

# Financial institutions shift focus to drive-up banking

By Adam Rudnick

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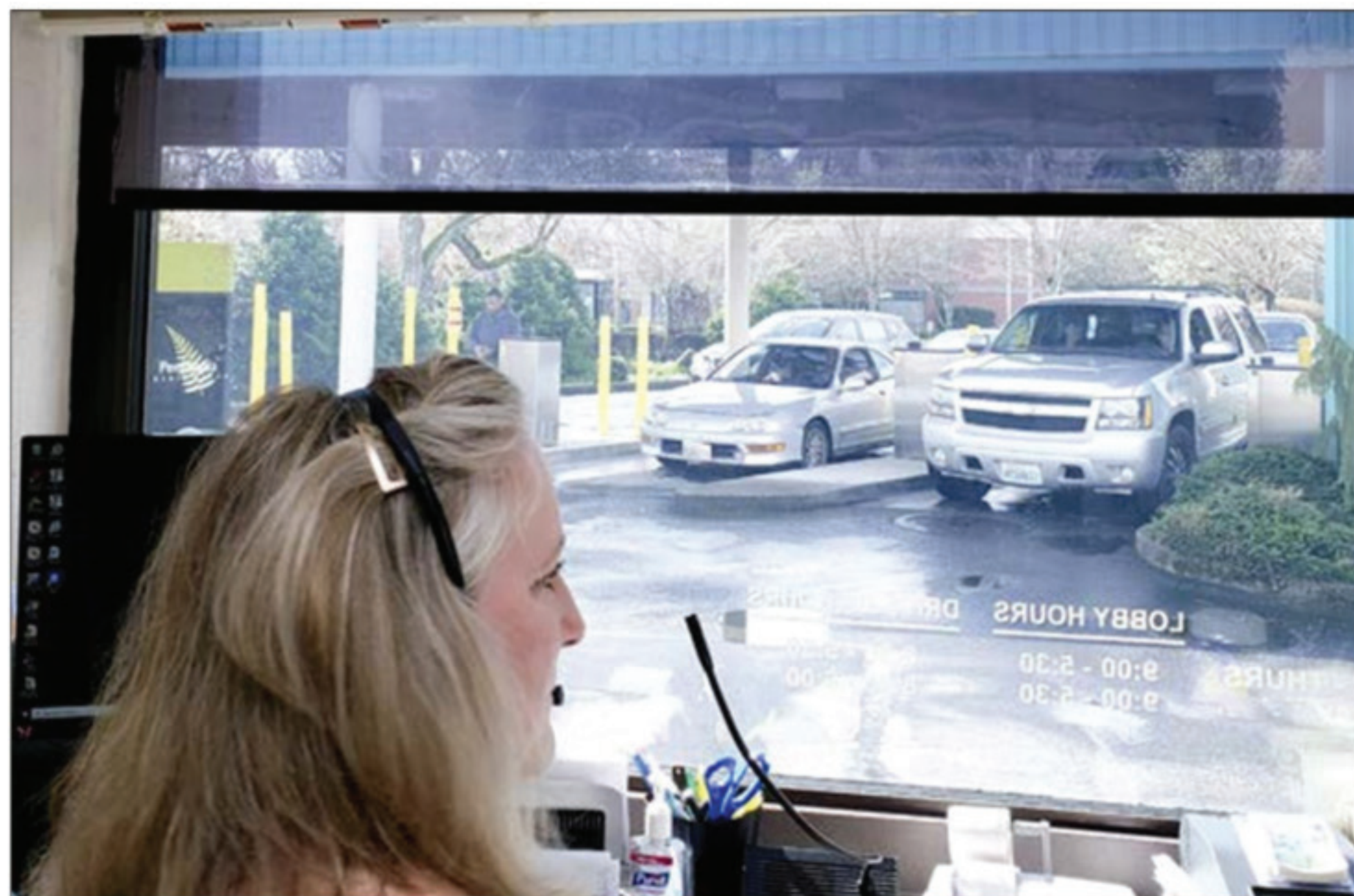
As Mason County residents began to settle in under the governor's stay home proclamation, local financial institutions were also making changes.

Instead of walk-in traffic, credit unions and banks — deemed an essential service under Gov. Jay Inslee's recent announcement — are seeing more drive-thru traffic.

Kirk Smith, marketing manager for Peninsula Credit Union, said its Shelton, Belfair and Port Orchard branches have temporarily switched to appointment-only to reduce lobby traffic, but drive-up windows will have additional staff and services available. The credit union also has branches in Port Townsend and Poulsbo.

"There are some people that have never used the drive up before, that is OK," Smith said in an email. "Our highly trained staff will be there to walk you through the process, from how to open the tube to what they need to send in, we are there to help you along the way."

Smith said that the credit union has plenty of ways customers can use Peninsula's



**Susan Travis, member service representative for Peninsula Credit Union in Shelton, works earlier this week at the credit union's drive-up window. Courtesy photo**

services without having to come in contact with staff, such as using online banking, mobile banking and ATMs that take deposits. Peninsula also offers Sprig, which allows customers to deposit checks using a photo.

Lisa Woodard, vice president and Shelton branch manager of Columbia Bank, said

Columbia is one of the only banks in Shelton that has not modified its hours. She said she's seeing fewer people in the lobby, and more people using the bank's drive-up window. Her employees are spending more time sanitizing.

"We are encouraging people to use our drive up to encourage social distancing, but if

coming in is essential, we are here to help," Woodard said in an email. "We do have some signs to help clients recognize the 6-foot guidelines and our team has arranged our work areas so we are able to maintain some distance also."

Woodard said customers have a lot of questions about the federal Small Business

Administration's disaster funds. She said customers are fearful of their business shutting down, or losing their paycheck.

"I spend a lot of time talking about solutions and connecting them with resources," she said.

In a news release Thursday, Our Community Credit Union announced it was temporarily restricting branch access and public accessibility. OCCU's drive-up windows would remain open. OCCU will continue to access many of its services online.

"On behalf of our employees, Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee, we thank you for choosing OCCU," the release states. "You have our commitment that we will continue to work to meet your needs during these challenging times."

Our Community Credit Union has branches in Shelton, Union, McCleary, Elma, Montesano, Vashon Island and Steamboat Island (Thurston County).

Each financial institution recommends customers go to their bank or credit union's website for up-to-date information on COVID-19, hours of operation, online banking services and more.