

# A COMMUNITY SURVEY OF SOUTH DESCHUTES COUNTY



Newberry Regional  
**PARTNERSHIP**



## 2023 COMMUNITY SURVEY

JUNE-JULY STUDY – FINAL REPORT

Updated 10/11/23

DCG RESEARCH

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## INTRODUCTION

The Newberry Regional Partnership is a team of residents and organizations that have been working since 2022 to develop a long-range plan for growth in South Deschutes County. To ensure that residents are fully engaged in the process, the partnership retained DCG Research to conduct a community survey. Their goal: Engage the community in helping to influence growth and change over time.

This report presents the findings of the first survey, conducted via social media and online, from June 6 to July 18, 2023. The study population was composed of residents that live in Sunriver, La Pine, and other areas in South Deschutes County including parts of Lake and Klamath that use La Pine-Sunriver for services.

### STRONG RESPONSE

The study design required that DCG Research receive 571 completed surveys to deliver a +/-4% Margin of Error. The final count was 1,162. This resulted in a study with a Margin of Error of less +/-3% with a 95% Confidence Factor.

DCG Research wants to thank everyone who participated in making this survey an accurate reflection of residents' thoughts on growth and change in the region. A special thanks to Kathy DeBone and Dwane Krumme for their leadership in this research project.

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## I. RESEARCH METHODS

Following several conference calls with Kathy DeBone and Dwane Krumme, it was agreed that the study population would be residents that live in Sunriver, La Pine, and outlying areas in South Deschutes County including parts of Lake and Klamath that use the La Pine-Sunriver area for services. The study population was estimated at 16,800. This study anticipated a Margin of Error of +/- 4% with a 95% Confidence Interval based on 571 completed surveys.

**DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENT** – In cooperation with the Newberry Regional Partnership committee, DCG developed an approved survey instrument that had 14 questions.

**DATA COLLECTION** – It was agreed that social media (Facebook) and emails would be used to collect data. The survey was launched June 6<sup>th</sup> and ended July 18<sup>th</sup>. Due to a strong response, the overall study had less than a **3% Margin of Error (2.7) with a 95% confidence interval**. Because Margin of Errors for sub-sets were under under 4%, the original study goal, DCG has included three data sets: Overall, La Pine Area, and Sunriver Area.

Q1 – STUDY ZIP CODES MARGIN OF ERROR WITH 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVAL	SURVEYS COLLECTED	STUDY MARGIN OF ERROR
<b>All Surveys</b>	<b>1,162</b>	<b>2.70%</b>
La Pine Area (97739)	710	2.95%
Sunriver (97707)	391	3.54%
Other Zip Codes (within study area)	60	N.A.

*OTHER ZIP CODES: DCG Research only kept responses within zip codes in the study area: Deschutes River Woods, Crescent, Crescent Lake Junction, Odell, Gilchrist, Chemult, and rural areas south of Bend. Others appeared to be visitors outside of the area zip codes.*

## II. RESEARCH SUMMARY

**BIGGEST CONCERNS** - This survey contained unaided and aided questions that allowed local residents to share their biggest concerns about living in the area.

**UNAIDED** – Participants were eager to provide input into their concerns with 80% answering this question. In reviewing 970 comments, the top local concerns fell into these broad categories:

- Concern about uncontrolled growth. The majority of unaided comments expressed support for controlled growth to protect the small-town, rural vibe of La Pine. However, there were many statements in favor of stopping all growth, reducing the impact of tourism, and concern about the growing number of part-time (second home) residents.
- Wildfire prevention, homeless population living in the woods, drug use, crime, and the limited availability of police protection were all top concerns.
- Better access to health care, specifically 24/7 emergency care and more clinic and hospital options in La Pine, without the need to drive to Bend.
- Increasing traffic, especially the difficulty in accessing Highway 97 through La Pine (need for roundabouts, stop lights, better traffic management).
- Need for more local restaurants and shopping, especially for competitive grocery stores with better selection and pricing.
- Some animosity between residents that do not share similar values concerning lifestyle (maintaining properties, government regulations, and urban/rural social views).

