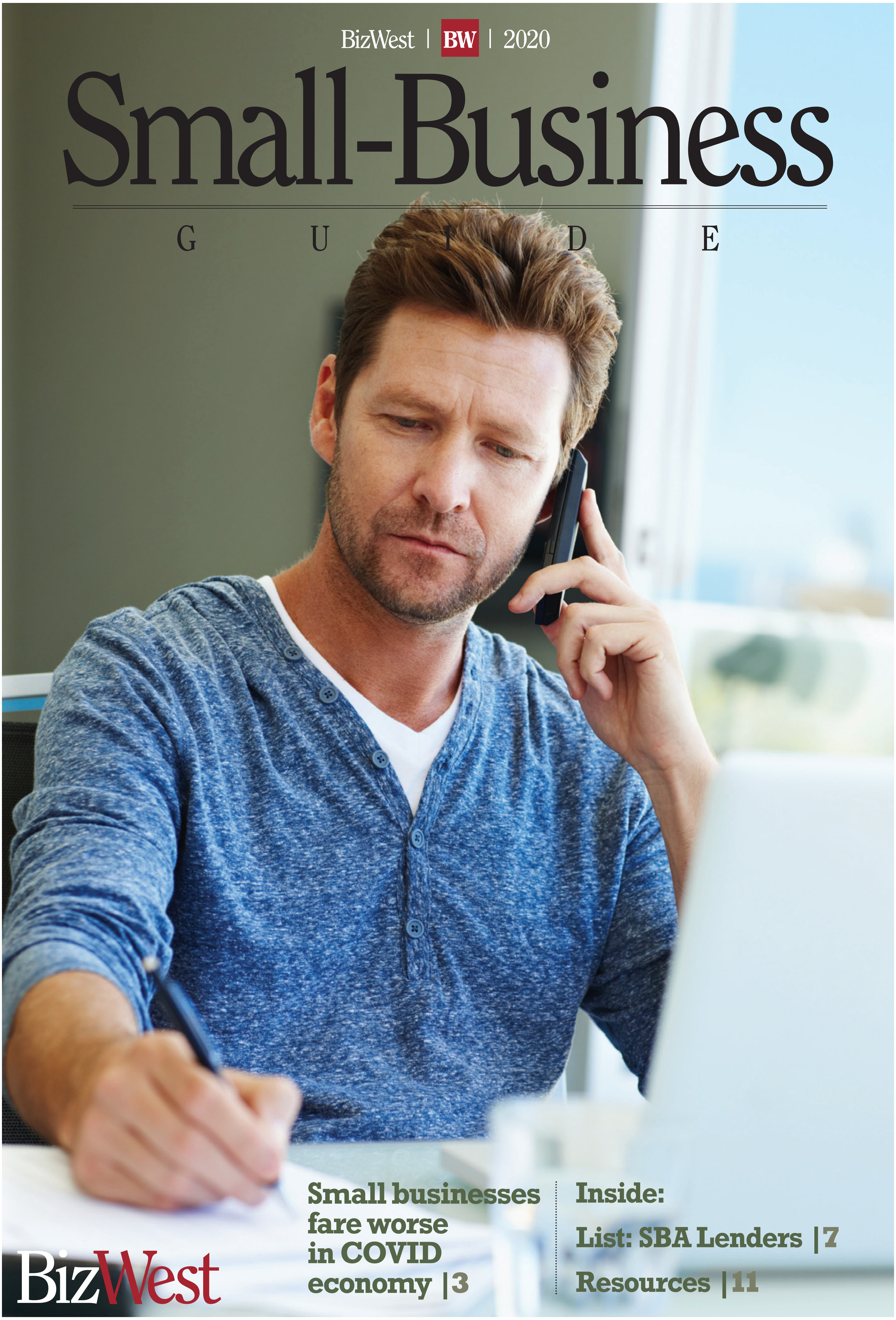
BizWest | BW | 2020

Small-Business GUIDE



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BizWest

Small businesses fare worse in COVID economy

By Ken Amundson
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The economic hole created by the novel coronavirus has resulted in massive disruption — pain might be a better word — to businesses large and small, yet it's small businesses that are faring worse.

That was one of several conclusions drawn from research conducted in Colorado by the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, a state agency.

Smaller companies had fewer reserves and were less prepared, and fully a third of their owners and operators told researchers that they are unlikely to survive beyond six months.


WOBBEKIND

"We really are in such uncharted territory that we have difficulty knowing what will happen," said Rich Wobbekind, senior economist and associate dean of the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado Boulder. Wobbekind addressed several hundred business people who participated in late May in an economic-forecast event.

Wobbekind, like other economists, makes reference to "black swan" events, and the COVID-19 pandemic fits the definition. The virus was not on anyone's radar early in the year, but in the space of two months, it completely upended a robust, vibrant, full-employment economy.

Getting at information has challenged economists and business leaders because the economic event moved so rapidly, and most reliable measures of performance trail real time by weeks or months.

That's why OEDIT commissioned a survey, conducted by the National Research Center Inc., to find out from the mouths of businesspeople what they are experiencing.

Their findings:

• Most businesses were not prepared. Fewer than a third felt they could survive more than six months with the shutdown, with 28% saying they might survive three months or less. Forty percent said it would take six months to recover once social distancing is lifted.

