

# Chapter 3: COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

---

## Introduction

Medina was a part of the “Big Woods,” a vast region of hardwood forest, broken only by lakes, marshes, and streams. Its Dakota people lived on game, fish, berries, wild rice, and maple sugar and traded with other bands in the region.

In 1853 the Traverse de Sioux Treaty opened up the region to white settlers, who were attracted by the huge stands of timber and the availability of land for farming.

The first settlers arrived in Medina in 1855. On April 10, 1858, County Commissioners gave the City an official designation as “Hamburg Township.” Local residents preferred the name, “Medina,” after the Arabian holy city that was in the news that year. On May 11, 1858, 37 residents met in the home of Valorius Chilson and voted unanimously to change the name. Medina graduated from township status to become a village in 1955 and was incorporated as a city in 1974.

Medina’s early European settlers were chiefly German, Irish and French-Canadian and had names still common in Medina such as Scherer and Reiser; Mooney and Crowe; Hamel and Fortin. The first generations tended to group according to their language ties and to help each other through the long hard winters.

Townships were always divided into 36 sections, each consisting of a square mile. This meant that the City of Excelsior extended beyond the north shore of Lake Minnetonka to Medina’s southern border. Excelsior’s northern residents tolerated this inconvenience until 1868, when Excelsior’s north shore residents voted to become a part of Medina. This expanded Medina to over 50 square miles.

In 1889, George A. Brackett led a successful drive to carve the City of Orono out of the southern 11 sections of Medina. Later, the City also ceded away land to Loretto, when it incorporated in 1940. Loretto had been platted since 1886 at the time the Minneapolis & St. Paul and Sault St. Marie railroad came through.

The Hamel area of Medina was platted as a City as early as 1879, but its efforts to incorporate failed, in part, because of the complication of straddling the borders of both Medina and Plymouth. The town might have been called Lenz after Leander Lenzen, who built a mill in Elm Creek and set up a post office in the name of Lenz in 1861. But when the Lange Hamel family gave land to the railroad for the train depot in 1884 they asked that it be called “Hamel,” and the name took root. To this day people still refer to this area of the city as Hamel.

Built on the road from Minneapolis to Rockford, Hamel was a busy town. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Hamel boasted a school, two hotels, the Church of St. Anne’s, a hall for the Ancient Order of United Workman and numerous stores. The town decreased to its present size after TH 55 bypassed it in the 1950’s.

## Community Survey

In 2006 the City of Medina conducted a community wide citizen and business survey to gauge the interests and desires of the residents and business owners. The survey provided residents and businesses the opportunity to rate the quality of life in the City, delivery of services and their satisfaction with local government. The full report and responses can be found in the official Medina Citizen Survey document prepared by National Research Center in September of 2006 and is available for review at the Medina City Hall.

The survey focused on community and rural character and attempted to gain insight on what rural quality included. The following information summarizes the survey:

- Approximately 80% of resident respondents rate their quality of life as good or excellent.
- Approximately 75% of resident respondents felt that maintaining the City's rural character is very important or essential.
- The major contributors to rural character include: presence of natural features, less noise pollution, low crime rates and open spaces. The majority of resident respondents felt that maintaining these characteristics is essential to maintaining the rural character.
- The top three reasons resident respondents chose to live in Medina are the rural character, the location and the quality of life in general.
- Approximately 50% of resident respondents rated the natural environment, schools neighborhoods and large lots as critical to their decision to live in Medina.
- 38% of resident respondents have lived in the community for less than 5 years, 20% from between five and ten years and 42% for more than ten years.
- Resident respondents felt the quality of new residential development was excellent or good.
- Some of the lowest rated community characteristics included: lack of sidewalks, inability to travel by bike or walking, and lack of affordable housing options.
- Auto travel within the community was also viewed as excellent or good
- Resident respondents felt that growth was occurring at about "the right amount" in recent years
- Resident respondents were focused on controlled and well-planned development as important to the future of the community.
- Resident respondents felt that community involvement, quality city government and city services are essential to the success of the community.

