



# CITY OF MEDINA

501 EVERGREEN POINT ROAD | PO BOX 144 | MEDINA WA 98039-0144  
TELEPHONE 425-233-6400 | [www.medina-wa.gov](http://www.medina-wa.gov)

---

**Date:** December 11, 2023  
**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**Via:** Stephen R. Burns, City Manager  
**From:** Steven R. Wilcox, Development Services Department Director  
**Subject:** Development Services Department Monthly Report

---

## Permit Activity and Budgeting

Please see the permits issued and permits received reports. The difference in total permit valuation between YTD 2022 and 2023 continues to increase. 2023 will not be a record high year for Development Services, but it is above average. We will produce a comparative graph for your review.

One interesting part of the issued permits data is that we performed nearly twice the number of inspections 2023 YTD vs. 2022 on roughly the same permit volume.

Construction Activity Permit open houses are associated with projects of \$500,000 and greater. The relevance of this information is that it shows the variations in monthly activity level and size of projects from a different perspective. Open houses more closely follow permit application dates as opposed to issuance timing.

### 2023 Construction Activity Permit Open Houses:

January – 0  
February - 0  
March – 5  
April – 1  
May – 4  
June - 7  
July – 2  
August – 2  
September - 2  
October - 0  
November – 3

Evaluating trends from different perspectives such as permit value and CAP open house volume allows for better understanding of our Development Services Fund and improves budget forecasting.

## **Tree Code Enforcement**

A hearing has been scheduled regarding the proposed removal of a 50.2" Coast Redwood on private property. This is designated by our Municipal Code as a Landmark tree.

A non-administrative tree activity permit is required which involves public noticing and a public hearing. A decision regarding the tree removal will be made by the Hearing Examiner.

Removal of trees this size is unusual in Medina.

## **WSDOT 520 Bridge Maintenance Project**

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) notified us several months ago that they will be maintaining the 520 bridge and approaches in 2024. The work as described required an administrative noise variance due to the night work involved.

The administrative variance process was nearly completed with a decision pending. Prior to issuing the decision, WSDOT approached me to say that their plans had changed. The same maintenance work will occur, but I am told that the timing will be much different.

The noise variance is now on hold pending additional information from WSDOT. It is not yet known if WSDOT will need a new variance or not.

Associated with this maintenance work, but not a part of our permitting or the noise variance are outstanding questions about the application methods of a spray applied concrete sealant to be used by the WSDOT contractor. The WSDOT 520 bridge maintenance project in 2024 surrounds the application of concrete sealant in the driving surface and under soffits. The project "Silane" is designed to extend the life of concrete. While Medina does not have authority to tell WSDOT how to operate, I have questioned the application methods of Silane. WSDOT to date has not adequately explained how the sealant Silane will be applied such that it does not enter lake Washington, and does not pose any health concern for Medina residents.

## **2021 Washington State Building Code Implementation**

The implementation of the 2021 State Building Code has been delayed twice. Issues involve the Energy Code and a debate about the use of natural gas in new construction. The issue is not resolved, but the State Building Code Council voted recently to implement the code anyways. The current date for implementation of the 2021 State Building Code is March 15, 2024. Medina will need to have the new code approved prior to implementation.

The State Building Code is a comprehensive set of documents regarding safety and occupant health while using all types of buildings and structures. The Energy Code is one part of the State Building Code, but usually the most controversial.

I would not at all be surprised if the 2021 edition of the State Building Code is implemented in Washington State on March 15, 2024 without the Energy Code, but we will have to wait and see.

Provided for your review is a Seattle Times article from November 30<sup>th</sup> which provides more insight.

## **2024 Comprehensive Plan Update**

I am currently compiling notes taken at the November 30<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. The Comprehensive Plan Community Design Element was discussed with input recorded by staff and others. The compiled notes are being drafted into the 2015 version of our Comp Plan in track changes for easy comparison. The Planning Commission will be presented this compiled draft for discussion at their December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Also at the December Planning Commission meeting will be a discussion on the Housing Element. The Planning Commission has seen the Housing Element three previous times so getting this to a point where it can be finalized is the goal.

Planning Commission Chair Laura Bustamante continues to place much time and effort into organization, and forwarding of the Comp Plan.

## **Planning Consultant**

While the City is actively searching for a new Planning Manager to replace the loss of Stephanie Keyser this past October 16<sup>th</sup>, my focus has also been on finding new consulting support for our Development Services Department. We need both an FTE Planning Manager and a Planning Consultant.

Our current planning consultant has been with Medina for some time and provided excellent permit review support to Stephanie. We are now finding that with anticipation of a new Planning Manager, a broader level of consultant support will be needed.

The qualifications of our new Planning Manager will be a factor that helps decide the work given to the planning consultant. It is preferred that our FTE Planning Manager be assigned priority to long-range work such as the Comprehensive Plan Update and that the consultant perform the current day-to-day planning work involved with fee-based permits. However, flexibility is needed, so contracting with a new planning consultant with a full range of abilities is something we need.

An RFQ was issued for a planning consultant, and we have had several inquiries with at least three local firms that can provide the broad scope of abilities we need. The RFQ closes on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. I hope to have a planning consultant contract completed by mid-January.

## **Construction Activity Permit**

It was recently brought to my attention that site postings associated with the required CAP public notice process could be improved.

CAP Ordinance 995 requires housekeeping amendments. From time-to-time ordinances can require updating. At the January regular Council meeting I will bring for discussion language related to the CAP posting process, other essential text amendments, and possibly additional suggestions for improvement.