

# Amazon Think Big Space to open at UHS

Hermiston Herald  
Umatilla High School is getting its own Amazon Think Big Space.

Umatilla School District on June 29 announced in a press release a collaboration between Amazon Web Services Inc. and the high school's robotics program is resulting in a revamp of the space the program now uses.

The robotics program aims to spark student interest in STEAM — science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics — and the new educational lab is going to support that effort with a “stimulating learning environment” that helps expand the “school’s interactive hands-on technical education, cloud computing training and advanced manufacturing technology offerings.”

This is the third AWS Think Big Space in Eastern Oregon and the second in Umatilla County. Amazon opened its first Think Big Space in the county in April at Nixyaawii Community School on the



Rosa Salinas/Submitted Photo

**Phoenix Davis and Weston Elliott, students, interact with technology Dec. 2, 2021, at the Think Big Space at the SAGE Center at the Port of Morrow in Boardman. Umatilla High School is next up to get an Amazon Think Big Space.**

Umatilla Indian Reservation. Umatilla School Board Chair Jon Lorence in the press release said it was “wonderful

to see this investment from AWS in our school and community. We’re excited to get started on the design and con-

struction work, which we expect to begin this summer so we can open in January 2023, just in time for the Umatilla

Robotics season kick-off and game challenge reveal.”

Umatilla School District Superintendent Heidi Sipe explained this Think Big Space is unique because Umatilla robotics students took the lead in creating the initial concept, project design “and every step of the grant application process for the space.” The team ensured AWS understood the full spectrum of the K-12 robotics and STEAM offerings and articulated its vision for a revamped space, which is to have a strong focus on advanced manufacturing technologies.

This new training lab, she continued, “will provide industry grade opportunities for Umatilla students so they can take their robotics work to a new level.”

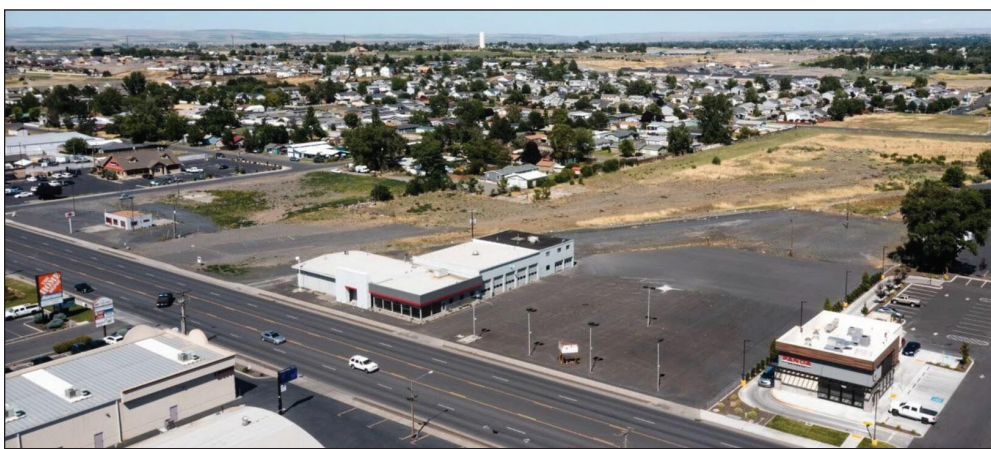
Sophomore Avery Gutierrez was one of the students who assisted with the grant application process. She is the junior project manager for Team Confidential, the school’s robotics team. She said it was a thrill to

help with the grant and honor to receive it.

“I’m excited to see what we can do as a team in this space,” she said in the press release, “and what opportunities we can hopefully offer to the community as we learn to use our equipment and teach others.”

The AWS Think Big Space is an AWS InCommunities program. Cornelia Robinson, global lead of inclusion and outreach for AWS InCommunities, in the press release said Amazon is committed to making a positive impact in the communities where its employees live and work.

“We are proud of our presence in Eastern Oregon and to have the opportunity to support our neighbors who share our passion for STEM education,” according to Robinson. “I hope this AWS Think Big Space at Umatilla High School allows its students to not only ‘think big’ but to also dream big. I can’t wait to see what they will create.”



Good Shepherd Health Care System/Contributed Photo

**The former site of Rogers Toyota in Hermiston is under new ownership. Good Shepherd Health Care System on Wednesday, June 29, 2022, announced it plans to build a new urgent care facility at the Highway 395 location.**

## Good Shepherd readies to build new urgent care facility

BY JOHN TILLMAN

Hermiston Herald  
Good Shepherd Health Care System announced it plans to build a new, state-of-the-art urgent care facility at a former auto dealer site in Hermiston. The local hospital and health care provider announced it closed in June on the purchase of the former Rogers Toyota property off Highway 395 in Hermiston.

“Good Shepherd is expanding its footprint to better serve this great community,” according to Brian Sims, GSHCS president and CEO. “We are in the early planning stages of constructing a whole new urgent care that provides one-stop care

for our patients that need it.” Caitlin Cozad, Good Shepherd public relations director, said the total investment for purchase and development of the facility is around \$10 million. The project is in the design phase, she emphasized, with construction planning in early development.

Good Shepherd plans to break ground at the site sometime this fall, once the building is demolished.

“This will be a fully-supported urgent care, with diagnostic imaging and laboratory services, right in the heart of Hermiston,” Sims stated in the press release. “We intend this location to offer much more con-

venience, efficiency and space to better serve our patients.”

Hospital administrators aim to open the new urgent care in October 2023, when the facility on Elm Street relocates to the Highway 395 site.

“We will have the same amazing providers and staff,” according to Sims, “but a more robust facility to take care of you quickly and efficiently, so that you can get right back to your work and family.”

The Toyota dealership in December 2020 moved into a new 30,000-square-foot building on the corner of Highway 395 and Punkin Center Road, about 1 mile north of its previous location.

## Deadline nears for proposal for Umatilla transitional housing project

Hermiston Herald

Organizations looking to manage the forthcoming transitional housing project on the west side of Umatilla County have about a week left to make proposals.

Umatilla, Hermiston, Umatilla County and other communities are partnering to create the Practical Assistance through Transitional Housing Project, or PATH. Umatilla on June 13 issued a request for proposal to identify a contractor to help develop and manage the program.

Project PATH will serve as a safe place for un-housed individuals to stay not only overnight but for extended periods. The fenced facility, owned by the city of Umatilla and on leased land, will include at least 12 rooms along with restrooms, open areas, and office spaces, according to the request.

The RFP seeks an organization that will manage the Project PATH facility, including planning, coordinating and delivering services. The fenced facility will have at least 12 sleeping quarters, restrooms, common areas and office space. The contractor will be responsible for providing 24-hour

on-site staffing and access to educational, health and care coordination services. PATH also aims to provide educational and health services to its occupants.

The contractor must “demonstrate success bringing partners to the table with proven experience helping homeless individuals transition to housing,” according to the request. Bids are due July 7 by 4 p.m. to Umatilla City Hall.

With the Supreme Court’s September 2018 ruling on the Martin v. Boise case, all areas that do not allow homeless camping must provide shelter by July 1, 2023. If completed on time, Project PATH will help keep Umatilla County ahead of the curve.

Oregon House Bill 4123, a bill regarding homeless services that passed in March 2022, will fund the project in the beginning. Afterward, funding shifts to other grants, the contractor and partner governments.

A committee consisting of representatives from Umatilla County and cities of Umatilla, Hermiston Echo and Stanfield will evaluate the proposals. For more information, visit [www.umatilla-city.org](http://www.umatilla-city.org).

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