## Population and Household Trends

Table 3-A below shows historical and projected population and household size data for the City of Medina. The 1990 and 2000 population and household data is from the U.S. Census. The 2005 population and household estimates and the 2010-2030 population and household projections are from the Metropolitan Council's 2030 Regional Development Framework. The population of Medina was estimated by the Metropolitan Council to be 4,770 people and 1,616 households in 2005. According to the Metropolitan Council, the average household size is expected to continue to decline regionally over the next 20 years due to an increase in the number of seniors and lifestyle changes.

**TABLE 3-A**  
**Metropolitan Council Forecasts**

Growth and Forecast	Population	Households	Employment
1990*	3,096	1,007	2,155
2000*	4,005	1,309	2,928
2005**	4,770	1,616	3,940
2010***	5,800	2,100	5,500
2020***	9,200	3,240	6,700
2030***	12,700	4,450	7,900

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000\*  
Metropolitan Council Estimates\*\*  
Metropolitan Council Projections\*\*\*

The City experienced relatively constant growth up to the 1990s before rapidly increasing in the last 5 to 10 years. This population trend will continue to increase as areas within the City guided for urban residential densities are developed. The Metropolitan Council forecasts a population of 5,800 in 2010, 9,200 in 2020 and 12,700 in 2030 which corresponds to a 30 percent increase over each 10-year period. Current development patterns suggest that the City may fall short of these projections due to the 2007 housing slump.

Table 3-B below was developed based on the Guide Plan developed as a part of this Plan. This table demonstrates the City's projections for future growth in the community. The City plans to grow and has anticipated a population of approximately 11,211 in 2030. Although this population forecast is lower than that of the Metropolitan Council, the forecast is based on a lower person-per-household estimate then utilized by the Metropolitan Council. If the City utilized the same person-per-household estimate as the Metropolitan Council, the forecast would be 98 percent of the Metropolitan Council forecast. The City has also projected much lower growth in the number of unsewered households than projected by the Metropolitan Council. This lower forecast is based on historical trends and an analysis of remaining undivided property. In terms of sewerer households, the City forecast slightly exceeds Metropolitan Council forecasts,

**TABLE 3-B**  
**Medina Population and Households Forecast based on Future Land Use**

	1990	2000*	2005**	2010	2020	2030	Change 2000-2030
<b>Total Population</b>							
Sewered	3096	2158	2745	3066	6958	8993	317%
Unsewered		1848	2025	2145	2146	2218	20%
<b>Total Households</b>							
Sewered	1007	705	927	1050	2530	3597	410%
Unsewered		604	685	715	740	765	27%

\*2000 Sewered and Unsewered numbers are estimates based on US Census Data, exact sewer units is unknown.

\*\*2005 population and households from 2000 US Census, employment from Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) estimates.

Source: 2000 US Census and City of Medina Data collected and processed in 2007.

Source: 2000 US Census and City of Medina Data collected and processed in 2007.

## Residential Development Activity

Table 3-C below shows the residential development activity in Medina from 2000 to 2006. During this period, the City issued building permits for a total of 293 single family homes and 169 multi-family units. The majority of these single family homes were built in the Foxberry Farms and Wild Meadows developments. The multi-family developments include the 87-unit Gramercy at Elm Creek Senior Cooperative, Medina Highlands, and the 18-unit Argent Parc condominium building located in the Uptown Hamel area.

**TABLE 3-C**  
**Medina Residential Building Permits (2000-2006)**

Year	New Single-Family Dwelling Units	Total Valuation	New Multi-Family Dwelling Units	Total Value
2000	43	\$17,519,000	0	\$0
2001	21	\$11,843,000	0	\$0
2002	38	\$30,000,000	22	\$7,952,000
2003	43	\$36,561,000	113	\$23,548,000
2004	53	\$33,355,000	16	\$6,530,000
2005	50	\$41,073,000	18	\$3,180,000
2006	45	\$34,903,000	0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>\$204,254,000</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>\$41,210,000</b>

Source: City of Medina, 2007

## Economic Overview

The economic health of a community contributes to a high standard of living and a desirable place to live. Medina has a strong economy that is likely to improve as population increases. The City has experienced considerable growth of its economic base and the addition of diverse employment opportunities since the last planning cycle. Table 3-D below shows that employment growth in the City of Medina increased 35.9% from 1990 to 2000. The Metropolitan Council's initial projections indicated an increase of 87.8% between 2000 and 2010. However, due to the recent economic downturn, the City readjusted these numbers and percentage increases accordingly. The availability of commercial and general business land along the TH 55 corridor, adequate transportation and utility infrastructure and the proximity of the City to the metropolitan area make Medina attractive to businesses. The City anticipates that most business growth will serve Medina and surrounding areas.

