for this section:
 - Accessory buildings have been listed as allowable structures for conversion into ADUs..
 - A provision has been added to require that parking spaces removed for conversion to ADUs must be replaced elsewhere on the property.

This language is required under RCW 36.70A.698(1). However, there is an additional step that the City can take:

Under RCW [36.70A.698](#)(2) the city may require off-street parking within this ¼ mile if the city has determined that the accessory dwelling unit is in an area with a lack of access to street parking capacity, physical space impediments, or other reasons. supported by evidence that would make on-street parking infeasible for the accessory dwelling unit.

Staff and SCJ welcome feedback from the Planning Commission on the Code Amendments, which will then be forwarded on for City Council consideration.

The timeline for ordinance adoption will be reviewed with the Planning Commission during the PC meeting.

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1 – Gap Analysis of Code Amendments
- Exhibit 2 – Code Amendment document