



WASHINGTON STATE

*heart of the skanogan*

2 North Ash  
P.O. Box 72  
Omak, WA 98841  
(509) 826-1170  
Fax: (509) 826-6531  
[www.omakcity.com](http://www.omakcity.com)

Hearing Impaired- call WA Relay Services 7-1-1

To: Whom it may concern:  
Subject: Highway 97 Underpass Support

August 29, 2018

The City of Omak has long been a supporter of creating safe-passage for people and wildlife between Riverside and Tonasket, Wa. on HWY 97.

In this 12 mile stretch of highway there are over 350 vehicle-deer collisions each year at a societal cost of over \$6,000 per accident. This is close to 2 million dollars per year in vehicle repairs, removal of carcasses, emergency vehicle response, medical costs, and the lost value of the deer for recreational viewing and or hunting. Fortunately, no one has yet been killed in an accident.

Our city depends on the safe travel of locals, visitors, tourists, and business's along this stretch of highway to support our community. No one coming to or from our city on highway 97 wants their trip to be ruined by hitting a deer, having to deal with expensive vehicle repairs, or ending up in the hospital with injuries suffered during a vehicle-wildlife collision.

We believe the support for doing something to stop this total waste of wildlife, and prevent potentially fatal accidents is widespread in our community. Especially considering the societal expenses, lost tourism, interruptions to visitor trips, and current danger to human life in driving this highway.

We understand that the plan is to complete this project in phases with the first phase to include the installation of 3 underpass's, wildlife fencing and cattleguards. We also understand the first phase will be installed where the most accidents can be avoided for the costs involved. Future phases will be considered and funded based on the return on the dollar from installing the first phase. We appreciate this common sense approach to solving this problem and the wise use of tax payer dollars.

In summary, the City of Omak fully supports the funding and construction of the first phase of this project hopefully leading to the entire project being installed over time. We also hope that consideration will be given to local contractors and construction business's to be a part of this great project for our community!

Sincerely,

Cindy Gagne  
Mayor, City of Omak