When asked what would make their life better, most unaided comments (936) reflected back on solving concerns they mentioned.

**AIDED** – For the most part, aided response mirrored unaided concerns. Participants are most concerned with drug and crime problems (71%), wildfires/climate impacts (70%), and lack of affordable/available housing and access to local health care (both at 60%).

Q7 – ISSUES OF CONCERN	OVERALL STUDY Very Concerned	OVERALL STUDY Somewhat Concerned	BIGGEST CONCERNS Very/Somewhat Concerned TOTALS
Access to higher education	26%	26%	52%
Access to local health care	27%	33%	60%
Lack of public transportation	23%	30%	53%
Drug and crime problems	36%	35%	71%
Access to local/regional government services	21%	32%	53%
Lack of affordable and available housing	33%	27%	60%
Growing risk of wildfires and other climate impacts	40%	30%	70%
Access to childcare	24%	23%	47%



Except for childcare access (47%), the majority are concerned (very and somewhat) with all issues presented. Reviewing zip code sub-sets, La Pine residents are more concerned with drugs and crime (75%) than Sunriver survey participants (66%).

**SATISFACTION WITH LOCAL SERVICES** - Participants are the most pleased with outdoor recreation opportunities (72%) and fire protection (69%).

<b>Q6 – SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY Very Pleased</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY Somewhat Pleased</b>	<b>MOST PLEASSED Very/Somewhat TOTALS</b>
Fire protection	34%	35%	<b>69%</b>
Law enforcement	30%	34%	<b>64%</b>
Quality of public education	17%	27%	<b>44%</b>
Local retail (shopping) opportunities	15%	32%	<b>47%</b>
Outdoor recreation opportunities	42%	30%	<b>72%</b>
Family-friendly things to do	27%	31%	<b>58%</b>

**They are the least pleased with the quality of public education and local shopping.** The majority are pleased (very or somewhat) with four out of six local services studied. Looking at individual zip code sub-sets, Sunriver participants are much more pleased with family-friendly things to do compared to La Pine (37% vs. 21%).

**ACCEPTANCE OF PLANNING GOALS** - All statements presented were supported by the majority of survey respondents. Being prepared for wildfires and natural disasters (73%) and preventing over-building and development (71%) were the most supported.

Reviewing zip code sub-sets, La Pine residents are even more supportive of preventing development and wildfires than Sunriver participants.

<b>Q8 – ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSED PLANNING GOALS</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY Strongly Agree</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>OVERALL AGREEMENT Strongly/Somewhat TOTALS</b>
Gain greater control over growth	36%	32%	<b>68%</b>
Increase local family wage job growth	35%	32%	<b>67%</b>
Prevent over-building and development	39%	32%	<b>71%</b>
Increase opportunities for community input into planning for the future	40%	29%	<b>69%</b>
Be better prepared for wildfires and natural disasters	46%	27%	<b>73%</b>

**Nearly three out of four survey participants (73%, 822 residents) are willing to participate in follow up qualitative research.**

Residents showed a strong support for being involved with the planning process. Receiving almost twice as many responses as initially estimated reflected this interest. DCG Research has names and emails for the majority of these individuals.

**SURVEY FEEDBACK** - Because of the overwhelming number of comments received via open ended questions Q4 and Q5, fewer participants offered additional comments. A preliminary review of these 620 comments shows that they fell into the following broad categories:

- Repeating Concerns – Many comments simply re-stated their concerns and ways to make things better.
- Thank You/Appreciation – The most common response was thanking the Newberry Regional Partnership for asking and listening to the community.
- Collaboration – Support for greater collaboration in the future among governmental agencies, and for keeping the community involved (asking and listening for input). Some skepticism was expressed as to whether the Newberry Regional Partnership would actually respond to their concerns.

