

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

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 within a larger community. 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 single-family units on individual lots. There are no multiple-family structures and current zoning does not allow such development. Medina is an established residential community that abuts residential areas of Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, and Bellevue. ~~Medina maintains a high percentage of owner occupied units (81.5%) and a vacancy rate of 5.03%. 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. Since 2015, the percentage of owner-occupied units has decreased from 89.1%, while the vacancy rate has decreased from 8.7%.~~ Medina’s development pattern is consistent with that of neighboring communities.

Table 1. Medina Housing Statistics

Housing Measure	Value	Units	Ratio
Total housing units	1,113		100%
Vacant housing units	59	(5.03%)	5.3%
Occupied housing units (households)	1,054		94.7%
- Owner occupied	859	(81.5%)	81.5%*
- Renter occupied	195	(18.5%)	18.5%*

Commented [KM1]: Added to incorporate feedback from 4/3 PC

Commented [KM2]: Edit made to capture comment made by PC on 4/3.

Commented [KM3]: Column added to address feedback from PC on 4/3 (applies to tables 1-3)

Persons per household	2.8
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*Represented percentage of the total occupied housing units
Source: 2021 U.S. Census

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Although the number of total housing units in Medina has decreased since the last Comprehensive Plan update, ~~down approximately 4.2% from 1,162 units in 2015 to 1,113 in 2021,~~ the number of larger households has increased. Larger households, composed of 4-or-more people, make up the greatest proportion of Medina’s households ~~at 38.5% (406),~~ followed by 2-person households ~~at 35.5% (374),~~ 1-person households ~~at 17% (178),~~ and finally 3-person households ~~at 9% (96)~~ (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 ~~at 39.5% (339),~~ followed by 4-or-more person households ~~at 36.8% (316).~~ 4-or-more person households make up the largest proportion of renter-occupied households ~~at 46.2% (90),~~ followed by 1-person households ~~at 26.7% (52).~~

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Commented [KM5]: Edits have been made to keep the paragraph more narrative-format and rely on the tables to provide the data, rather than expecting readers to read the data within the narrative. Edit made to address 4/3 PC feedback.

Table 2. Medina Household Size

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

Source: 2021 U.S. Census

Commented [KM6]: Edit made to capture comment made by PC on 4/3.

Table 3. Medina Household Size by Occupancy Type

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

*Ratios have been rounded to their nearest tenth place
Source: 2021 U.S. Census

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This larger household size correlates with more children living in the city. ~~44% (462)~~ Nearly half of households in Medina have children and of those households, 74% ~~(340)~~ are between the age of 6 to 17 years. In general, Medina has a higher percentage of children under the age of 18 ~~(26.2%)~~ than both King County ~~(20.2%)~~ and the state of Washington ~~(22.1%)~~. 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. ~~34%~~ 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 single-family residential city, it is this aging population that are most at risk for displacement due to a number of factors that are both within and beyond the city’s control (e.g., rising property taxes, limited public transportation, increased cost of home maintenance against the backdrop of often fixed incomes) ~~encouraging the development of smaller houses, ADUs/DADUs, and reducing~~

Commented [KM7]: Similarly made edits to these paragraphs to remove much of the data points/percentages, though few were left as they provide relevant context and aren’t challenging to read.

Commented [KM8]: Edit made to incorporate feedback from the PC at 4/3 meeting.

Commented [KM9]: This term has been added to Appendix A and a definition for the term has been drafted for PC’s consideration.

permit fees) and beyond (e.g., property taxes) the city's control.

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 (CPP's), or 1,132 units by 2044. As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, jurisdictions must demonstrate zoned or planned capacity for their growth target. As a fully built-out community with no adjacent land to annex, Medina has an existing buildable net capacity of 8 units which means there is a capacity deficit of 11 units.

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 (such as duplexes) will be 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 organically and easily meet its 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. The Growth Management Act (GMA) affirms the city's responsibility to meet this challenge in its goal to plan for and accommodate housing that is affordable to all economic segments (including emergency and permanent supportive housing) and plan for promote a variety of housing units 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 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 detached units are allowed to be constructed on properties where there is sufficient lot size to meet the underlying, minimum zoning.
- Accessory dwelling units are permitted in all residential zoning districts subject to the requirements of the Medina Municipal Code.
- The City makes contributions to ARCH (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.

Commented [KM10]: Added to reflect feedback from 4/3 PC

Commented [KM11]: Edit made to incorporate feedback from 4/3 PC

Commented [KM12]: Text deleted by 4/3 PC feedback

Commented [KM13]: Edit made to remove "plan for," as was discussed among PC on 4/3

Commented [KM14]: Definitions for these household incomes have been provided in Appendix A, as requested by PC at 4/3 meeting.

Commented [KM15]: This has been added to align with the RCW and to carry forward general discussion among the PC on 4/3 that involved preserving the existing character/development within Medina.

Commented [KM16]: On 4/3, PC made a comment that the bulleted list below could include mention of rezoning, since the City expects to consider rezoning this year to accommodate middle housing/affordable housing. However, this list represents mechanisms that are already in place to assist in affordable housing. It seems that the discussion in much of the rest of the document calls for Medina to make provisions for a variety of housing types (including affordable housing), which could include rezoning, and is a more appropriate place for that kind of discussion than in this list. Therefore, mention of rezoning has not been added here. For the PC's deliberation at their 4/23 meeting.

Commented [KM17]: Edits made here correct errored use of colons identified by PC at their 4/3 meeting

Commented [KM18]: Edit made per 4/3 PC feedback.

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.

Approximately 18.9% of all Medina households earn less than 80% of the Area Median Income (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 housing 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 ~~must will plan for and~~ 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.

Commented [KM19]: I’ve added this text to provide better understanding around the numbers in Table 5 (previously Table 6). PC made mention on 4/3 that it was hard to understand how the numbers in Table 5 relate to the 19 housing unit target - this statement aims to provide that understanding.

Table 4. Allocation of Projected Housing Units by Income Level

Percentage of Area Median Income (AMI)	Owner
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

	0 to <30%					Emergency
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Commented [KM20]: Added to provide clarity that these targets are specific to Medina only, to address feedback from 4/3 PC

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

Commented [KM21]: AMI has been added to incorporate PC 4/3 feedback

*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.

H-P2 Maintain the informal (sylvan) residential character of neighborhoods.

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 Consider encouraging Dark Sky lighting with new development.

H-P8 Support and promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs/DADUs) within new and existing residential developments.

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.

H-P10 Continue to make contributions to agencies that support affordable housing.

H-P11 Support Encourage the construction of housing types that are available to 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.

Commented [KM22]: This edit should be discussed with PC on 4/23. Conversation on 4/3 made clear distinction between the terms “sylvan” and “informal,” but a suggestion was then made for the policy to read as it’s been edited here, which seems as though “informal” and “sylvan” are the same thing. A final word on this from PC on 4/23 would be very helpful 😊

Commented [KM23]: Edit made to address 4/3 PC feedback

- 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.

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