• A third of all Colorado businesses were shut down during the time of the survey, which was conducted April 10-30. A total of 42% of those that remained open were experiencing revenue declines greater than 50%. The majority expected 2020 revenue to be at least 25% below projections.

• While obviously concerned about loss of revenue, businesses also were concerned about their employees. "Can I pay them; can I keep them safe" were questions they were asking. Among businesses not shut down, almost half expected to lay off workers within six months.

• When asked about what help they might need to recover, most said they preferred grants to loans, because financial uncertainties made it difficult to know how and when loans could be repaid.

• All businesses were affected by the pandemic, but small companies with public-facing operations reported larger revenue deficits.

A quarter of a million Coloradans are on the ongoing unemployment-compensation list as of the last week of May. But beyond layoffs, 45% of employers have cut hours, suspended bonuses, reduced pay rates or otherwise cut payroll costs, the survey found.

Many companies sent their employees home to work, but 45% of companies said their businesses could not telework because of the nature of the jobs to be done. And even when workers could work from home, they often did not have sufficient internet access or equipment.

Almost 60% of companies moved some or all operations online in order to stanch the outflow of revenue.

Eighty percent of businesses, the survey said, pursued federal assistance, but 40% as of the time of the survey said they had not gotten it.

It's all up from here

"We have potentially seen the worst of it," Wobbekind said. Citing statistics not normally included in one of his forecasts, the economist said that truck traffic, for example, has picked up in the past couple of weeks, "which is indicative of a bounce back."

He does not expect a V-shaped recovery in the macro economy, but more likely a W-shaped recovery if the state enters a second round of the virus.

Wobbekind quoted a study that concluded that half of the states — Colorado included — are likely to suffer a resurgence later this year.

Some industries, residential real estate, for example, may recover before others, he said.

The OEDIT survey concluded similarly. Companies with the worst chance of quick recovery are in the leisure and hospitality industries, along with the retail sector. In Colorado, about a fourth of all accommodation and food-service workers have been laid off.


LEWANDOWSKI

Brian Lewandowski, executive director of the Business Research Division at Leeds, said he projects that 125,000 jobs will be lost for the year statewide. The loss of every 16,200 jobs at Colorado's average wage means $1 billion in lost wages and lost spending ability.

Wobbekind said the state can expect to experience double-digit unemployment rates as it enters 2021, and might not return to pre-pandemic employment levels for two or three years.

Devereaux: Now more than ever, government must be a partner

What is it like to be a community banker today? When was the last disruption with uncertainty this deep? The real estate crash of 2008? Y2K (what's that?)? The stock market crash of 1989? The depression beginning in 1929? The flu epidemic of 1918? All of the above? Regardless, where do we go?


DEVEREAUX

In the last month the federal government via the Small Business Administration scrambled to develop the Paycheck Protection Program, providing liquidity to small "main street" businesses so they could stay open until the shutdown had subsided or ended.

In 2019, the SBA assisted in $28 billion of bank-originated loans. In May, with six days of notice, the SBA requests tied to PPP increased by 25 times. Community banks jumped into action despite no clear plan and no electronic access system for applications, to ensure our businesses had a fighting chance. Unfortunately, federal guidelines are still confusing, inconsistent, nonexistent or not practicable.

And that is where local governments become critical. Compared to the last recession, business balance sheets show more liquidity and tangible capital, leverage is manageable and relatively moderate, and P&L statements reflect improved efficiency with improved GPM and less operating costs/expenses. This is good news for our region, but we have to be smart on how we navigate the uncharted waters ahead.

Government, in my lifetime, has been a regulator, rule maker or enforcer; it is time for that to change. Government, while recognizing that it frequently is, has to step up to be an intentional partner all the time moving forward. The over regulations the government has in place have not allowed us to be as nimble as we would like in this time, and businesses now more than ever will need nimbleness, not overhanded enforcement if our economies are going to bounce back.

> "The first question we really need to ask, is how much do local governments really need to take upfront for business to launch a project?"

We know that local governments get harped on about fixing the development process. This time we mean it. Over the years I have seen hundreds of deals killed because the cost to explore and open up a business is just too much. Preliminary studies, site plans, feasibility studies, traffic studies, they are endless and will be the death of new projects and the death of job retention and creation in our region. Government has to own up to its share of the cost of doing business and come to the table with reasonable solutions for business.

The first question we really need to ask, is how much do local governments really need to take upfront for business to launch a project? Or look at expanding a business? From a banking and finance perspective, when looking at business growth and retention, this is one of the critical questions that local governments will need to ask themselves in the next 18 months. Cash flow is king, has never been more true than right at this moment, and businesses need local governments to take this very seriously.

Through adversity comes innovation and opportunity. Yes, we are in this together for a long time. Best to rely on simplicity, common sense and historical experiences. Let's come together for our communities by creating the best environment for business to thrive. I know community bankers are ready to help.

Harry Devereaux has been involved with banking in Northern Colorado for 45 years and is a Colorado native. He wrote this on behalf of NoCo Strong for Business, a group that brings local government officials together to discuss ideas for how they can support businesses, now and in the future.

Hostetter: COVID-19 need not be a Sophie's Choice

Why are state and local governments approaching re-opening their municipalities during COVID-19 as a Sophie's Choice trade-off between economic growth and public safety?