### III. QUESTIONS/DATA COMPARISON TABLES

#### Q1 – What zip code do you live in?

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ 97739		61%	710
▼ 97707		34%	392
▼ Neither, I live in zip code:	Responses	5%	60
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,162</b>

#### Q2 – What county do you live in?

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ Deschutes		56%	651
▼ Klamath		30%	352
▼ Lake		11%	128
▼ None of the above		3%	31
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,162</b>

#### Q3 – How many years have you lived there?

#### OVERALL STUDY

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ 0-5 years		16%	184
▼ 6-10 years		28%	329
▼ 11-14 years		18%	209
▼ 15-20 years		13%	156
▼ More than 20 years		24%	281
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,159</b>

#### LA PINE ONLY

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ 0-5 years		16%	113
▼ 6-10 years		30%	211
▼ 11-14 years		16%	112
▼ 15-20 years		14%	99
▼ More than 20 years		24%	173
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>708</b>

## SUNRIVER ONLY

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-5 years	16%	62
6-10 years	27%	104
11-14 years	23%	90
15-20 years	12%	46
More than 20 years	23%	89
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>391</b>

### Q6 – How pleased are you with the following services in your area?

Q6 – SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES	OVERALL STUDY Very Pleased	OVERALL STUDY Somewhat Pleased	OVERALL STUDY Very/Somewhat TOTALS
Fire protection	34%	35%	<b>69%</b>
Law enforcement	30%	34%	<b>64%</b>
Quality of public education	17%	27%	<b>44%</b>
Local retail (shopping) opportunities	15%	32%	<b>47%</b>
Outdoor recreation opportunities	42%	30%	<b>72%</b>
Family-friendly things to do	27%	31%	<b>58%</b>

## OVERALL STUDY

	VERY PLEASSED	SOMEWHAT PLEASSED	NEUTRAL/DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISPLEASED	VERY DISPLEASED	TOTAL
Fire protection	34% 394	35% 400	19% 221	8% 96	3% 38	1,149
Law enforcement	30% 338	34% 395	18% 210	14% 162	3% 40	1,145
Quality of public education	17% 195	27% 313	29% 333	16% 183	10% 118	1,142
Local retail (shopping) opportunities	15% 177	32% 370	19% 217	24% 282	9% 107	1,153
Outdoor recreation opportunities	42% 479	30% 344	13% 149	11% 125	5% 53	1,149
Family-friendly things to do	27% 308	31% 351	20% 229	17% 194	6% 67	1,149



## LA PINE ONLY

	VERY PLEASSED	SOMEWHAT PLEASSED	NEUTRAL/DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISPLEASED	VERY DISPLEASED	TOTAL
Fire protection	36% 250	35% 248	18% 126	8% 56	3% 22	702
Law enforcement	32% 225	35% 245	17% 118	13% 91	3% 19	698
Quality of public education	14% 96	29% 200	28% 195	16% 114	13% 92	697
Local retail (shopping) opportunities	16% 111	29% 207	18% 128	25% 176	12% 81	703
Outdoor recreation opportunities	40% 279	32% 221	13% 91	11% 77	5% 33	700
Family-friendly things to do	21% 146	33% 229	21% 149	18% 129	7% 48	701

## SUNRIVER ONLY

	VERY PLEASSED	SOMEWHAT PLEASSED	NEUTRAL/DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISPLEASED	VERY DISPLEASED	TOTAL
Fire protection	32% 125	33% 127	21% 81	10% 39	4% 15	387
Law enforcement	26% 100	33% 129	19% 75	17% 65	5% 20	389
Quality of public education	23% 87	24% 94	30% 117	17% 66	6% 22	386
Local retail (shopping) opportunities	15% 60	35% 138	20% 78	24% 92	6% 22	390
Outdoor recreation opportunities	45% 176	25% 97	14% 53	11% 44	5% 19	389
Family-friendly things to do	37% 142	27% 106	17% 67	14% 54	5% 19	388

