

# 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 tThe Growth Management Act (GMA) and King County’s Countywide Planning Policies (CPP). 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:

- 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. 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%. Since 2015, the percentage of owner-occupied units has decreased from 89.1%, while the vacancy rate has decreased from 84.7%. Medina's development pattern is consistent with that of neighboring communities.

**Table 1. Medina Housing Statistics**

<b>Housing Measure</b>	<b>Value</b>
Housing units	1,113
Vacant housing units	59 (5.03%)
Occupied housing units (households)	1,054
- Owner occupied	859 (81.5%)
- Renter occupied	195 (18.5 %)

Persons per household	2.8
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Source: 2021 U.S. Census

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).

**Table 2. Medina Household Size**

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

Source: 2021 U.S. Census

**Table 3. Medina Household Size by Occupancy Type**

Household Size	Owner	Renter
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	195

Source: 2021 U.S. Census

This larger household size correlates with more children living in the city. 44% (462) of households in Medina have children and of those, 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% 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 (e.g., encouraging the development of smaller houses, ADU's, and reducing permit fees) and beyond (e.g., property taxes) the city's control.

## **HOUSING TARGET**

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 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 housing units necessary to meet statewide projections for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households.

Medina has several mechanisms to assist in the provision of affordable housing. These are as follows:

- 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), 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 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 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 2021 King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPP’s) establishes a countywide need for housing in 2044 by percentage of AMI. Table 5 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 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 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 5. Allocation of Projected Housing Units by Income Level**

<b>Percentage of Area Median Income (AMI)</b>	<b>Units</b>
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. Table 6 shows the 2044 projected housing units that include emergency housing and permanent supportive housing units.

**Table 6. Allocation of Projected Housing Units Including Permanent Supportive and Emergency Housing**

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

Source: King County Countywide Planning Policies, 2022.

## GOAL

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

### Community Values and Quality Neighborhoods

- 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 residential character of neighborhoods.
- H-P3. Support and encourage through the use of appropriate incentives 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.

### Development Standards

- 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-7. Consider encouraging Dark Sky lighting with new development.
- H-8. Support and promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) within new and existing residential developments.

### Affordable Housing

- HP-9. 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 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.
- H-P13. Continue to work with cities and community representatives on countywide, or 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.

#### Special Housing Needs

- 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.