We don't know. This is not a Sophie's Choice situation. Both public safety and economic growth can be achieved at the same time as municipalities emerge from stay-at-home orders.


HOSTETTER

How can this be done? Ask us, Colorado's manufacturers. We know how.

Since the second industrial revolution of the late 19th/early 20th centuries, manufacturers have known how to manage filtration and air particulates. The World Health Organization has concluded that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted during close contact through respiratory droplets expelled by such things as coughing. So, as filtration and particulate experts, manufacturers can play a unique role during this pandemic. And, we should.

We can collaborate across industries to help all types of businesses protect their clients and employees from droplets and airborne virus particulates. We can help municipalities keep people safe while allowing businesses to operate.

What should we do?

Let's form a Colorado manufacturers/local authority collaboration in Northern Colorado? Let's have the collaboration…

Get boots on the ground with a team of manufacturing and public safety experts who can go into businesses, if needed, to help them adapt and retrofit their facilities to manage the new guidelines in place. The government guidelines for these things require resources to implement, which are resources businesses don't have right now. This is a great way for local governments to aid businesses navigating these unknown times.

Give employers the necessary information to educate their employees regarding how to act responsibly both at and outside of work and, let's give business owners the air cover they need to effectively manage their clients and employees safely.

Alleviate unnecessary regulatory policies and limit liability for businesses that are acting responsibly to protect their employees and clients from COVID-19.

Approach Safer at Home and future reopening and expansion efforts with a considered approach — one where businesses being

> "We can help municipalities keep people safe while allowing businesses to operate."

responsible and trying to do the right thing can stay open. We need our businesses open to ensure a thriving Northern Colorado economy, and we need our manufacturers to open to keep Colorado supplied with essential products and technology. Local governments need to help be a conduit to the state to make this happen

We have found varying municipalities, both inside and outside of Colorado, that are actively working to implement practical support for business. Boulder County is providing access to rangers who can help business owners with their facilities and is providing useful information and checklists. This sort of direct line of access allows manufacturers to navigate our current situation better. In North Carolina, policies and pledges are being created to address both public safety and economic growth issues, in addition to creating access to training for businesses that help them get up and running quickly and be able to provide safety assurances. We believe that Colorado has the will and the skill to take this on. So, let's do it.

Collaboration and innovation have always been at the core of who we are in manufacturing. Every dollar spent in manufacturing adds $1.89 in business growth in other supporting sectors including retailing, transportation and business services. Manufacturing will continue to be a critical growth engine for the economy.

However, during COVID-19, manufacturing can play an even more important role in driving both economic growth and public safety given our specialized knowledge and expertise regarding filtration and particulates. We are eager to contribute even more toward Colorado's recovery.

So, let's talk.

Heidi Hostetter is the vice president of Faustson Tool Corp. and is a Colorado manufacturing industry evangelist with 20 years of experience in the field. She wrote this on behalf of NoCo Strong for Business, a group that brings local government officials together to discuss ideas for how they can support businesses, now and in the future.

BW LIST

SBA Lenders

Ranked by gross amount of 7(a) SBA Loans in Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer and Weld counties.