## Q7 – How concerned are you with the following issues?

Q7 – ISSUES OF CONCERN	OVERALL STUDY Very Concerned	OVERALL STUDY Somewhat Concerned	OVERALL STUDY Very/Somewhat Concerned TOTALS
Access to higher education	26%	26%	<b>52%</b>
Access to local health care	27%	33%	<b>60%</b>
Lack of public transportation	23%	30%	<b>53%</b>
Drug and crime problems	36%	35%	<b>71%</b>
Access to local/regional government services	21%	32%	<b>53%</b>
Lack of affordable and available housing	33%	27%	<b>60%</b>
Growing risk of wildfires and other climate impacts	40%	30%	<b>70%</b>
Access to childcare	24%	23%	<b>47%</b>

## OVERALL STUDY

	VERY CONCERNED	SOMEWHAT CONCERNED	NEUTRAL/NOT SURE	SOMEWHAT NOT CONCERNED	NOT CONCERNED AT ALL	TOTAL
Access to higher education	26% 293	26% 296	25% 287	13% 151	11% 121	1,147
Access to local health care	27% 306	33% 380	17% 193	16% 180	8% 90	1,149
Lack of public transportation	23% 260	30% 346	22% 253	15% 167	11% 124	1,149
Drug and crime problems	36% 416	35% 406	14% 158	11% 130	3% 37	1,146
Access to local/regional government services	21% 243	32% 368	25% 291	15% 169	7% 82	1,152
Lack of affordable and available housing	33% 379	27% 306	20% 234	13% 146	8% 87	1,152
Growing risk of wildfires and other climate impacts	40% 465	30% 342	16% 179	11% 128	3% 38	1,151
Access to childcare	24% 274	23% 263	31% 351	10% 120	12% 137	1,144

## LA PINE ONLY

	VERY CONCERNED	SOMEWHAT CONCERNED	NEUTRAL/NOT SURE	SOMEWHAT NOT CONCERNED	NOT CONCERNED AT ALL	TOTAL
Access to higher education	27% 188	27% 188	25% 177	11% 75	11% 74	701
Access to local health care	27% 187	34% 240	16% 114	14% 101	9% 60	702
Lack of public transportation	22% 154	30% 211	22% 154	14% 100	12% 81	699
Drug and crime problems	39% 272	36% 249	12% 85	10% 71	3% 22	698
Access to local/regional government services	21% 144	34% 238	25% 174	14% 98	7% 49	702
Lack of affordable and available housing	31% 218	28% 198	20% 139	13% 88	8% 58	701
Growing risk of wildfires and other climate impacts	41% 287	31% 217	15% 105	11% 74	3% 20	702
Access to childcare	23% 158	24% 168	32% 222	9% 61	13% 92	700

## SUNRIVER ONLY

	VERY CONCERNED	SOMEWHAT CONCERNED	NEUTRAL/NOT SURE	SOMEWHAT NOT CONCERNED	NOT CONCERNED AT ALL	TOTAL
Access to higher education	24% 91	23% 90	25% 97	18% 69	10% 40	387
Access to local health care	28% 108	30% 116	18% 69	18% 69	7% 26	388
Lack of public transportation	23% 91	30% 116	22% 87	15% 59	9% 37	390
Drug and crime problems	33% 130	33% 129	16% 63	14% 54	3% 13	389
Access to local/regional government services	22% 84	29% 112	26% 101	16% 62	8% 31	390
Lack of affordable and available housing	34% 133	24% 95	20% 79	15% 57	7% 27	391
Growing risk of wildfires and other climate impacts	40% 157	25% 98	17% 67	13% 49	5% 18	389
Access to childcare	26% 99	22% 83	28% 108	15% 56	10% 39	385

**Q8 – How much do you agree with the following statement:  
“In the future, my community needs to...”**

This question was designed to evaluate the acceptance of possible goals for a long-range plan being developed by the Newberry Regional Partnership team. These results appear to endorse the preliminary focus of future plans for the South Deschutes County area.

<b>Q8 – ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSED PLANNING GOALS</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY Strongly Agree</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY Strongly/Somewhat Agree TOTALS</b>
Gain greater control over growth	36%	32%	<b>68%</b>
Increase local family wage job growth	35%	32%	<b>67%</b>
Prevent over building and development	39%	32%	<b>71%</b>
Increase opportunities for community input into planning for the future	40%	29%	<b>69%</b>
Be better prepared for wildfires and natural disasters	46%	27%	<b>73%</b>

**OVERALL STUDY**

	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT AGREE</b>	<b>NEUTRAL/DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
▼ Gain greater control over growth.	36% 417	32% 365	17% 192	11% 132	4% 50	1,155
▼ Increase local family wage job growth.	35% 403	32% 370	17% 198	13% 148	3% 33	1,152
▼ Prevent over building and development.	39% 451	26% 302	14% 165	15% 178	5% 59	1,155
▼ Increase opportunities for community input into planning for the future.	40% 464	29% 338	17% 196	9% 106	5% 52	1,155
▼ Be better prepared for wildfires and natural disasters.	46% 533	27% 307	13% 154	10% 121	3% 40	1,155

## LA PINE ONLY

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEUTRAL/DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
▼ Gain greater control over growth.	39% 273	32% 222	15% 105	11% 75	4% 30	704
▼ Increase local family wage job growth.	37% 257	34% 237	17% 117	11% 77	2% 14	702
▼ Prevent over building and development.	43% 306	23% 161	13% 88	15% 109	6% 40	704
▼ Increase opportunities for community input into planning for the future.	44% 311	30% 208	15% 107	7% 51	4% 28	704
▼ Be better prepared for wildfires and natural disasters.	49% 346	27% 188	12% 82	10% 68	3% 20	704

## SUNRIVER ONLY

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEUTRAL/DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
▼ Gain greater control over growth.	31% 122	31% 122	19% 75	13% 52	5% 20	391
▼ Increase local family wage job growth.	32% 123	30% 118	18% 70	15% 60	5% 19	390
▼ Prevent over building and development.	34% 131	31% 123	16% 64	15% 58	4% 15	391
▼ Increase opportunities for community input into planning for the future.	35% 135	27% 106	20% 77	13% 50	6% 23	391
▼ Be better prepared for wildfires and natural disasters.	42% 165	26% 101	15% 58	12% 47	5% 20	391



## IV. OPEN ENDED QUESTION – VERBATIMS

Three open ended questions were asked. For this initial report, raw comments have been alpha sorted for ease of reviewing but have not been significantly edited or coded.

**Verbatims of all comments (Q4, Q5, Q10) are attached as separate PDF files. They certainly deserve further investigation and coding. A detailed coding of all comments can be conducted by DCG Research.**

The first two open ended, unaided, questions (Q4, Q5) were asked before presenting any ranking questions or information that might influence someone’s top of mind reflections on their concerns or ideas for making their life better.

The final open ended question (Q10) was designed to capture any thoughts that may not have been expressed while taking the survey. A total of 620 comments were collected, 13% of participants added comments.

## STUDY DEMOGRAPHICS

<b>STUDY DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	<b>OVERALL STUDY</b>	<b>LA PINE ONLY</b>	<b>SUNRIVER ONLY</b>
<b>AGE (Q12)</b>			
<b>YOUNGER (1996 to 2010)</b>	15%	13%	19%
<b>MILLENNIALS (between 1980 &amp; 1995)</b>	38%	38%	39%
<b>GENERATION X (between 1965 &amp; 1979)</b>	21%	23%	16%
<b>BABY BOOMERS (between 1946 &amp; 1964)</b>	24%	24%	23%
<b>SENIORS (born 1945 or before)</b>	3%	3%	3%
<b>NEW GENDER QUESTION 2021 (Q11)</b>			
<b>Female</b>	57%	60%	52%
<b>Male</b>	42%	38%	48%
<b>Non-Binary/Third Gender</b>	1%	1%	1%
<b>INCOME (Q26)</b>			
<b>Under \$25,000</b>	5%	6%	4%
<b>\$25-49,999</b>	24%	26%	20%
<b>\$50-99,999</b>	33%	34%	30%
<b>\$100,000 or more</b>	29%	24%	36%
<b>Prefer Not to Answer</b>	10%	10%	10%