

4. HOUSING ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Medina's Housing Element describes the community's vision for ensuring the vitality and character of its neighborhoods while meeting the goals and requirements of The Growth Management Act (GMA) and King County's Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). The GMA requires local Housing Elements to include an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community. Medina's Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) is an addendum to the Housing Element.

Through its adopted plans and policies, the city pursues opportunities to do the following:

- Preserve the quiet, sylvan neighborhood character.
- Encourage residential development compatible in scale with the surrounding housing.
- Promote and encourage green building practices and tree preservation.
- Encourage affordable housing options for a cross section of the community.

This Housing Element works in conjunction with land use, transportation, capital facilities, and utilities elements in this Comprehensive Plan. For instance, the infrastructure and services required for housing are described in the Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements. Consideration of denser housing along transit corridors supports the city's transportation objectives. A full understanding of Medina's housing goals and policies should include an examination of these other Comprehensive Plan elements.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

While Medina is an incorporated city, its character and function are more like that of a mature residential neighborhood. According to the 2021 U.S. Census of Population and Housing, there are 1,113 total housing units in the City. Housing units are in the form of detached residential units on individual lots. There are no multiple-family structures and current zoning does not allow such development although ADUs and DADUs are permitted. Medina is an established residential community that abuts residential areas of Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, and Bellevue. As of 2021, 81.5% of housing units in Medina were owner-occupied, down from 89.1% in 2015. The vacancy rate in 2021 was 5.3%, down from 8.7% in 2015. Medina's development pattern is consistent with that of neighboring communities.

Table 1. Medina Housing Statistics

Housing Measure	Units	Percent
Total housing units	1,113	100%
Vacant housing units	59	5.3%
Occupied housing units (households)	1,054	94.7%
- Owner occupied	859	81.5%*
- Renter occupied	195	18.5%*

Commented [DJ1]: The Housing Action Plan and Housing Needs Assessment are currently referenced in the Housing Element. Additional documents should be added as appendices or referenced to provided consistency with the GMA:

- Land Capacity Analysis (LCA)
- Racially Disparate Impacts (RDI) Analysis
- Adequate Provisions Checklist

Persons per household	2.8
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*Represented percentage of the total occupied housing units

Source: 2021 U.S. Census

Although the number of total housing units in Medina has decreased since the last Comprehensive Plan update, the number of larger households has increased. Larger households, composed of 4-or-more people, make up the greatest proportion of Medina’s households, followed by 2-person households, 1-person households, and finally 3-person households (Table 2). When the occupancy is separated into homeowners and renters (Table 3), 2-person households make up the largest proportion of owner-occupied units, followed by 4-or-more person households. 4-or-more person households make up the largest proportion of renter-occupied households, followed by 1-person households.

Table 2. Medina Household Size

Household Size	Units	Percent
1-person	178	17%
2-person	374	35.5%
3-person	96	9%
4-or-more people	406	38.5%
Total Occupied Households	1,054	100%

Source: 2021 U.S. Census

Table 3. Medina Household Size by Occupancy Type

Household Size	Owner	Percent*	Renter	Percent*
1-person	126	14.7%	52	26.7%
2-person	339	39.5%	35	17.9%
3-person	78	9.1%	18	9.2%
4-or-more people	316	36.8%	90	46.2%
Total Households	859	100%	195	100%

*Ratios have been rounded to their nearest tenth place

Source: 2021 U.S. Census

This larger household size correlates with more children living in the city. Nearly half of households in Medina have children and of those households, 74% are between the age of 6 to 17 years. In general, Medina has a higher percentage of children under the age of 18 than both King County and the state of Washington. This, along with the general population increase in the surrounding jurisdictions, could be a factor in the uptick of bike and park usage that has been noted over the past few years.

Consistent with regional and national trends, the proportion of Medina’s population over the age of 65 continues to increase. Residents 65 and older account for 19% of Medina’s population, with 39% of those seniors being over the age of 75. Approximately one-third of households have one or more people 65 years of age or older and of those, 10.6% are living alone. As a historically residential city, it is this aging population that are most at risk for displacement. Rising property taxes, limited public transportation, and increased cost of home maintenance against the backdrop of often fixed incomes are beyond the city’s control; however, the city can encourage development of affordable housing (see Affordable Housing section of this Element) through varied mechanisms which could include reduced permit fees.

