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Petaluma Health Care District Launching Well-Being Transformation Initiative in Petaluma

Blue Zones to assess Petaluma's well-being and create plan to help residents live better and longer

PETALUMA, Calif., Apr. 18, 2022 — The [Petaluma Health Care District](#) (PHCD) is bringing the globally-renowned Blue Zones to Petaluma to launch the [Blue Zones Activate](#) readiness and feasibility assessment, a comprehensive and engaging initiative that uses an evidence-based approach to evaluating the city's health and well-being of its residents. The effort begins with an in-depth assessment of the Petaluma area that will help determine how to help people live better, longer lives.

"We have been following Blue Zones and its work in communities to improve overall well-being for several years, and we are thrilled to bring this transformative initiative to Petaluma. There is great enthusiasm for a Blue Zones initiative from the city of Petaluma along with residents and community leaders," said Ramona Faith, PHCD CEO. "In the wake of recent fires and the COVID-19 pandemic, we are focused on creating a self-healing model with greater cross-sector collaboration and new cultural norms that improve health for current and future generations. As a solution proven to increase community resilience and build a culture of well-being into communities, the Blue Zones approach is a tremendous community health-shaping tool."

The Blue Zones Activate initiative commenced in April through the establishment of a 12-member steering committee consisting of Petaluma Mayor Teresa Barrett, as well as other community leaders from the healthcare, education, business, and nonprofit sectors. Stakeholder and community events are planned.

We invite community leaders and residents to help launch the Blue Zones Activate initiative in Petaluma at the kickoff event from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at New Life Christian Fellowship.

[Click here to RSVP for the event.](#)

"We are very excited that our community will have an opportunity to participate in the Blue Zones Activate assessment as it ties together so many of the values long held and represented by the people of Petaluma," said Mayor Barrett. "It is a perfect opportunity to actively combine public policy and community health and well-being, and it comes at exactly the right time as we

emerge from a prolonged pandemic and look for ways to reengage with our neighbors and friends.”

What is Blue Zones?

The Blue Zones model is a proven solution based on research and principles developed by founder and National Geographic Fellow and New York Times bestselling author Dan Buettner, who identified the cultures of the world—or blue zones—with the healthiest, longest-living populations.

Research shows that where people live has a bigger influence on their health than their genetics, commonly called the “zip code effect.” The Blue Zones approach focuses on this single largest determinant of health using scientifically proven lessons of longevity, health, and happiness gleaned from 20 years of research.

Instead of focusing on individual behavior change, Blue Zones helps communities make permanent and semi-permanent changes to a city's policies, systems, streets, surroundings, and social networks so it's easier for residents to eat wisely, move naturally, and connect more with others as they move throughout their day. By improving the Life Radius®—the area close to home where most Americans spend 90% of their lives—Blue Zones transformations have been able to move the needle dramatically in improving overall population health and well-being, raising employee and student productivity, and boosting economic vitality and development.

Next Steps for Petaluma's Activate Assessment

PHCD is supporting the first phase of Blue Zones Activate, which is a community and leadership readiness and feasibility assessment. The Blue Zones team, made up of global experts in food systems, built environment, and other sectors, will connect with select leaders and organizations within PHCD's wide network to begin immediate work assessing the strengths, needs, and challenges that residents are facing today. Blue Zones experts will then work with local leaders and residents to build a plan for change.

“We are excited to work with Petaluma leaders in this bold shared purpose to improve well-being, resilience, and economic vitality in the region,” said Ben Leedle, Blue Zones CEO.

“Research shows improved well-being leads to healthier and happier residents and a better and more productive workforce, and we're excited to work with the south Sonoma County community to create systems and surroundings that will promote a vibrant home for current and future generations.”

For more information on Blue Zones Activate or to learn how to get involved, visit <https://www.bluezones.com/activate-petaluma>.

About Blue Zones®

Blue Zones employs evidence-based ways to help people live better, longer. The company's work is rooted in explorations and research done by National Geographic Fellow Dan Buettner

in blue zones regions around the world, where people live extraordinarily long and/or happy lives. The original research and findings were released in Buettner's bestselling books The Blue Zones Solution, The Blue Zones of Happiness, The Blue Zones, Thrive, and Blue Zones Kitchen—all published by National Geographic books. Using original Blue Zones research, Blue Zones works with cities and counties to make healthy choices easier through permanent and semi-permanent changes to our human-made surroundings. Participating communities have experienced double-digit drops in obesity and tobacco use and have saved millions of dollars in healthcare costs. For more information, visit bluezones.com.

About Petaluma Health Care District

PHCD is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the southern Sonoma County community through leadership, advocacy, support, partnerships and education. Its vision is to foster a healthier community and equitable access to comprehensive health and wellness services. PHCD, a public agency managed by the community for the community, has served southern Sonoma County's health and wellness needs for 75 years. [HeartSafe Community \(HSC\)](#) is an initiative led by PHCD to strengthen the community's response to cardiac emergency through CPR/AED Training, strategic AED installation, maintenance and registration, and heart health education. The HSC program is managed by Healthquest CPR, an authorized training center of the American Heart Association. For more information, please visit www.phcd.org.