**TABLE 3-D**  
**City of Medina Employment Growth and Forecasts**

Year	Number	Percent Increase
1990*	2,155	
2000*	2,928	35.9
2007	3,940	34.6
2010**	5,100	29.4
2020**	6,200	21.6
2030**	7,200	16.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000\*

## Employers and Employees

The City has approximately 150 employers that provide a range of industry and job choices. The following table represents the number of establishments per industry in Medina as provided in the 2002 Economic Census.

**Table 3-E  
Number of Establishments in Medina by Industry**

Industry Description	Number of Establishments	Percentage
Manufacturing	22	14.6
Wholesale trade	28	18.7
Retail trade	12	8
Information	3	2
Real estate and rental and leasing	6	4
Professional, scientific and technical services	28	18.7
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	21	14
Arts, entertainment and recreation	4	2.7
Accommodation and food service	11	7.3
Other services (except public administration)	15	10
<b>Total number of establishments in City</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, 2002 Economic Census

51.6 percent of the total population over the age of 16 in Medina was employed in 2000. The following table demonstrates the number of employees per industry. The industries that most heavily employ Medina residents include finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing (14.2%); education, health and social services (13.4%); manufacturing (13.2%); professional, scientific, management and administrative support services (12.7%) and retail trade (11.3%).

**Table 3-F  
Number of Employees by Industry in Medina**

Industry Description	Number of Employees	Percentage
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and mining	9	0.4
Construction	200	9.7
Manufacturing	273	13.2
Wholesale trade	170	8.2
Retail trade	233	11.3
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	70	3.4
Information	63	3
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing	294	14.2
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	263	12.7
Educational, health and social services	277	13.4
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	118	5.7
Other services (except public administration)	60	2.8
Public administration	36	1.7
<b>Total employed residents over 16 years old</b>	<b>2066</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

### Major Employers

Most residents travel outside Medina for their jobs; however, employers within the City provide a wide range of potential employment options to residents. The following table identifies the major employers in the City:

**Table 3-G  
Largest Medina Employers**

Top Employer's	Number of Employees
Polaris Industries	300
Loram Maintenance of Way, Inc	230
Hennepin County Public Works	225
Rockler Companies	200
Walter G. Anderson, Inc.	200
Temroc Metals, Inc.	130
Tol-O-Matic, Inc.	125
Intercomp Co.	75
Twinco/Romax Automotive	44
Target Corporation	36 full-time and 65-90 part time
Medina Golf & Country Club	35 full-time and 125 seasonal part time
Maxxon Corporation	35
Oil-Air Products	35
Clam Corporation	25

Source: City of Medina, 2006

The table below shows that since 2000 there has been approximately \$23,843,000 of commercial development in the City. This growth occurred from expansion of existing businesses as well as the location of new employers into the City including Target Corporation and Polaris Industries.

**Table 3-H  
Medina Commercial Building Permits  
(2000-2006)**

Year	New Commercial Building Permits	Total Valuation
2000	0	\$0
2001	1	\$400,000
2002	3	\$1,795,000
2003	2	\$1,263,000
2004	9	\$4,519,500
2005	5	\$9,353,000
2006	8	\$6,513,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>\$23,843,000</b>

Source: City of Medina, 2007

### Economic Development Initiatives

The City created a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF District 1-9) in 2004 to provide public improvement incentives for the redevelopment of properties within and around the Uptown Hamel area. The TIF district consists of more than 60 parcels on both sides of TH 55 near its intersection with Sioux Drive/CR 101. TIF funds have been used to fund public improvements to entice development north and south of TH 55 in the Uptown Hamel area, including storm water infrastructure in Uptown Hamel. Through 2007, redevelopment in Uptown Hamel has been slow.

### Investment Framework

In order to maintain a reasonable tax base, Medina will be working to off-set the large rural residential areas with commercial and mixed use developments along TH 55. Commercial development is a significant part of Medina's tax base plan. Map 3-1 Illustrates the amount of taxes paid by residential and commercial properties in the City.