HOUSING TARGETS

A housing target, as defined in the GMA, is based on regional forecasts and allocations in Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) VISION 2050 and sets the minimum expectation for the amount of housing that Medina will need to plan for in the Comprehensive Plan Update for 2024. The City of Medina has a 2019-2044 housing unit target of 19 units as adopted in King County's Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs); as a fully built-out community with no adjacent land to annex, Medina currently has an existing buildable net capacity of 8 units which means there is a capacity deficit of 11 units. As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, jurisdictions must demonstrate zoned or planned capacity for their growth target.

The predominant development pattern in Medina happens through redevelopment where an older home is demolished and replaced by a new one. With the 2023 passage of missing middle housing legislation (HB 1110 and HB 1337) by the Washington State Legislature, denser, neighborhood-scale housing (requiring one additional dwelling unit capacity be added to each existing residential lot) are allowed in every zoning district except for those parcels with a critical area (e.g., the Shoreline Jurisdiction, steep slopes, etc.). Although a deficit of 11 units might initially seem to be an insurmountable goal, the city has always exceeded the growth target set by King County. The middle housing land use change will create an opportunity for Medina to meet its overall growth target through redevelopment.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A major challenge for all Eastside communities is to provide affordable housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community and at the same time, encourage preservation of existing housing stock. The GMA affirms the city's responsibility to meet this challenge in its goal to plan for and accommodate housing that is affordable to multiple economic segments (including emergency and permanent supportive housing), promote a variety of housing types necessary to meet statewide projections for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households, and encourage the preservation of existing housing stock.

Medina has several existing mechanisms to assist in the provision of affordable housing. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Special Housing Needs such as foster homes, adult daycares, permanent supportive housing, and transitional housing are all permitted within the City. 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 construction of ADUs and DADUs are allowed on properties where there is sufficient lot size to meet the underlying, minimum zoning.
- ADUs are permitted in all residential zoning districts subject to the requirements of the Medina Municipal Code.
- Contributions to A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), 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.

Medina is part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Seattle-Bellevue Metro Area, which includes all of King County. In 2021, the area median income (AMI) for the Seattle-Bellevue Metro area was \$115,700 while Medina’s median household income was over \$250,000 for owner-occupied housing units, \$160,856 for renters, and \$208,500 across all households. It is important to note that although Medina’s median household income is higher than the AMI, and therefore more households are less likely to face housing affordability challenges than the typical residents of the HUD Seattle-Bellevue Metro Area, Medina does have residents whose incomes fall below AMI.

Approximately 18.9% of all Medina households earn less than 80% of the AMI with a higher percentage of renters (33.4%) compared to homeowners (16.5%) earning less than 80% AMI. Renters, who are more likely to be families with children, tend to spend a greater proportion of their income on housing compared to homeowners. More homeowners are persons on fixed incomes, including elderly residents.

Policy H-1 of the 2022 CPPs establishes a countywide need for housing in 2044 by percentage of AMI. Table 4 demonstrates the allocation of projected housing units by income level, as established by the CPP’s. To meet the 19 new housing units, King County has allocated 8 units between 0-30% AMI, 3 units between 31-50% AMI, and 8 units between 51-80% AMI; Medina has also been allocated 4 emergency housing¹ units, which are not included in its housing target of 19. Medina has an abundance of housing units affordable to an AMI of 81% and greater which is why there are no units allocated in those AMI brackets. This is not to indicate that market rate housing cannot be built, but rather that Medina will endeavor to plan for and accommodate in a manner that seeks to increase housing choice. Success will primarily be defined by whether Medina has adopted and implemented policies and plan(s) that, taken together and in light of available resources, can reasonably be expected to support and enable the production or preservation of units needed at each affordability level.

Table 4. Allocation of Projected Housing Units by Income Level

Percentage of Area Median Income (AMI)	Housing Units
0-30%	8
31-50%	3
51-80%	8
81-100%	0
101-120%	0
Above 120%	0

Source: King County Countywide Planning Policies, 2022

Jurisdictions are also required to plan for and accommodate emergency housing and permanent supportive housing. King County has allocated 3 permanent supportive housing units and 4 emergency housing units to Medina. Table 5 shows the 2044 projected housing units that include emergency housing and permanent supportive housing units.

