16. HEALTH & WELLNESS

Ivins, a part of the nation's fastest-growing metropolitan area, stands out for its exceptional quality of life. We remain committed to enhancing this quality through our unique health and wellness initiatives, keeping Ivins an extraordinary place to live and visit.

Health and Wellness of a city is measured and promoted by the City in three primary areas:

- Environmental Wellness: The area's unmatched natural beauty, countless outdoor recreation options, and surrounding mountains and vistas foster a healthy lifestyle by encouraging residents to go outside to enjoy this natural beauty.

- Social Wellness: The City's location and environment provide opportunities for people to focus on their social wellness and find positive relationships and a sense of connection.

- Physical Wellness: Our dedication to physical wellness is evident in the accessibility of active lifestyles. We provide multi-use trails for bikes and pedestrians, community sports, and recreational facilities, all within easy reach. These are organized activities through the Parks & Recreation department, ensuring that health and wellness are not just goals but a way of life in Ivins.

- Mental and Emotional Wellness: Our natural environment and facilities invite us to be active and to connect with nature and neighbors. These are keys to sustaining a sense of well-being and emotional stability and are worthy of our protection and enhancement.

Addressing the physical health of our residents, the City is proud to be home to Rocky Vista University. This health-sciences institution offers a comprehensive range of programs, including Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia, Master of Physician Assistant Studies, Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences, and Master of Medical Services. The University also includes a 23,000-square-foot medical office building, ensuring that accessible healthcare services are always within reach for all.



Rocky Vista University

The City's commitment to the health of all residents is evident in our conversion from a regional ambulance service to a city-owned and operated service. This change was made to serve our growing population better and ensure their well-being.

Over the years, Ivins has seen the ebb and flow of doctors' and dentists' offices, a testament to our city's growth and evolving needs. Today, we stand proud with a comprehensive healthcare system in place, thanks to our growing population, the presence of Rocky Vista University, and the Southern Utah Veterans Home. The latter, a premier provider of post-acute care and rehabilitation services, ensures that our veterans and their spouses are well-cared for, offering dedicated short-term rehabilitation, long-term care, and secure memory care.

Ivins Social Health has increased through resident engagement and participation in town hall meetings. This dialogue helps all contribute to discussions on issues and better solutions. Striving for a more highly engaged citizenship has been a struggle and we are looking to improve through a resident Volunteer Program being initiated.

Where we live matters in terms of the mental health component of wellness. It is said that zip code can be a better predictor of health than genetic code. There can be no personal health or a healthy city without consideration of mental health. This aspect helps achieve resilient and sustainable cities. Ivins helps support the mental health of its residents through several key factors:

- Cultural Events
- Open Space
- Parks and Trails
- Community Events
- Social Connection

Each of these areas has been documented for stress reduction, lower depression, and overall improved physical health.

In 2024, Ivins created a Health Coalition of diverse stakeholders that will meet quarterly to oversee the task of earning and maintaining the Healthy Utah Community designation. The coalition will develop a community health plan and oversee its implementation. The goal is to ensure that every resident has access to healthy food, mental health resources, and opportunities to be physically active.

Ivins City has implemented several strategies to qualify for designation as a Healthy Utah Community. Here are just a few:

- The City organizes free fitness events throughout the year.
- The Public Works Department completed a 3+ mile walking/biking trail along Hwy 91 and is filling in gaps to connect several other walking/biking trails.
- We host an annual spring program to promote healthy eating through gardening tips.
- The City encourages urban agriculture with an ordinance that allows backyard poultry/animal husbandry and a policy to allow residents to sell produce as a home business without requiring payment for a business license.

- Our Police and Fire Departments train first responders on mental health crises and suicide prevention and have a Victim's Advocate Coordinator and posts information for victims of sexual assault on its web page.

The City is working on plans for a community garden, creating outreach informational campaigns about healthy eating and mental health issues and resources, continuing to fill active transportation connectivity gaps between key community destinations, updating our active transportation plan, and much more.

Related health and wellness issues include noise, light, and air pollution. The City addresses noise pollution with a noise ordinance that does not allow loud, unnecessary, or unusual noise or any noise that negatively impacts the health, peace, or safety of others. City Code also addresses light pollution, emphasizing the protection of the night sky while providing its residents with safety.

Although residents are pleased with the city's air quality, problems exist with blowing dust from land scraped and graded for new construction. While this form of air pollution cannot be eliminated, the City is acting in 2024 to minimize that impact through changes to the City Code.

A city's financial health is also a component of overall well-being. Careful planning by the city government can ensure that health and safety services are adequately funded and provided. Ivins provides its residents with a balanced budget annually and complete transparency for services provided.

Guiding our growth can also contribute to maintaining the health and well-being of our residents. The four key factors in growth are:

- Housing
- Water
- Transportation
- Open Space/Recreation

These are each addressed in separate chapters.

Supporting City Documents

- Healthy Community Coalition (*** not ready yet)

Community Preferences

Households responding to the General Plan Survey showed that 87.6% of residents were pleased with the quality of life in Ivins, 75.6% were pleased with air quality and noise pollution controls, 81% want more open space, 74% want to preserve the night sky, 60% want more parks or outdoor sports spaces.

Goal

Ivins will continue prioritizing the community's environmental, social, and physical well-being and developing a “Healthy Ivins Coalition” to work toward state recognition as a Healthy City.

Ivins prioritizes all residents' physical, mental, and social well-being by supporting first-class medical facilities and services, a healthy and clean environment, and encouraging healthy lifestyles through an extensive multi-use trail system, parks, open spaces, and organized recreational activities.

Action Steps

- Create a Healthy Community Coalition to develop the community health plan and oversee the plan's implementation.
- Analyze the feasibility of attracting health-related businesses and institutions, such as a pharmacy and insta-care, to Ivins.

Health & Wellness Policies

- Prioritize pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.
- Develop and maintain open spaces, parks, and recreational areas.
- Encourage schools, Rocky Vista University, and healthcare providers to promote wellness.
- Foster social connections through community events and support groups.
- Design streetscapes prioritizing “active transportation” (pedestrian and bike).
- Protect the night sky for all residents to enjoy.