## Demographics

This demographic data has been extrapolated primarily from the 2000 US Census. If information was collected from alternative sources, those sources are identified. The 2000 census is the most up-to-date demographic information available and much of this information is already out of date. However, the data is still relevant because it suggests trends of development and characteristics of the population. Where more up-to-date information is available, regardless of source, that information is included as a point of reference.

## Household Income

The following table describes the household income levels of current residents in Medina in the year 2000. 19.8% percent of the City population has income of less than \$50,000 per year, 36.5% between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year and 43.8% over \$100,000 per year.

**Table 3-I**  
**City of Medina Household Income**

Income	Households	Percentage
Less than \$10,000	14	1.1
\$10,000 to \$24,999	42	3.3
\$25,000 to \$49,999	197	15.4
\$50,000 to \$74,999	255	19.9
\$75,000 to \$99,999	213	16.6
\$100,000 to \$149,999	229	17.8
\$150,000 to \$199,999	74	5.8
\$200,000 or more	258	20.1
<b>Total households that earned income in 2000</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

The following table indicates that the average household income in Medina is high relative to the Hennepin County average. The median household income in Medina is \$88,847 which is 158.6% of the median County household income. The mean or average household income in Medina is \$144,702, which is 188.7% of the mean County household income. The contrast between the mean and the median household income levels in Medina is due to the high numbers of Medina households with incomes that exceed \$200,000 per year.

**Table 3-J**  
**Medina and Hennepin County Median and Mean Household Income**

Income	Medina	State of MN	Percentage of State
Median household income (dollars)	88,847	55,996	158.6%
Mean household income (dollars)	144,702	59,348	188.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000



## Level of Educational Attainment

The following table shows that Medina residents are well educated. Approximately 96.3% of the adult population graduated from high school or higher and 44% of the population has completed a Bachelors degree or higher.

**Table 3-K  
Medina Adult Resident Level of Educational Attainment**

Level of Educational Attainment	Number of Residents	Percentage
No high school diploma	91	3.7
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	542	22
Some college, no degree	572	23.2
Associate degree	175	7.1
Bachelor's degree	737	29.9
Graduate or professional degree	346	14
High school graduate or higher	2,372	96.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,083	44
<b>Total population 25 years and older</b>	<b>2,463</b>	

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

## Age

The table below shows that 34.3% of the population is 19 years old or younger, 31.5% of the population is between 20 and 44 years old, 27.3% of the population is between 45 and 64 years old and 6.9% of the population is 65 years or older. Residents of the City of Medina are almost half male and half female.

**Table 3-L  
Age of Medina Residents**

Age of Residents	Number of Residents	Percentage
Under 5 years	270	6.7
5 to 9 years	367	9.2
10 to 14 years	434	10.8
15 to 19 years	303	7.6
20 to 24 years	119	3
25 to 34 years	316	7.9
35 to 44 years	827	20.6
45 to 54 years	712	17.8
55 to 64 years	380	9.5
65 years and over	277	6.9
Median age (years)	38	
<b>Total population</b>	<b>4,005</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

When planning future community facilities and housing options in the City, all of these age groups must be considered. For example, as the population continues to age the demand for senior lifestyle housing and activities within the City will continue to increase.

## School Enrollment

There are 1,286 residents in the City of Medina who are enrolled in school. Of these residents 8.7% are enrolled in preschool or kindergarten, 50.5 percent are enrolled in elementary school, 29.3% are enrolled in high school and 9.6% are enrolled in college or graduate school.

**Table 3-M  
City of Medina School Enrollment**

School Enrollment	Number of Students	Percentage
Nursery school, preschool	97	7.5
Kindergarten	41	3.2
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	649	50.5
High school (grades 9-12)	375	29.2
College or graduate school	124	9.6
<b>Total population 3 years and over enrolled in school</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

## Race

The table below indicates that 97.3% of the population are white, 0.5% are Black or African American and 1.2 percent are some other race or two or more races.

**Table 3-N  
City of Medina Race**

Race	Number of Residents	Percentage
White	3,946	98.5
Black or African American	19	0.5
American Indian and Alaska Native	9	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0
Some other race	7	0.2
Two or more races	23	0.6
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>4,005</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

## Household Demographics

Approximately 85% of families have children under 18 years of age. Single householders make up the next largest group with 11.2 percent. The average household size is 3.05 and the average family is 3.31 people. Household averages are slightly higher than the Metropolitan Council's, estimates which suggests that average household size will decrease as the population ages.