Table 5. Allocation of Projected Housing Units Including Permanent Supportive and Emergency Housing for Medina, WA

¹ See Appendix A for definition of “Emergency Housing”

Total	0 to <30%		>30 to <50% AMI	>50 to <80% AMI	>80 to <100% AMI	>100 to <120% AMI	>120% AMI	Emergency Housing Needs
	Non-PSH*	PSH						
Net New Need 2019-2044	5	3	3	8	-	-	-	4

*Permanent Supportive Housing

Source: King County Countywide Planning Policies, 2022

GOALS

H-G1 Preserve and foster the development of a variety of housing types, sizes, and densities to accommodate the diverse needs of all members of the community while maintaining Medina’s high-quality residential setting.

POLICIES

- H-P1 Ensure new development is consistent with citywide goals and policies, including but not limited to sustainable site standards, landscaping and tree retention requirements, and diversity of housing options all while maintaining a quiet, safe, and livable city.
- H-P2 Maintain the informal, sylvan residential character of neighborhoods. Encourage residential site development and redevelopment to plan for the retention or preservation of existing trees.
- H-P3 Through the use of appropriate incentives, support and encourage appropriate ways to meet Medina’s housing needs, including a need for a variety of household sizes, incomes, and types.
- H-P4 Promote fair and equal access to housing for all persons and prohibit any activity that results in discrimination in housing.
- H-P5 Craft regulations and procedures to provide a high degree of certainty and predictability to applicants and the community-at-large to minimize unnecessary time delays in the review of permit applications, while still maintaining opportunities for public involvement and review.
- H-P6 Restrict the size and scale of new and remodeled homes in order to retain the informal, sylvan character of the community.
- H-P7 Encourage Dark Sky lighting within the community.
- H-P8 Support and promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs/DADUs) within new and existing residential developments to increase housing options and availability within Medina to create affordable housing.
- H-P9 Continue participation in regional and inter-jurisdictional organizations, such as King County, A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), and other Eastside jurisdictions to assess the need for and to assist in the provision of affordable housing on the Eastside.

Commented [DJ2]: Commerce, 08/01/2024, Comment 2.a
PSRC, 07/18/2024, Page 3

The City should revise or add a Housing Element policy “for the preservation, improvement, and development of... moderate density housing” consistent with RCW 36.70A.070(2)(b).

Commerce, 08/01/2024, Comment 2.e
KCAHC, 09/05/2024, Recommendation 4 & 5

The City should “consider additional policies to address and begin to undo this exclusion.”. If any potential impacts are identified in the RDI analysis, they should be addressed in the policies.

Commented [DJ3]: Commerce, 08/01/2024, Comment 2.b
KCAHC, 09/05/2024, Recommendation 2

The City should assume ADUs will only be affordable to households making more than 80% AMI unless additional market analysis or subsidies/incentives are provided to support the affordable development of ADUs.

- H-P10 Continue to make contributions to agencies that support affordable housing.
- H-P11 Plan for and encourage the construction of housing types that are available to extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income households.
- H-P12 Encourage affordable housing options that are compatible with the City’s high-quality residential setting, including the preservation and rehabilitation of older housing stock to create affordable housing.
- H-P13 Continue to work with cities and community representatives on countywide, subregional, state, and federal funding sources for housing development, preservation, and related services.
- H-P14 Limit short-term rentals as they can limit the availability of housing for full-time residents.
- H-P15 Consider incentives that will encourage the construction of more affordable housing.
- H-P16 Ensure development regulations allow for and have suitable provisions to accommodate housing opportunities for special needs populations.
- H-P17 Provide reasonable accommodation for special housing needs throughout the city, while protecting residential neighborhoods from potential adverse impacts.
- H-P18 Encourage a range of housing types for seniors that are affordable at a variety of incomes.
- H-P19 Encourage and support accessible design and housing strategies that provide seniors the opportunity to remain in their own community as their housing needs change.

Commented [DJ4]: KCAHC, 09/05/2024, Recommendation 1

The City should “include a policy that clearly states its intent to plan for and accommodate its allocated share of countywide future housing needs for moderate-, low-, very low-, and extremely low-income households.” This is consistent with the requirements of the GMA as revised by HB 1220.

KCAHC, 09/05/2024, Recommendation 3

The City should include the income category “*extremely low-income households*” in H-P11.

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