

## Masks

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It also mandates that businesses make sure people aren't within 6 feet of each other — unless that's not practical for certain activities.

The agency said it would be considered if the rule can be repealed, starting no later than July.

Besides mask and distancing requirements, the rule — which also includes requirements and guidelines regarding airflow, ventilation, employee notification in case of an outbreak and sanitation protocols — dovetails with separate actions and restrictions by Gov. Kate Brown, the latest being increased county risk levels.

# Paycheck Protection Program runs out of money

BY JOYCE M. ROSENBERG

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The government's key COVID-19 relief program for small businesses has run out of money.

The Small Business Administration said Wednesday that the Paycheck Protection Program has been exhausted. As of Sunday, the program PPP had given out nearly 10.8 million loans worth more than \$780 billion since April of last year.

The program, which has run out of cash and refunded by Congress twice before, was scheduled to expire May 31. It's not yet known if lawmakers will approve another round of funding.

The SBA said in a statement it will still fund applications that have been approved. New applications made through Community Financial Institutions, which are financial lenders that serve underserved communities, would also be funded.

More than half the loans and nearly a third of the loan money were distributed this year. The average loan size was \$46,000, less than half the \$101,000 average loan in 2020. That is a sign that smaller companies unable to get loans last year were now getting funding. Companies have been drawn to the loans because they promised forgiveness if the money is used for payroll and

other essentials.

But, while the Paycheck Protection Program helped save many companies devastated by the pandemic, the Biden administration has estimated that more than 400,000 U.S. businesses have permanently closed due to the virus.

More aid is still available to small businesses through SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans, and restaurants with no more than 20 locations can apply for grants through the Restaurant Revitalization Fund that began accepting applications on Monday. Help is also available to owners of theaters and other entertainment companies under the Shuttered Venues Operator Grants.



Evan Vucchi/AP file

President Joe Biden speaks after signing the PPP Extension Act on March 30. The Small Business Administration said Wednesday the Paycheck Protection Program has been exhausted. As of Sunday, the PPP had given out nearly 10.8 million loans worth more than \$780 billion since April of last year.

## Buyers

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Parmon tells her local clients, some of whom have lost out after a dozen offers to buy, that if they can stick with it, they will eventually purchase a home.

Interest in suburban living, with larger homes on larger lots, had been growing for years, said real estate professionals, but the coronavirus amplified the desire for more size, comfort and livability as well as space to entertain outside and replace vacation getaways while remaining socially distant.

"The coronavirus has fundamentally changed how you view your house," said Israel Hill, the office leader of John L. Scott Real Estate's Portland Northeast office. "Before COVID-19, people wanted to walk to get coffee, delicious food and join activities like movies in the park. Now that people are working, home schooling and cooking at home, they wish they had a backyard to hang out in."

He said less populated areas, including suburbs and second-home markets like

Bend, continue to tempt people who can work remotely.

Danielle Snow, a broker with John L. Scott in Bend, said an influx of out-of-state buyers willing to make a fast offer and pay over asking price have made a tight market more difficult for locals.

She ticks off recent Bend deals:

- A four-bedroom townhome listed at \$699,000 sold for \$774,277 — \$75,277 over the asking price — after six days on the market. Snow's clients, who are Oregon residents, were in the backup position for the home, but they didn't get it.
- A three-bedroom townhouse with riverfront and Cascade mountain views was listed for \$2,175,000 and sold for \$2,260,000 after four days on the market, \$85,000 over asking price. Snow's clients from Seattle couldn't get to Bend fast enough to make an offer, she said.
- A 2,715-square-foot, single-level house on the eighth fairway in Awbrey Glen was listed for \$1,149,000 on March 24. It went pending three days later and closed on April 9 for \$1,200,500.

Buyers from California paid \$51,000 over asking price, Snow said.

Another of Snow's out-of-state clients bought a house in Bend after a video walk-through; they have yet to see the property in person even though it's now being significantly remodeled.

Snow calls Bend the "Aspen of Oregon," and said it's attractive to city "stress cadets" who want to be closer to nature and enjoy a more hectic lifestyle.

Bend was once a place where people retired, she said. Now more tech company employees are moving to Bend, Redmond and Prineville, which was a "cow town," she said, before Apple and Facebook invested billions of dollars in data centers there.

But not every residential property is selling fast. The price has to be right, said Snow, who has been selling property for 40 years but said pricing a property is challenging in the current market.

Her approach: "Start at a number and the market will tell you if it's too much."

## Wind

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"This is a community of survivors, forgotten by the world and ever shrinking, but not going anywhere anytime soon. And lately we are feeling rather betrayed by our neighbors in the Tri Cities," Wiley wrote. "Shame on you for condemning construction on a ridge while hoping to someday build a mansion on the very same hill. Shame on you for being this upset about something that, at very most, would be a slight change to your backyard view. Because this same thing would be an absolute, life-changing blessing to your neighboring community."

Wiley's letter, published online and in several newspapers, drew hundreds of responses that offered stark evidence of the fault lines that have opened up in Benton County over this project in the Horse Heaven Hills.

"People were either very supportive or like, 'I hope you go broke and your family starves,'" Wiley said. "I definitely had a target on my back."

The project was put together by Boulder, Colorado-based

Scout Clean Energy, which is owned by Quinbrook Infrastructure Partners, a global private equity firm.

As proposed, Scout could erect up to 244 wind turbines spaced across a 24-mile swath of the upper elevations of the Horse Heaven Hills, a long, prominent ridgeline — formed of volcanic basalt — in the Columbia River basin to the south and west of the Tri-Cities. The wind turbines' height, for the preferred model as measured from ground to blade tip, would rise up to 496 feet. Some could tower 671 feet, taller than the Space Needle.

The project also would include several solar sites that could eventually cover more than 6,500 acres, as well as a battery complex to store and then release some electricity in the evening when demand may be stronger. Running at full capacity, the project could produce up to 1,150 megawatts of power. With the up-and-down nature of solar and wind power, the project would operate over the course of a year at well below half that capacity. Still, the output is expected to generate enough electricity for some 275,000 homes.

Proponents say it is the kind of project needed to help Washington meet the requirements of a 2019 law that calls for ending by 2045 electricity production from coal and gas unless some way is found to capture planet-warming carbon emissions.

This epic change is expected to contribute to a regional build-out of tens of thousands of megawatts of new zero-carbon energy generation by midcentury, according to Ben Kujala, director of power planning with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

The Scout project does not yet have contracts with utilities that will use the power, but expects to put in bids to deliver electricity to Seattle City Light, Puget Sound Energy, Portland General Electric and other regional utilities. The utilities benefit from the region's abundant low-carbon hydropower, but forecast a need for additional renewable resources in the years ahead.

"We have a resource gap. And we want to be part of the puzzle in meeting that," said Javon Smith, a Scout spokesperson.

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## Why I'm running for Bend-La Pine School Board

I am both passionate and concerned about the future of education, and confident that I can be a **voice for all parents** who share the same feelings of commitment. **I will represent all families and advocate for children across all communities.** As a proud Mexican-American, I also believe that my perspective will add value to the diversity of viewpoints.

I have met wonderful teachers in the district who care deeply about students and want to see them succeed to their fullest potential. I also want to be able to give teachers the necessary tools they need to deliver excellence.

"Our group represents 40,000 Oregonian parents advocating for getting students back to school full-time. We are proud to endorse **Maria Lopez-Dauenhauer** for school board." — ED300



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for Bend-La Pine School Board

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