



MEDINA, WASHINGTON

AGENDA BILL

Monday, October 14, 2024

Subject: Middle Housing Update and Introduction of Consultant Firm SCJ Alliance, Kirsten Peterson, Project Manager

Category: City Business - Discussion

Staff Contact: Jonathan G. Kesler, AICP, Planning Manager

Summary

Medina has selected a consulting firm to aid the City in completing the Middle Housing Update to the Medina Municipal Code for compliance with the updates to state law enacted over the past several years. The chosen firm is SCJ Alliance, which describes itself as “a multi-disciplinary planning and engineering firm specializing in solving complex issues that challenge developing communities. With over 140 employees, SCJ provides a broad range of professional services to public- and private-sector clients, including land use and environmental planning, transportation planning and design, outreach facilitation, urban design, landscape architecture, civil engineering, and construction management.” The firm has worked with other communities to develop Housing Action Plans, Comprehensive Plans, Development Code Amendments and Missing Middle Housing Initiatives around the state. Please refer to SCJ’s proposal, which is included in Attachment #1. This document provides additional details about SCJ’s firm, the project team members, project experience, and the approach to Medina’s Middle Housing Project.

Kirsten Peterson, who recently joined SCJ after 18 years in land-use planning in the public sector, will be acting as Project Manager, based out of SCJ’s principal office located in Lacey. She has long-range planning experience from her roles as Community Development Director, both for the City of Ellensburg and the City of Moses Lake. Other team members have been carefully selected for this project based on their experience in code writing, graphic design and public engagement.

Attachment #2, the adopted Middle Housing Public Engagement Plan (PEP), is a working document that describes the goals, objectives, activities, and timeline for community engagement that will be conducted in support of the Department of Commerce Middle Housing Grant in the run-up to the June 30, 2025, deadline for compliance.

SCJ’s scope of work has been developed following Medina’s PEP as well as the Commerce grant schedule, tasks, and deliverables. This approach will facilitate reporting and invoicing and keep the project on target for timely adoption. The work will take place in four (4) phases over the next several months: Administrative and Project Management, Community Engagement and Draft Middle Housing Development Regulation Amendments and Amendment Adoption.

Per the PEP, the City has already published a webpage with additional information about the middle housing legislation, as found here: <https://www.medina-wa.gov/development/services/page/new-housing-laws-middle-housing-and-adu-legislation-and-medina#> This page will be revised as the update advances.

SCJ will also be supporting the current public engagement efforts with new materials to post on the City's website, along with workshops that will rely heavily on graphics and 3D visuals to help community members, planning commissioners and the city council in making informed decisions on the Middle Housing Code updates.

SCJ has already been coordinating with city staff in administering the project, with a staff kick-off meeting, an introduction to the Planning Commission, and now the introduction to the City Council. Work on the gap analysis outlined in Phase 3 of the Scope of Work has already commenced, and a schedule of meetings is currently being developed for working with the Planning Commission (PC), Development Services Committee (DSC) and City Council. SCJ is also closely tracking the progress of the Comprehensive Plan adoption and will ensure that the Middle Housing work product is aligned with the adopted goals of policies of the Comp plan.

This Middle Housing Land Use Code Update meets and supports Council's priorities 1, 2 and 5. Council Priorities:

- 1. Financial Stability and Accountability**
- 2. Quality Infrastructure**
3. Efficient and Effective Government
4. Public Safety and Health
- 5. Neighborhood Character and Community Building**

Attachments

1. SCJ Alliance Background Information and Proposed Scope of Work for Medina.
2. Resolution No. 444 and Public Engagement Plan

Budget/Fiscal Impact: Proceeding with the Middle Housing Scope of Work is consistent with the City's obligations under the Commerce Middle Housing Grant. By meeting the required milestones, the City will be able to draw from the grant funds.

Recommendation: Discussion and introduction only; no action needed.

City Manager Approval: 

Proposed Council Motion: N/A

Time Estimate: 30 minutes