**Table 3-O**  
**Household Demographics**

Type of Households	Number of Households	Percentage
Family households	1,118	85.4
With own children under 18 years	615	47
Married-couple family	1,026	78.4
With own children under 18 years	558	42.6
Female householder, no husband present	56	4.3
With own children under 18 years	37	2.8
Non-family households	191	14.6
Householder living alone	146	11.2
Householder 65 years and over	37	2.8
Households with individuals 65 years and over	188	14.4
Average household size	3.05	
Average family size	3.31	
<b>Total households</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

## Marital Status

69.5% of Medina residents are married; 23.8% are single and 6.7% are married but separated, widowed or divorced. The number of married couples in the City of Medina is relatively high as compared to communities in closer to proximity to either Minneapolis or St. Paul.

**Table 3-P**  
**Medina Resident Marital Status**

Marital Status	Number of Residents	Percentage
Never married, single	701	23.8
Now married, except separated	2,047	69.5
Separated	5	0.2
Widowed	48	1.6
Divorced	145	4.9
<b>Total population 15 Years and older</b>	<b>2,946</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

## Factors Influencing Development

Natural features within the City of Medina will substantially influence the feasibility of extending municipal services and where and when development will occur. The City undertook an extensive open space and natural resources initiative as a part of this plan. An Open Space Report was prepared by an Open Space Task Force and is available for review at the City of Medina City Hall. A summary of information in the Open Space Report follows.

- I. **Natural Features:** significantly affect current and future development.
  - A. **Lakes and Wetlands:** Map 3-2 illustrates the Wetland Locations throughout Medina and is based on Hennepin County wetland data records. Nearly 35 percent of the land in Medina is wet, with many lakes, creeks and wetlands. These natural areas affect where and in what intensity development can occur within the City. Upland areas suitable for development need to be well planned to ensure that lakes, wildlife and wetlands are not adversely impacted. The City completed a Functional Assessment of Wetlands (FAW) in November 2007, which was developed to provide guidelines for regulating and protecting these wetlands, and a comprehensive inventory and assessment of existing wetland functions with the City. An overall wetland classification map was provided as part of the FAW and is referenced at the end of this section as Map 3-2.A
  - B. **Floodplains:** Map 3-3 identifies the FEMA designated floodplains found in Medina. Minnehaha Creek, Elm Creek and Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watersheds have floodplains that will limit development in Medina. Much of the floodplains cover the same area as wetlands. Limited portions of these floodplains may be used for development, if criteria for building elevations, floodproofing and filling can be met as outlined in the City's Floodplain Ordinance.
  - C. **Watershed District Boundaries:** Map 3-4 identifies the three Watershed District Organizations and boundaries inside Medina. Although not visible as landscape features, these boundaries are significant because they define the direction of surface water flow. The boundaries are commonly used as major parameters for development of sewer interceptor and trunk lines. Each of the various watershed districts has its own regulations for land development, and some require watershed board approval of all water management plans for development proposals. The City has designated itself as the Local Governmental Unit (LGU) responsible for reviewing development proposals affecting wetlands.
  - D. **Woodlands:** Preservation of woodlands is important aesthetically, ecologically and functionally. Woodlands provide wildlife habitat, prevent soil erosion, absorb runoff, provide wind breaks, and define the patterns of streets and land use.
  - E. **Soils:** The United States Department of Agriculture's Soil Survey and Soil Classifications are used to evaluate development proposals in Medina and to determine the capability of on-site septic systems. Rural residential lots are required to have at least 5-acres of contiguous soils suitable for a standard sewage disposal system as defined by Medina's Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Code. A significant portion of the rural residential area of Medina contains soils that are considered unsuitable for septic site development. The general soil conditions, therefore, establish

the intensity of unsewered development. Map 3-5 generally identifies the areas where suitable soils are present in Medina.

- F. **Topography:** Topography and steep slopes in the City will impact future and current developments. Map 3-5 identifies areas considered as “Steep Slopes” and “Steep Slopes with Grades Greater than 18 percent.” Management and maintenance of steep slopes and other topographic challenges will be critical to future development and growth plans.

(REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK)

(THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK)