



# MEDINA, WASHINGTON

## Planning Commission

Tuesday June 23, 2026

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**Subject:** Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

**Planning Commission Action:** Discussion and Approval of Recommendation

**Staff Contact:** Kim Gunderson, Medina Planning Consultant

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The goal of this meeting is completion of a recommendation of the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance for the Council. Please see the Proposed Planning Commission Motion at the end of this Agenda Bill.

### **Summary**

#### **Background**

At its meeting on June 23, 2025 the City Council passed new outdoor lighting regulations. The need for this new Medina Municipal Code Chapter 16.25 comes from Council priorities established as a result of the recent adoption of the Middle Housing ordinance. Increased density which can result from Middle Housing could have adverse impacts on the Medina community. Impacts associated with outdoor lighting is seen as a high priority to address because we have already had lighting complaints even prior to the new density rules.

MMC 16.25 is adopted as an Interim Official Control which is a process having some similarities to a moratorium. An Interim Official Control is a process that adopts temporary (6-month) regulations and allows those temporary regulations to be extended by Council for additional 6-month periods following a public hearing with each extension. The benefit of an Interim Official Control is that it allows a City to immediately apply important changes to its Municipal Code while it studies the particulars that are appropriate of its permanent ordinance.

Amending Medina's Development Code Title 16 requires Planning Commission involvement. Planning Commission is required to review, approve, and forward to the Council with recommendation any new development ordinances. Because the outdoor lighting matter was considered a community priority, Council accepted an Interim Official Control proposal which does not require Planning Commission involvement. Council has given direction at its June 23, 2025 meeting for Planning Commission to study and process permanent outdoor lighting regulations to be brought to Council before the expiration of the interim official control on outdoor lighting. However, due to essentials of code amendment timing, two extension approvals by Council of the Interim Official Control (Ordinance 1050 and Ordinance 1057) were necessary and occurred on December 8, 2025 and June 8, 2026, extending the validity of the Interim Official Control until December 2026.

Kim Gunderson of Mahoney Planning, LLC is under contract with the City of Medina to provide on-call current and long-range planning support services, and has been tasked with preparing the permanent Outdoor Lighting Ordinance that will be recommended for adoption to City Council. Following the January, April, and May Planning Commission meetings, Kim and the City Attorney incorporated feedback offered by the Planning Commission into a draft permanent ordinance governing outdoor lighting in Medina. This feedback is reflected both in clean and in

redline draft ordinance forms attached to this Agenda Bill.

Outdoor Lighting Project Components

Importantly, this project has been designed with the intention of efficiently building off of Medina’s Interim Official Control as a template, a work product that has already been thoughtfully crafted to reflect feedback from City Council and now only needs refinement to capture remnant direction from City Council. Other key components of this project include: optimizing implementation of the Dark Sky Model Ordinance, ensuring the prevention of light trespass, and limiting the permanent ordinance to allow no more lighting than is allowed via the Interim Official Control.

As one of the project’s key components is to model Medina’s new ordinance on the Dark Sky Model Ordinance, a summary comparison of the two ordinances has been prepared and included as a demonstration of this effort:

Dark Sky Model Ordinance	Draft MMC Chapter 16.25
<p>Definitions for: candela, CCT, IES, light level, lumen, seasonal lighting, and security lighting.</p>	<p>The definitions for candela, CCT, IES, light level, lumen, seasonal lighting, and security lighting were all sourced from the Dark Sky Model Ordinance.</p> <p>The definition for "shielding" was based on the IOC and was expanded on to include opaque fixtures, as discussed with Planning Commission at its May meeting.</p> <p>The definition for "temporary or periodic events" was crafted between the contract Planner and Planning Commission given Planning Commission's hope for short-term events to be a contemplated component of the new lighting ordinance.</p>
<p>Purpose statement: "...reduce lighting conflicts between property owners...and preserve the naturally dark sky for the benefit of residents, visitors, wildlife, and the environment."</p>	<p>The IOC's purpose statement was added to as follows: "This chapter is intent on reducing lighting conflicts between property owners, and preserving the naturally dark sky for the benefit of residents, visitors, wildlife, and the environment."</p>
<p>Exemptions for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Security lighting (as determined by a municipal official with authority).</li> <li>2. Temporary or semi-permanent lighting approved by municipal permit for special events, festivals, and community benefit, provided the lighting still meets light trespass requirements and does not add further disruption to ecological migration or habitat.</li> <li>3. Seasonal lighting (can be restricted to certain dates)</li> </ol>	<p>Exemptions for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Security lighting which is color-restricted and cannot cause light trespass. "Downward cast security lighting, provided the lighting does not cause light trespass and has a rated correlated color temperature of 2,700K or less, unless the luminaire emits light only upon detected motion, in which case color temperature is not limited to 2,700K."</li> <li>2. Temporary lighting which is color-restricted and cannot cause light trespass. "Outdoor lighting approved by the director for temporary or periodic events (e.g., fairs, nighttime construction, events</li> </ol>

	<p>on private property), provided the lighting does not cause light trespass and has a rated correlated color temperature of 2,700K or less."</p> <p>3. Seasonal lighting, which is exempted as was stated in the IOC and, after contemplation of the Planning Commission, does not include specific dates so as to be inclusive of all customs.</p> <p>Additional exemptions were added for in-pool lighting (since MMC 16.34.040 already allows this lighting type) and exterior stairway lighting consistent with the building code (since this is already allowed via IBC/IRC).</p> <p>All other exemptions remain from the IOC.</p>
<p>General provisions: 1. Spectrum: Unless otherwise specified in this ordinance, the maximum allowable correlated color temperature (CCT) for outdoor luminaires is 3000 K.</p>	<p>General standards: 1. Outdoor lighting shall have a rated correlated color temperature of 2,700K or less. This metric was selected following public testimony by a Medina resident which was incorporated into Planning Commission's recommendation.</p>
<p>Permit application submittal: "projects to be documented using a spreadsheet format by listing the Luminaire identifications (i.e., manufacturer, model number, type), Luminaire quantities, installation locations, and Lumen outputs for each."</p>	<p>Permit application submittal: "A. Luminaire identifications (i.e., manufacturer, model number, correlated color temperature, type); B. Luminaire quantities; C. Correlated color temperature (Kelvin) for each fixture, and; D. Installation locations. The lighting schedule shall include both permanent luminaires and temporary luminaires used during construction"</p> <p>The MMC has been drafted to require CCT rather than lumen outputs since the City has not recommended an ordinance that governs total lumens per residence. This is based on direction to create an enforceable code and feedback from other cities with light ordinances, who advise that enforcing lumen output requires special equipment and nighttime code enforcement.</p>

The new ordinance will apply to new construction and is not retroactive to existing conditions.

Public and Agency Engagement

Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on June 23, 2026, which has been noticed to the public in all manners required of MMC 16.81.070 (attached); as of the date this Agenda Bill was prepared, no comments have been received from the public in response to the Notice of Public Hearing.

On May 21, 2026, Kim submitted a Notice of Intent to Adopt to the Washington Department of Commerce, as required by RCW 36.70A.106. Kim's Notice to Commerce included a request for the state's expedited review of Medina's Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, which was granted on

June 4, 2026 (attached). No comments were received by any state agency during the Notice of Intent to Adopt period.

On May 22, 2026, the City's SEPA Responsible Official reviewed a SEPA Environmental Checklist prepared for the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and issued a Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) threshold determination (attached). The City noticed the SEPA DNS on May 26, 2026. No comments were received in response to the noticed DNS during the 14-day SEPA comment period.

Planning Commission has also been presented with public comments prepared by Mr. and Mrs. Koh, owners of 3257 Evergreen Point Road (attached), and heard oral testimony from Mr. Yee Dawson at their January 2026 public meeting. Each of these comments urged greater protections against intrusive lighting and were considered by Planning Commission through the drafting of a permanent Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.

**Attachment(s)**

Current Draft Outdoor Lighting Ordinance (clean)

Current Draft Outdoor Lighting Ordinance (redline)

Outdoor Lighting Interim Official Controls

Ordinance No. 1057 Outdoor Lighting Interim Official Control (extension of Ord. 1050)

Ordinance No. 1050 Outdoor Lighting Interim Official Control (extension of Ord. 1043)

Ordinance No. 1043 Outdoor Lighting Interim Official Control

Notice of Public Hearing

Department of Commerce Notice of Intent to Adopt Ordinance & Approved Expedited Review

SEPA Environmental Checklist and DNS

Public Comment, Koh, January 27, 2026

**Proposed Planning Commission Motion:**

I move to recommend approval of the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and to direct staff to forward the Planning Commission's recommendation to the City Council.