Rank	Company	Dollar volume 2019 Total loans 2019	Headquarters Phone Website	Person in charge Title Year founded
1	**Independent Financial**[1] 7777 Henneman Way McKinney, TX 75070	$11,958,500 17	McKinney, TX 972-562-9004 www.independent-bank.com	David Brooks chairman, president & CEO 1913
2	**Wells Fargo Bank N.A.** 101 N. Phillips Ave. Sioux Falls, SD 57104	$11,443,400 37	Sioux Falls, SD 800-956-4442 www.wellsfargo.com	Timothy Sloan CEO 1874
3	**BBVA** 15 S. 20th St. Birmingham, AL 35233	$11,212,000 9	Birmingham, Ala. 205-297-3000 www.bbvacompass.com	Francisco González chairman 1964
4	**Live Oak Banking Co.** 1741 Tiburon Drive Wilmington, NC 28403	$9,057,000 13	Wilmington, NC 877-890-5867 www.liveoakbank.com	James Mahan III CEO 2007
5	**Keybank N.A.** 127 Public Square Cleveland, OH 44114	$6,654,400 8	Cleveland, OH 800-539-2968 www.keybankusa.com	Beth Mooney CEO/chairman 1849
6	**Bank of the West** 180 Montgomery St. San Francisco, CA 94101	$6,097,500 15	San Francisco, CA 925-942-8300 www.bankofthewest.com	Nandita Bakhshi CEO 1874
7	**Hanmi Bank** 3327 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90010	$5,962,000 5	Los Angeles, CA 213-427-5722 www.hanmi.com	Chong Guk Kum CEO/president 1982
8	**First National Bank of Omaha** 1620 Dodge St. Omaha, NE 68102	$5,708,500 16	Omaha, NE 402-602-3022 www.firstnational.com	Bruce Lauritzen chairman 1863
9	**NBH Bank, dba Community Banks of Colorado** 7800 E. Orchard Road, Suite 200 Greenwood Village, CO 80111	$4,479,000 11	Greenwood Village, CO 888-237-3111 www.nbhbank.com	G. Timothy Laney CEO/president 2010
10	**U.S. Bank N.A.** 425 Walnut St. Cincinnati, OH 45202	$4,038,100 28	Cincinnati, Ohio 800-872-2657 www.usbank.com	Andrew Cecere CEO 1863
11	**Bank Five Nine**[2] 155 W. Wisconsin Ave. Oconomowoc, WI 53066	$3,818,000 1	Oconomowoc, WI 888-569-9909 www.fbfcwi.com	Mark Mohr CEO 1859
12	**UMB Bank N.A.** 1010 Grand Avenue Kansas City, MO 64106	$3,656,000 4	Kansas City, Mo 816-860-7000 www.umb.com	Mariner Kemper CEO/chairman 1913
13	**PromiseOne Bank**[3] 2385 Pleasant Hill Road Duluth, GA 30096	$2,850,000 1	Duluth, GA 678-385-0800 www.promiseone.bank	Jake Park co-president, co-CEO & director 2008
14	**Seacoast Commerce Bank** 11939 Rancho Bernardo Road, Suite 200 San Diego, CA 92128	$2,834,900 4	San Diego, CA 858-432-7000 www.sccombank.com	Richard Sanborn president and CEO 2002
15	**United Community Bank** 177 Highway 515 East Blairsville, GA 30512	$2,751,800 6	Blairsville, CA 706-745-2151 www.ucbi.com	H. Lynn Harton CEO 1950
16	**JPMorgan Chase Bank** 1111 Polaris Parkway Columbus, OH 43240	$2,741,500 13	Columbus, OH 312-732-4000 www.jpmorganchase.com	James Dimon CEO 1824
17	**First Home Bank** 9190 Seminole Blvd. Seminole, FL 33772	$2,738,000 9	Seminole, FL 727-394-2265 www.firsthomebank.com	Anthony Leo CEO 1999
18	**Zions Bancorporation, N.A., dba Vectra Bank Colorado** 1 S. Main St. Salt Lake City, UT 84133	$2,636,000 12	Salt Lake City, UT 800-232-8948 www.zionsbank.com	Bruce Alexander president & CEO, Vectra Bank Colorado 1873
19	**HomeStar Bank and Financial Services**[4] 303 Section Line Road Manteno, IL 60950	$2,538,000 8	Manteno, IL 815-468-6504 www.midlandsb.com	Bill Smith CEO 1946
20	**Choice Financial Group** 645 Hill Ave. Grafton, ND 58237	$2,500,000 4	Grafton, ND 701-352-0242 www.choicefinancialgroup.com	Brian Johnson CEO N/A
21	**North Valley Bank** 9001 N. Washington St. Thornton, CO 80229	$2,389,000 4	Thornton, CO 303-452-5500 www.nvbank.com	Chuck Johnston president 1963
22	**Midwest Regional Bank** 363 Festus Centre Drive Festus, MO 63028	$2,000,000 4	Festus, MO 636-937-5351 www.mwrbank.com	Michael Bender CEO 2006
23	**IncredibleBank** 327 N. 17th Ave. Wausau, WI 54401	$1,845,000 2	Wausau, WI 715-845-5522 www.incrediblebank.com	Todd Angel CEO 1967
24	**High Plains Bank** 600 Kimbark St. Longmont, CO 80501	$1,429,700 4	Flagler, CO 303-776-2265 www.highplainsbank.com	John Creighton CEO 1908
25	**Stearns Bank N.A.** 4191 Second St. S. St. Cloud, MN 56301	$1,403,000 6	St. Cloud, MN 320-253-6607 www.stearns-bank.com	Kelly Skalicky president & CEO 1912

Source: U.S. Small Business Administration
1 Formerly Independent Bank. Acquired Guaranty Bank & Trust Co. in January 2019
2 Formerly First Bank Financial Centre
3 Formerly NOA Bank.
4 Merged into Midland States Bancorp in 2019.

Researched by BizWest

Businesses seek PPP guidance, flexibility

By Tommy Wood
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Nearly two months after the Paycheck Protection Program was launched to help keep small businesses afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic, new guidance issued last week by the Treasury Department and the Small Business Administration offered business owners and local lenders some answers about which PPP loans could be forgiven — and raised many more questions.

This comes as the House of Representatives voted May 28 to pass bipartisan legislation that would make forgiveness terms for PPP loans much more flexible, with a Senate vote on the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act expected to take place next week.

In Northern Colorado, responses to the PPP and the new loan-forgiveness guidance issued by the Treasury and the SBA have been mixed. For some businesses, the loans have been a boon that has helped keep them open. For others, the program has created confusion and concern.

SHARON KING

"We have worked with many employers who have been successful in keeping their employees and keeping things together," said Sharon King, director of the Boulder Small Business Development Center. "Other businesses have been very reluctant and concerned about spending that money."

Much of that concern revolves around not spending PPP money in ways that would make the loan ineligible for forgiveness. The PPP was rolled out at the beginning of April with the intention of giving small business owners forgivable loans to help them weather the pandemic. The first round of PPP funding, totaling $349 billion, was exhausted in less than two weeks. The second round of funding, which started with $310 billion, still has $140 billion left. Through the end of last week, more than 4.4 million PPP loans had been approved.

For businesses to be eligible for loan forgiveness, they must satisfy several criteria: spend the loan within eight weeks of receiving it; retain or rehire employees; use at least 75 percent of the loan for payroll; and spend the remaining money on rent, utilities or mortgage interest. The new guidelines released last week included the establishment of a 60-day time frame for lenders to review loan-forgiveness applications, as well as limits to the amount of an owner-employee's or sole proprietor's payroll compensation that can be forgiven.

Specifically, the new guidance states that owner-employees, sole proprietors, and independent contractors can have the lower of 15.38% of their 2019 compensation or $15,385 forgiven. This stipulation has raised many questions and concerns, said Dan King, a consultant with the Boulder SBDC.

> "When customers provide a forgiveness application, what are the banks responsible for making sure is contained in there?"
>
> Shawn Osthoff, president of Bank of Colorado

"It's harsh," he said. "It's very restrictive. It's penalizing owner-employees."

One of the problems, King said, is that the guidance failed to adequately define the term "owner-employee," which has put some businesses in a position of not knowing how to categorize their employees. For example, it's unclear if owning stock — whether 5% or one single share — is enough to qualify someone as an owner-employee.

The new guidance also prevents owner-employees from paying themselves more salary if they took on the responsibilities of furloughed employees. A further issue, King added, is that many owner-employees and sole proprietors have little reportable income to begin with. If only about 15% of their 2019 earnings can be forgiven, that doesn't add up to much.

"These people are struggling with the loss of business, working 40-to-50-hour weeks," said Natalia Crofut, another consultant working with the Boulder SBDC. "It can come across as just unfair. It doesn't seem to align with the goal of the program."

Crofut said that she has worked with business owners who had to choose between accepting a PPP loan to keep their business afloat and going on unemployment. In some cases, she said, they'd have been ineligible for forgiveness had they taken the loan.

And, for business owners whose loans aren't eligible to be forgiven, repaying them may not be easy. PPP loans have a two-year term with the first payment due six months after disbursement. If a business received an $18,000 loan that ends up not being forgiven, it'll owe $1,000 per month during a time when, given the state of the pandemic, steady revenue is anything but assured.

"That's a lot for a small business," Crofut said. "That can be the difference between making payroll and not."

Other businesses, Dan King said, have been sitting on their loans while they decide whether to use them or simply give the money back to the government. Even with the confusion and concerns surrounding the new guidance, however, businesses did receive some clarity.

One of the most beneficial aspects of the new guidance allows companies to change the starting point of their eight-week spending window from the time they receive their loan to their first payroll date after getting the funds.

Lisa Hudson, the director of East Colorado SBDC, said that change will help business owners get the most out of their forgivable loans even as they look for more answers.

"I think what they're still looking for is what they need to provide to ensure their forgiveness is maximized," Hudson said.

SHAWN OSTHOFF

The community banks that have done the brunt of the lending for the PPP are in a similar position after receiving the new guidance — they have more clarity than they did before, but questions still abound.

While the guidance established a 60-day timetable for lenders to review PPP loan forgiveness applications, it didn't specify banks' ultimate authority in approving or denying forgiveness or whether the SBA can overrule their decisions.

"From our perspective, we'd like more guidance on exactly what our responsibilities are," said Shawn Osthoff, president of Bank of Colorado. "When customers provide a forgiveness application, what are the banks responsible for making sure is contained in there?"

Osthoff added that additional guidelines about how health-care costs factor into forgiveness applications would also be welcome.

"It's one of those things where more guidance begets more questions," Osthoff said.

Some of those questions may be answered when the Senate comes back into session June 1 and takes up the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act, the bill that already passed the House. It would extend the eight-week spending period to 24 weeks, require that only 60 percent of the loan be spent on payroll, and allow businesses that receive forgiveness to defer payroll taxes.

Until that bill is passed or defeated, or until the SBA and Treasury issue more guidance, local SBDCs and lenders are advising business owners as best they can during an unprecedented time.

Susan Moratelli, vice president of Flatirons Bank in Boulder, said that Kyle Heckman, the bank's president and CEO, told staff something when the PPP was launched that has stuck with her as her bank and its clients navigate the program:

"We're building the plane as we fly it."

Inhulsen: Collaboration key to surviving COVID

We are fortunate to live in Northern Colorado because we have everything — outdoor beauty, amazing amenities and a uniquely diverse economy. Northern Colorado is a great place to call home. As Realtors, we think the overall regional perspective is vital as we look to recover from the current situation we face. So much of our current conversations have been focused on assistance from the federal and state governments, but we need to remember that our local cities and counties can act more quickly to help businesses, especially in housing.


BRAD INHULSEN

Local governments play a critical role in housing, particularly when talking about new housing, as well as affordable and attainable housing. There is no doubt at this point that our previous stock of affordable and attainable housing will not come close to the need of our communities. Cities need to take a serious look at the expense they add to housing.

We could start by reviewing codes and how we can streamline the processes, as well as ask what reasonable incentives are available. Furthermore, while many communities have started to do this, really looking at codes to address occupancy, lot sizes and uses, water allotments, landscaping requirements, tap fees and the like will all be critical to how and what will be built in our communities. Cities need to push themselves outside of their comfort zones.

In that same vein, the policies governments make, while well meaning, can have negative effects as well. A note of caution to local communities during these times, collaboration is crucial. Those of us in the housing world want to be part of the solution. Policies such as inclusionary zoning that push the real estate sector away from the table won't encourage us to work together to address our housing challenges. Let's have a conversation and get the best ideas on the table.

> "Local governments play a critical role in housing, particularly when talking about new housing, as well as affordable and attainable housing."

Additionally, we need to remember what makes Northern Colorado unique. Like all of us, governments are now facing revenue shortfalls and will force significant budget cuts, but let's make them balanced. Clearly, public safety should always be at the top, but there are other elements to a community that make it just as safe and livable. While we don't expect services such as libraries, museums, recreation centers and parks to be what they were before, slashing one for the other isn't going to get us to where we want to go either. These are elements that make Northern Colorado a welcoming home, why people come here, and moreover why people stay. Protecting, at a minimum, the structure of these elements at this point will be key.

Together, we have weathered storms in Northern Colorado in the past, and this one should be no different. We will all have a role, but local governments need to stand up and lead the charge on things that directly impact our economies. The world we live in looks very different now, and codes and regulations that make it harder to move our economy forward will not be helpful. If local governments focus on collaboration rather than more enforcement, Northern Colorado will more quickly overcome the challenges we face as a region.

Brad Inhulsen is a Colorado native who relocated to the Greeley area in 2008 and has been selling real estate since 2012. He wrote this on behalf of NoCo Strong for Business, a group that brings local government officials together to discuss ideas for how they can support businesses, now and in the future.

Give small business a fighting chance

It's been eight years since I sold our furniture manufacturing company and shortly thereafter became involved with the Larimer Small Business Development Center. We basically provide what I call "street-smart" business consulting to small businesses and entrepreneurs. I like the street-smart phrase because it represents the nimbleness, innovation and survival-mode mindset needed to succeed in a competitive system. I've talked with hundreds of entrepreneurs about their experiences, and it's usually an inspiring interaction.


MIKE O'CONNELL

And boy, biz owners sure are operating in a "street smart" mode these days. The COVID-19 health crisis is having a devastating impact on entire industries, large and small business, and a record number of newly-unemployed individuals. Business owners are chasing every possible revenue dollar, watching costs more closely than ever and struggling to absorb the lightning-quick policy changes on everything from reopening rules to face-coverings to employee-recall guidance.

I've done my time in Zoom Call Hell and heard multiple legislators/officials ask "what can we do to support small businesses?" While I believe there are a couple of near-term actions that would help business owners, I'm equally concerned about structural fixes we need to make as a country, to ensure a strong foundation for Northern Colorado and America's entrepreneurs.

First, the near-term actions

The CARES Act produced the Payroll Protection Program loan program, which generated billions of dollars intended to keep employees working with their current employer. Unfortunately, the program took some early deserved criticism because these dollars weren't finding their way to the intended targets. Today, more than $10 billion of PPP loans are approved in Colorado. The new Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program offers unemployment insurance to freelancers and gig workers, for the first time ever.

However, course corrections are needed. The PPP loan can be forgiven if at least 75% is used for payroll, but many small businesses have other allowable large expenses, so the 75% payroll requirement is limiting, and needs to be decreased or eliminated. Also, the business owner has an eight-week window, ending roughly June 30, to get payroll to pre-COVID levels, in order to maximize loan forgiveness. But, this requirement is counter-productive to businesses still operating under mandated "safer at home" rules, so a time extension would be hugely helpful. Legislators are pursuing these improvements.

> "The COVID-19 health crisis is having a devastating impact on entire industries, large and small business, and a record number of newly-unemployed individuals."

Next, the structural issues

America's health- care system — The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development evaluated several metrics from more than 40 industrialized countries. The average annual public and private per person health-care cost is about $5,200. The most expensive health-care system? Our USA, at $10,200. In 1980 health-care costs were 9% of our gross domestic product; in 2020 they're 18%. What a brutal decision for entrepreneurs — Do you offer health care, at a big unpredictable expense, or do you not offer it, and lose employees? The current system is great if you're a pharmaceutical company shareholder but not so great if you're an American entrepreneur.

Student loan debt — American student loan debt was $200 billion in 2004; it's $1.6 trillion today, for 44 million Americans. It's surpassed auto loan and credit card loan debt. It's 7.8% of America's GDP, which is a debt burden that no other country is piling on its younger generation. Harder to start a business with high existing debt levels.

Federal deficit — In 2019, our federal government spent about 25% more than we brought in, and this was BEFORE the extraordinary COVID recovery costs. Can you imagine a business, or a household, that believes it will find financial stability with expenses exceeding revenues by 25%, year after year? Appropriate tax collections from large corporations would help this deficit. A small downtown retail store pays higher tax rates than Amazon, a $280 billion a year corporation. Let's stop putting our small businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

Mike O'Connell is the Larimer County SBDC's senior director. He can be reached at mike@larimersbdc.org.

RESOURCES

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Berthoud Area Chamber of Commerce
428 Mountain Ave.
Berthoud, CO 80513
970-532-4200
bcc@berthoudcolorado.com
www.berthoudcolorado.com

Boulder Chamber
2440 Pearl St.
Boulder, CO 80302
303-442-1044
info@boulderchamber.com
www.boulderchamber.com

Broomfield Chamber of Commerce
105 Edgeview Drive, Suite 410
Broomfield, CO 80021
303-466-1775
info@broomfieldchamber.com
www.broomfieldchamber.com

Carbon Valley Chamber of Commerce
8308 Colorado Blvd., Suite 203
Firestone, CO 80504
303-833-5933
info@carbonvalleychamber.com
www.carbonvalleychamber.com

Eaton Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 111
Eaton, CO 80615
970-396-4127
board@eatonareachamber.com
www.eatonareachamber.com

Erie Chamber of Commerce
235 Wells St.
Erie, CO 80516
303-828-3440
erie@eriechamber.org
www.eriechamber.org

Estes Chamber of Commerce
533 Big Thompson Ave., Suite 103
Estes Park, CO 80517
970-480-7552
info@esteschamber.org
www.esteschamber.org

Evans Area Chamber of Commerce
3819 St. Vrain St., Unit C
Evans, CO 80620
970-330-4204
ecc@evanschamber.org
www.evanschamber.org

Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce
225 S. Meldrum St.
Fort Collins, CO 80521
970-482-3746
info@fcchamber.org
www.fortcollinschamber.com

Fort Lupton Chamber of Commerce
1200 Dexter St., #W12
Fort Lupton, CO 80621
303-857-4474
fortluptonchamber@gmail.com
www.fortluptonchamber.org

Greater Brighton Chamber of Commerce
22 S. Fourth Ave., Suite 205
Brighton, CO 80601
303-659-0223
naomi@brightonchamber.com
www.brightonchamber.com

Greeley Area Chamber of Commerce
902 Seventh Ave.
Greeley, CO 80631
970-352-3566
info@greeleychamber.com
www.greeleychamber.com

Johnstown/Milliken Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 501
Johnstown, CO 80534
970-852-4455
info@johnstownmillikenchamber.com
www.jmchamber.com

Kersey Area Chamber of Commerce
414 First St.
Kersey, CO 80644
kerseycochamber@gmail.com
www.kerseycochamber.com

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce
1290 S. Public Road
Lafayette, CO 80026
303-666-9555
info@lafayettecolorado.com
www.lafayettecolorado.com

The Latino Chamber of Commerce of Boulder County
332 Main St.
Longmont, CO 80501
720-491-1986
info@latinochamberco.org
www.latinochamberco.org

Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce
528 Main St.
Longmont, CO 80501
303-776-5295
staff@longmontchamber.org
www.longmontchamber.org

Louisville Chamber of Commerce
901 Main St.
Louisville, CO 80027
303-666-5747
info@louisvillechamber.com
www.louisvillechamber.com

Loveland Chamber of Commerce
5400 Stone Creek Circle
Loveland, CO 80538
970-667-6311
mmccloughan@loveland.org
www.loveland.org

Lyons Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 426
Lyons, CO 80540
303-823-6622, ext. 26
admin@lyons-colorado.com
www.lyons-colorado.com

Southeast Weld County Chamber of Commerce
617 Birch St.
Hudson, CO 80642
844-517-5406
admin@southeastweldchamber.com
www.southeastweldchamber.com

Superior Chamber of Commerce
122 E. William St.
Superior, CO 80027
303-554-0789
info@superiorchamber.com
www.superiorchamber.com

Wellington Area Chamber of Commerce
4006 Cleveland Ave.
Wellington, CO 80549
970-568-4133
wellingtonareachamber@gmail.com
www.wellingtoncoloradochamber.com

Westminster Chamber of Commerce
9191 Sheridan Blvd., Suite 300
Westminster, CO 80031
303-961-5975
info@westminsterchamber.biz
www.westminsterchamber.biz

Windsor Chamber of Commerce
421 Main St., Unit A
Windsor, CO 80550
970-686-7189
information@windsorchamber.net
www.windsorchamber.net

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Boulder Economic Council
2440 Pearl St.
Boulder, CO 80302
303-442-1044
bec@bouldereconomiccouncil.org
www.bouldereconomiccouncil.org

Brighton Economic Development Corp.
22 S. Fourth Ave., Suite 305
Brighton, CO 80601
303-655-2155
info@brightonedc.org
www.brightonedc.org

City and County of Broomfield Economic Development
One DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, CO 80020
303-464-5579
jromine@broomfield.org
www.investbroomfield.com

City of Boulder Economic Vitality Program
1500 Pearl St., Suite 302
Boulder, CO 80302
303-441-3017
pinsonneaultj@bouldercolorado.gov
www.bouldercolorado.gov/business

City of Dacono Economic Development
512 Cherry St.
Dacono, CO 80514
303-833-2317
jkrieger@ci.dacono.co.us
www.ci.dacono.co.us/435/Economic-Development

City of Evans - Economic Development
1100 37th St.
Evans, CO 80620-2036
970-475-1112
amoeding@evanscolorado.gov
www.evanscolorado.gov/economicdevelopment

City of Fort Collins Economic Health Office
222 LaPorte Ave.
Fort Collins, CO 80522
970-416-4349
jbirks@fcgov.com
www.fcgov.com/business

City of Greeley - Department of Economic Health & Housing
1100 10th St., Suite 201
Greeley, CO 80631
970-350-9380
economicdevelopment@greeleygov.com
www.greeleygov.com

City of Lafayette, Economic Development
1290 S. Public Road
Lafayette, CO 80026
303-661-1225
debbiew@cityoflafayette.com
www.cityoflafayette.com

City of Louisville Economic Development Department
749 Main St.
Louisville, CO 80027
303-335-4533
info@louisvilleco.gov
www.louisvilleco.gov

City of Loveland - Economic Development Department
500 E. Third St., Suite 310
Loveland, CO 80537
970-962-2345
kelly.jones@cityofloveland.org
www.lovelandeconomicdevelopment.org

City of Westminster Economic Development Department
4800 W. 92nd Ave.
Westminster, CO 80031
303-658-2113
ecodevo@cityofwestminster.us
www.westminstereconomicdevelopment.org

Erie Economic Development Council
500 Briggs St., #200
Erie, CO 80516
720-381-2786
info@erieedc.com
www.erieedc.com

Estes Park Economic Development Corp.
533 Big Thompson Ave., Suite 103
Estes Park, CO 80517
970-577-1031
ashake@estesparkedc.com
www.estesparkedc.com

Longmont Economic Development Partnership
1925 Pike Road, Suite 202
Longmont, CO 80501
303-651-0128
jessica@longmont.org
www.longmont.org

Lyons Economic Development Commission
432 Fifth Ave.
Lyons, CO 80540
303-823-6622, ext. 23
ahodgson@townoflyons.com
http://www.townoflyons.com/187/Economic-Development-Commission

Superior Chamber of Commerce
122 E. William St.
Superior, CO 80027
303-554-0789
info@superiorchamber.com
www.superiorchamber.com

Town of Berthoud Business Development
807 Mountain Ave.
Berthoud, CO 80513
970-532-2643
welish@berthoud.org
www.berthoud.org

Town of Erie Economic Development
645 Holbrook St.
Erie, CO 80516
303-926-2769
economicdevelopment@erieco.gov
www.erieco.gov/606/Economic-Development

Town of Firestone, Economic Development Department
151 Grant St.
Firestone, CO 80520
303-531-6265
pmehle@firestoneco.gov
www.firestoneco.gov

Town of Frederick Economic Development
401 Locust St.
Frederick, CO 80530
720-382-5651
jsimmons@frederickco.gov
www.frederickco.gov

Town of Hudson Economic Development Department
50 S. Beech St.
Hudson, CO 80642
303-536-9311
info@hudsoncolorado.org
www.hudsoncolorado.org

Town of Superior Economic Development
124 E. Coal Creek Drive
Superior, CO 80027
303-499-3675
martint@superiorcolorado.gov
www.superiorcolorado.gov

Town of Windsor Economic Development Department
301 Walnut St.
Windsor, CO 80550
970-674-2414
smiller@windsorgov.com
www.windsoreconomicdevelopment.com

Upstate Colorado Economic Development
821 Seventh St., Suite 550
Greeley, CO 80631
970-356-4565
info@upstatecolorado.org
www.upstatecolorado.org

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Boulder SBDC Foundation
1001 Arapahoe Ave.
Boulder, CO 80302
303-442-1475
Sharon.King@bouldersbdc.com
www.bouldersbdc.com

Boulder Small Business Development Center — Longmont
528 Main St., Suite A
Longmont, CO 80501
303-442-1475
www.bouldersbdc.com

East Colorado Small Business Development Center
800 17th St., Kepner Hall #0025
Greeley, CO 80631
970-351-4274
lisa.hudson@eastcoloradosbdc.com
www.eastcoloradosbdc.com

Larimer Small Business Development Center
320 E. Vine Drive, Suite 303
Fort Collins, CO 80524
970-498-9295
www.larimersbdc.com

Larimer Small Business Development Center — Estes Park
533 Big Thompson Ave., Suite 105
Estes Park, CO 80517
970-577-1031
www.larimersbdc.com

Larimer Small Business Development Center — Loveland
5400 Stone Creek Circle, Suite 200
Loveland, CO 80538
970-667-4106
www.larimersbdc.com

Loveland Business Development Center
5400 Stone Creek Circle
Loveland, CO 80538
970-667-4106
Info@LovelandBusiness.com
www.lovelandbusiness.com

WORKFORCE CENTERS

Broomfield Workforce Center
100 Spader Way
Broomfield, CO 80020
303-464-5855
www.broomfield.org/1426/Workforce-Center

Employment Services of Weld County
315 N. 11th Ave., Building B
Greeley, CO 80631
970-353-3800
www.weldgov.com/departments/human_services/employment_services

Larimer County Workforce Center — Estes Park
1601 Brodie Ave.
Estes Park, CO 80517
970-577-2140
www.larimerworkforce.org

Larimer County Workforce Center — Fort Collins
200 W. Oak St., Suite 5000
Fort Collins, CO 80521
970-498-6600
lcwc@larimer.org
www.larimerworkforce.org

Larimer County Workforce Center — Loveland
418 E. Fourth St.
Loveland, CO 80537
970-619-4650
lcwc@larimer.org
www.larimerworkforce.org

Workforce Boulder County
515 Coffman St.
Longmont, CO 80501
720-864-6600
www.bouldercounty.org/departments/community-services/workforce-boulder-county/

Workforce Boulder County
5755 Central Ave.
Boulder, CO 80301
303-413-7555
www.bouldercounty.org/departments/community-services/workforce-boulder-county/