

City of Fircrest Existing Middle Housing Stock

September 3, 2024



Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present a visual sample of the existing middle housing within the city rather than an exhaustive list.

The intention is to demonstrate gentle density and highlight how existing middle housing is hiding in plain sight. You or your neighbors may already live in one of the middle housing units throughout Fircrest.

The goal of the City's new housing laws is to meet the minimum requirements of state law compliance while protecting the small-town character that we all love.

This document was presented to the Planning Commission at the September 3, 2024 Regular Meeting and is provided to the public for reference.



222 Farallone Avenue - Internal ADU

What is Middle Housing?

- Middle housing refers to housing types between single-family detached homes and mid-to high rise apartments

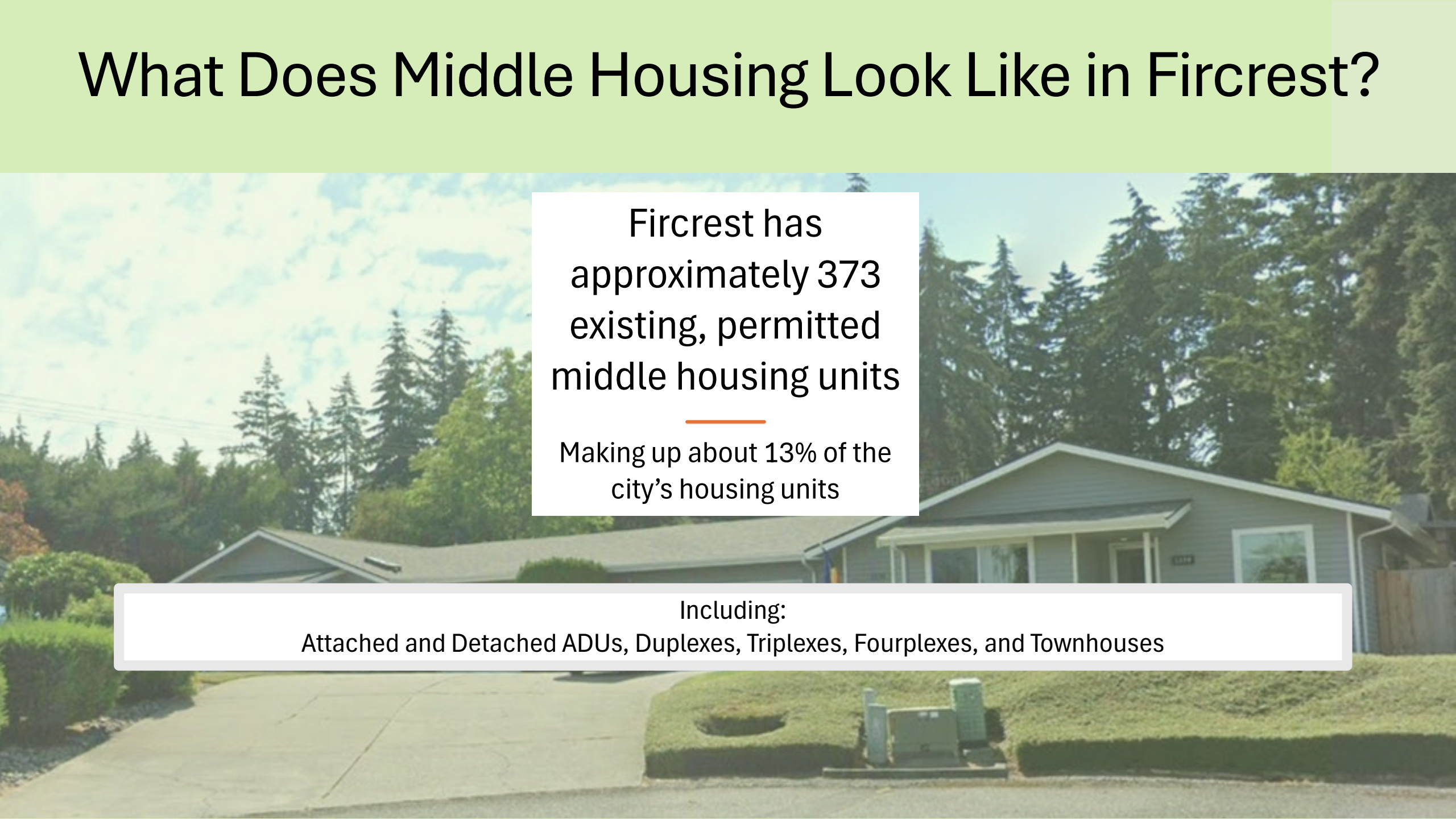


The WA State Department of Commerce defines middle housing as:

Buildings that are compatible in scale, form and character with detached single-family houses; typically, “house-scale” and are similar in bulk and form

This means similar building heights, setbacks, building coverage, and yard space as single-family homes

What Does Middle Housing Look Like in Fircrest?



Fircrest has
approximately 373
existing, permitted
middle housing units

Making up about 13% of the
city's housing units

Including:

Attached and Detached ADUs, Duplexes, Triplexes, Fourplexes, and Townhouses

What Does the Count Include?

Why are the numbers represented as “approximate?”

The number of existing middle housing units represented in this count is **conservative**

Some Reasons Include:

- Some units lack permits and are otherwise unknown to the city
- Some units, built when Fircrest’s building requirements, codes, and classifications were different; were vested without proper documentation
- Some units, though they may have been permitted, have records that have been lost or that did not properly document completion and cannot be conclusively counted as an existing middle housing unit

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Fircrest has about 8 detached, permitted ADUs

Detached ADUs, also called DADUs, are stand-alone structures separate from the primary residence

Detached Accessory Dwelling Units in Fircrest



Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Fircrest has about 10 permitted, attached or internal ADUs

There are likely many more internal ADUs in Fircrest as many older homes commonly incorporated internal ADU aspects in their builds

Attached or Internal ADUs are within or attached to the primary residence, typically served by a separate entrance

Attached Accessory Dwelling Units in Fircrest



Duplexes

Fircrest has approximately 112 duplexes making up 224 units

Duplexes make up the largest portion of Fircrest's existing middle housing

Most are not new; many having been constructed between 1980 and 1990

A duplex is a multifamily home on a single plot of land made up of two-units separated by a wall or floor with separate entrances, typically having a mirrored design

Duplexes in Fircrest



1314/1316 Boise Street



1220/1222 Alameda Avenue



1315/1317 Contra Costa Avenue

Duplexes

Duplexes in Fircrest



Triplexes and Fourplexes

Fircrest has about 3 triplex units making up 9 units and about 14 fourplex units making up 56 units
Most are not new, with the majority having been built around 1980

Triplexes and fourplexes are similar to duplexes, often having mirrored layouts but units may be more likely to have a shared entrance

Triplexes and Fourplexes in Fircrest



1301/1303/1305/1307 Boise Street



1301/1303/1305/1307 Boise Street



1201 Mar Vista Drive



Multiple units on Spruce Street

Townhouses in Fircrest



137/141 Wild Rose Street

Townhouses

Fircrest has approximately 33 townhouses making up 66 units

Most are contained within the 'Commons at Fircrest,' having been constructed in the early 2000s

Townhouses are tall, narrow, multi-story houses attached to one or more similar houses by shared walls, typically three stories or more

Parking

Parking is a major consideration for any development in the region. With additional units per lot come increased parking demand.

Seen are a few examples of how Fircrest's existing middle housing shields its parking from the roadway.

Parking in rear

Parking in rear

Recessed garage

Parking in rear



Does Fircrest's Middle Housing receive more complaints than its Single-Family Housing?

No.

The data shows that over a four-year period and 278 submissions, Planning and Building received only 5 compliance complaints about residences that were middle-housing units.



Next Steps

Please look out for a middle housing survey that will be mailed out to all Fircrest households this Fall 2024.

Survey responses will be reviewed and analyzed by our Middle Housing consultant and City staff which will then be incorporated into draft development regulations. These regulations will be presented during public hearings in 2025.

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