

Business in Brief

Clatsop home prices up, listings down

ASTORIA — Clatsop County's real estate market remained active in March with average selling prices increasing nearly 11% compared to March 2019. However, the number of sales and listings were down by double digits.

The average sales price was nearly \$421,000 this March, up from \$379,000 a year earlier. The median price — meaning half of sales were for more and half for less — \$387,500, up 6% from a year earlier.

Forty-six listings sold in March, 13.2% less than in March 2019. There were 6% fewer sales for the year to date. Pending sales declined nearly 16% in March and pushed year-to-date pending sales into negative territory.

Active listings — houses available for purchase — dipped more than 19% to 209, 50 fewer than in March 2019. New listings declined to 90, a nearly 17% drop from one year prior.

Houses that sold in the county in March were on the market a median of 119 days, a sharp 55% slowdown from March 2019, when homes were finding buyers in 77 days.

Washington MLS curtails some operations

KIRKLAND, Washington — As the news and impact of covid-19 continues to rapidly evolve, Northwest Multiple Listing Service decided to temporarily disable the public and broker open house features in its MLS system.

As of April 2, NWMLS hadn't updated its public database at www.nwmls.com/library/corporatecontent/statistics/Recaps.pdf. However, the organization said in a press release, "The real estate market in Washington remains strong. Many brokers are conducting virtual showings for clients and hosting virtual open houses for potential buyers. In addition to property photos, many listings have virtual tours where potential buyers can view videos and even remotely 'walk-through' the property. Brokers are also continuing to conduct in-person showings, while remaining cognizant of social distancing recommendations."

Until while a statewide stay-at-home order remains in effect, brokers will not be able to input, search, or view public or broker open house information in the MLS system. Open house information will not be available for display on member real estate broker public websites.

NWMLS's service area includes Pacific County.

Chamber releases guides to COVID-19 relief

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Chamber of Commerce on April 1 released new guides for businesses of all sizes to secure relief under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

"These comprehensive guides ensure business owners fully understand what aid is available to them and how to access those funds as quickly as possible. We are committed to ensuring no family or business goes bankrupt due to financial hardships associated with the coronavirus," said Suzanne Clark, chamber president.

NEW: Economic Injury Disaster Loan Guide: The CARES Act expanded the Small Business Administration's long-standing Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (EIDL), which includes \$10,000 grants for eligible applicants. The EIDL program was created to assist businesses, renters, and homeowners located in regions affected by declared disasters. The guide is available at: uschamber.com/eidl

NEW: Employee Retention Tax Credit Guide: The CARES Act created a new employee retention tax credit for employers who are closed, partially closed, or experiencing significant revenue losses as a result of the coronavirus. The guide is available at: uschamber.com/ertc

UPDATED: Small Business Emergency Loan Guide: The U.S. Chamber's Coronavirus Small Business Emergency Loan Guide, first issued last week, outlines the steps small businesses need to take to access much-needed Payroll Protection Program funds. The guide now includes important information including key dates as the government moves toward implementation. Recently, the Treasury Department issued more details on this paycheck protection program and a loan application available for download: <https://tinyurl.com/Covid-Small-Biz-Help> and <https://tinyurl.com/Paycheck-App-Form>.

Renew commercial fishing licenses online or by mail

OLYMPIA — In response to needs of the commercial fishing industry, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife said on April 1 that its licensing staff are once again processing licenses.

Fishers must apply electronically, by obtaining the relevant application materials from WDFW's website (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/commercial>) and send completed materials to Carol Stedman at Commercial.Sales@dfw.wa.gov, who is also available to answer questions.

Applications and payment may also be made by U.S. Mail to the address on the application.

Do not make the trip to Olympia to purchase licenses as WDFW's headquarters building is currently closed to the public.

SAIF issues guide to help Oregon businesses

A new resource will help eligible Oregon businesses pay for expenses tied to making their workplaces safer against the coronavirus and responding to the impact the pandemic has had on workers.

Established by SAIF, the \$10 million coronavirus worker safety fund is designed to support employee safety, reduce injuries, and decrease exposures by helping businesses impacted by the coronavirus. More than 53,000 SAIF policyholders across the state are eligible for funds.

The fund will help businesses pay for expenses tied to making workplaces safer against the virus and dealing with the impact of the pandemic on workers. Eligible expenses could include worksite cleaning and disinfection supplies; resources to reopen businesses safely after a coronavirus-related closure; resources to redesign or modify workspaces to encourage social distancing; and mental health and wellness initiatives.

Expenses incurred on or after March 1 will be considered. The application, along with additional details about the fund, can be found at saif.com/safetyfund. SAIF will accept submissions until all funds have been expended or until the fund is no longer needed.

Credit unions offer lifelines during covid crisis

SEATAC — Credit unions are considered essential businesses under most closure orders. As not-for-profit, cooperative financial services providers, credit unions are already mobilized to help their members who are facing financial hardships as the result of covid-19.

While communities are coming together in efforts to slow the spread of coronavirus, disruptions in everyday life may create inconveniences, anxiety, and financial difficulty for Pacific Northwest residents. Credit unions are helping members and employees through those challenges. After all, the credit union philosophy is "People Helping People."

Residents are facing life-changing disruptions as schools and many businesses close. Unfortunately, for many, this has meant the loss of jobs or income. Credit unions have special programs in place to help consumers through these difficult times, and have already provided hundreds of solutions such as:

- Loan modifications to make payments more affordable
- Options to skip mortgage payments for as long as 90 days
- Emergency low-interest to zero-interest loans

If you are being impacted financially by covid-19, contact your credit union to find out about the solutions that are best for you. If you aren't a credit union member, and unsure where to start, visit YourMoneyFurther.com to learn more and find one near you.

Unprecedented rise in initial jobless claims continues

OLYMPIA — New claims for unemployment benefits soared to a record 181,975 for the week of March 22-28, according to the Employment Security Department (ESD). This represented a 3,513% increase year over year, and a 41% increase over the previous week.

By comparison, this is seven times the peak week during the 2008/2009 recession which was 26,075 weekly initial claims. Including the ongoing weekly claims that were filed, ESD saw roughly 350,000 claims come into its claims center in the last week of March.






TRAVEL TRAILER/5TH WHEEL



NEW SHOP! LARGER BAYS MORE TECH'S



TRUCK CAMPER/TOY HAULERS





Find us on
Facebook

Right on the Freeway - Right on the Price

1-5 Exit 36 • Kelso, WA • www.UNEKRv.com • 800-248-6335

CELEBRATING 42 YEARS!
1978 - 2020