2024 **Living Well in La Pine Community Coalition**

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE/SITUATION

La Pine is located in the southernmost part of Deschutes County, about 30 miles south of Bend. Although It is located right along US Highway 97, it is still isolated from the resources that Bend, the fifth largest city in Oregon, offers. Many homes are dispersed and rural, with most businesses and economic activities located right along the highway. La Pine hails as a recreational hotspot, with easy access to a variety of recreational activities along the Cascade Mountain Range, Deschutes River, and beyond.

The city of La Pine had a 2020 population of 2,017. However, the greater La Pine area has a population of 14,248 and over 8% increase from 2020-2024 with a significant number of people over 55 years old. Economically, La Pine has a median household income of $52,404 and an unemployment rate above the state average at almost 7%. Top employment industries in La Pine include construction, health care, and retail trade. Those whose higher degree attained is a high school degree and who are over 25 years old is just over 33%, well over the state average. The percentage of families below the Federal Poverty Level in this community is 13.55%, almost double the state level. (retrieved from Central Oregon Health Data 2024 Demographics for zip codes 97737 and 97739 https://www.centraloregonhealthdata.org/?module=demographicdata&controller=index&action=index&id=33093&sectionId=).

The Central Oregon Health Data website offers health indicators. For the La Pine and Northern Klamath zip code areas, the health equity index is a 5, ranked above any other Central Oregon area (https://www.centraloregonhealthdata.org/indexsuite/index/view?localeType=3&indexId=1).
In addition, The mental health index is ranked four just below two Jefferson county areas (https://www.centraloregonhealthdata.org/indexsuite/index/view?localeType=3&indexId=3).

In 2021, the High Desert Food and Farm Alliance received a grant from the CDC to develop SDOH Accelerator Plans. The first phase and the entirety of the grant included gathering teams of folks to assist in building this plan. The second phase of the project was not funded. However, starting in 2023, the group continued to meet in an informal capacity to establish a broader community group to address health and wellness gaps in La Pine and Northern Klamath Counties. Founding members include the Deschutes County Library, La Pine Community Health Center, Department of Human Service, High Desert Food and Farm Alliance, Newberry Partnership, and OSU Extension Service.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION TAKEN

In 2024, the founding members started meeting monthly. Throughout the year, the team crafted a vision and mission statement, determined the group name, and four focus areas: Get Nourished, Get Knowledge, Get Outside, and Get Together.

DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOME OR IMPACT

The group invited local organizations to present in areas where the members lacked knowledge of these initiatives. The two presentations included the Deschutes Land Trust and the Newberry Partnership. The Get Nourished sub-group applied for a FEAST grant as a first step in gathering community feedback. This application was not funded. However, the group decided to conduct its FEAST by inviting local organizations and

businesses to a community gathering to discover food access resources and identify gaps in the La Pine area.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS TO MOVE

More will come in 2025 as we gear up for community input through focus groups and increased community involvement in our four focus areas. After our ‘FEAST’ event, the group will tackle Get Outside.

PHOTOS AND QUOTES