12. HOUSING

Over the past five years, growth efforts have focused on Ivins's tourism economy. The city has also experienced significant residential growth as tourists have discovered the area. Although the average price of a home remains the highest in the region, we envision more affordable options for anyone choosing to live here, but there are challenges to achieving this.

Despite a housing construction boom, over 90% of the housing in Ivins is single-family. Most are upscale and set on relatively large lots, making them unaffordable for most people working in Ivins.

Only 10% of the City's housing is multifamily, ranging from duplexes to townhomes to apartment buildings. Most of these units are owner-occupied units, not rental housing.

Even though Ivins encourages the development of affordable housing with several higher-density zones, the city does not regulate for-sale or rental housing units as affordable units.

Ivins Housing Units by Type (2022)

Housing Type	Units
Single-family	4,095
Townhomes	203
Apartments	97
Townhome apartments	35
Duplexes	18
Condominium	20
Triplexes	12
Total Housing	4,480

Due to this relative lack of housing affordability, an increasing number of people commute to Ivins each day for work. This strains our transportation corridors and makes developing a sense of community more challenging.

The lack of housing options at various price points also limits life-cycle options. It has resulted in a housing shortage for first-time buyers and downsizing options for aging homeowners. This lack of life-cycle options prevents Ivins from having a deeper sense of community. The current housing stock hampers the development of a stable long-term residential community and the associated benefits if we had a more diverse housing supply.

For clarity, it's important to note that in this Plan, we use the terms 'Affordable' and 'Moderate Income' housing interchangeably. This aligns with the State of Utah's definition of 'moderate income' housing, which refers to housing that is affordable for households earning 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less.

Moderate-Income Housing Plan

Our Plan's goals include making changes to reflect evolving needs, priorities, resources, and conditions in the city so that all who choose to live here have the opportunity. It also fulfills the Utah State Moderate Income Housing Plan mandate, expanding on the State's basic requirements to promote a city where housing is ample and affordable.

The Moderate-Income Housing plan set forth by the state offered a variety of goals for each city to commit to. Ivins Moderate-Income Housing Plan identifies three strategies:

1. Rezone for densities necessary to facilitate the production of moderate-income housing.
2. Eliminate impact fees for accessory dwelling units that are not internal accessory dwelling units.
3. Create, allow for, and reduce regulations related to internal or detached accessory dwelling units in residential zones.

This creates the opportunity for residents (existing or new) to build or utilize existing structures as Accessory Dwelling Units to expand long-term rental opportunities and help with reduction in mortgage costs.

Moderate-Income Task Force

There are a variety of housing types and densities in Ivins. Density bonuses in overlay districts encourage moderate-income housing. However, as construction and land costs increase, fresh solutions are needed.

The state has adopted legislation as useful tools designed to assist with finance, process changes and new housing products for planning. However, government resources and programs alone cannot adequately address this in Ivins.

In addition to the strategies in the Moderate-Income Housing Plan, the City has established an active Affordable Housing Task Force.

This task force is comprised of residents and city officials knowledgeable and concerned with the growing housing issues. The goals of the task force are to:

- Evaluate how state legislation can be utilized.
- Evaluate alternatives to lower the cost of building.
- Explore avenues to develop a Land Trust and local Housing Authority
- Work with innovative developers and organizations deeply committed to affordable housing for coordination and collaboration.
- Determine how and if a housing commission may assist with deed restrictions and affordability.

Community Preferences

Households responding to the General Plan Survey showed respondents strongly prefer low-density single-family housing. It is important to keep this in mind so we do not lose the character of the City. At the same time, it is important to provide more options to support life-cycle housing to accommodate the changing needs of our residents over time. Doing this creates many intangible benefits, including a stable workforce and entrenched support for community activities.

Goal

Ivins will retain its residential character by protecting existing residential neighborhoods from the impacts of increased commercialization and density. The City will have housing options that support a diverse population, including low-density residential housing, higher-density multifamily units in select locations, and accessory dwelling units.

This will allow Ivins to maintain housing for families, empty-nesters, seniors looking to downsize, and households with diverse incomes. It will benefit local businesses by providing a larger labor pool. It will benefit the City by having the people working in businesses also be committed and contributing community members.

Obstacles

- Wages have not kept pace with other areas of the state or inflation.
- The cost of land is prohibitive, and construction costs continue to rise.
- Ivins does not own any land to develop and does not engage in the business of home building.
- Markets, not cities, drive the cost of housing.

Resources

The Moderate-Income Housing Plan is a required Element of the General Plan as a separate document and is modified from time to time. The current Plan can be found on the City website.

Action Plan

- Revise building code requirements for multifamily and townhome development to blend in better with adjoining single-family homes.
- Take actions needed to achieve the three strategies in the Moderate-Income Housing Plan.
- Revise zoning ordinances to accommodate innovative, Ivins-appropriate, entry-level, and downsized housing designs.
- Establish appropriate design standards for using manufactured and modular lower cost housing.

Housing Policies

- Protect the character of existing residential neighborhoods from the impact of commercial development and density.
- When making land use decisions, consider all the impacts of commercial development on the need for additional housing.
- Multifamily and higher-density housing shall be located near collector and arterial roads so access to services and transportation is available.
- The Historic District should continue to be developed with medium-to-high-density housing.
- High-density buildings should be located so as not to block views of the mountains, and the building mass should be stepped and staggered.
- Encourage low-profile housing.
- Emphasize residential design that complements the natural beauty and character of the area.
- Consider alternate construction techniques and identify valid new ways of building.

- Encourage infill development.
- Encourage various housing types and price levels to attract residents of diverse ages and life stages.
- Encourage mixed-use and mixed-income developments when developers are amenable to building.