

= Omak , Washington =

Omak (/ ˌoʊˈmæk / o @-@ MAK) is a city located in the foothills of the Okanogan Highlands in north @-@ central Washington , United States . With an estimated 4 @, @ 854 residents as of 2015 , distributed over a land area of 3 @. @ 43 square miles (8 @. @ 9 km²) , Omak is the largest municipality of Okanogan County and the largest municipality in Central Washington north of Wenatchee . The Greater Omak Area of around 8 @, @ 229 inhabitants as of the 2010 census is the largest urban cluster in the Okanogan Country region , encompassing most of its twin city of Okanogan . The population has increased significantly since the 1910 census , reporting 520 residents just prior to incorporation in 1911 .

The land that is now Omak had been inhabited by various Native American tribes before the arrival of non @-@ indigenous settlers in the early 19th century . The city began to develop after the completion of the Okanogan Irrigation Project affecting the Grand Coulee Dam and other nearby electric facilities . The housing and municipal infrastructure , along with regional infrastructure connecting the new town to other municipalities , were built simultaneously in 1908 supported by the local agricultural industry . The name Omak comes from the Okanagan placename [umák] , or the Salishan term Omache ? which is said to mean " good medicine " or " plenty " , referring to its favorable climate , with an annual high of around 88 ° F (31 ° C) . Omak acts as the gateway to the Okanogan National Forest and consists of a central business district and residential neighborhoods .

Omak is a code city governed by a seven @-@ member council and the state 's 4th district . Omak 's economy is dominated by the primary industries of agriculture and forestry , although economic diversification has occurred with sawmills and recreational tourism . Nearby recreational destinations include walking trails , state parks and national forests , such as Conconully State Park , Bridgeport State Park and Osoyoos Lake State Park . The city is home to a weekly newspaper , the Omak ? Okanogan County Chronicle , and a Wenatchee Valley College campus . Standards for education in Omak are higher than the state 's average , though drugs and alcohol remains a problem among students . The prominent U.S. Route 97 intersects in town , while Washington State Route 155 , as well as Washington State Route 215 , connects the city to Okanogan and Nespelem , respectively . By road , Omak is located approximately 235 miles (378 km) from Seattle , Washington , 140 miles (230 km) from Spokane , Washington and 125 miles (201 km) from Kelowna , British Columbia .

= = History = =

= = = Origin = = =

The Okanogan Valley was the traditional homeland of the Syilx (also called Okanogan) Native Americans , whose territory extended north into what is now Canada . The Syilx acquired horses in the mid @-@ 18th century , which helped them expand northward . They first met non @-@ native traders and missionaries in the early 19th century . The Syilx participated in trade fairs held at Kettle Falls and at the mouth of the Fraser River . Trading networks strengthened after the acquisition of horses in the mid @-@ 18th century .

In 1811 Fort Okanogan was built by the Pacific Fur Company at the confluence of the Okanogan and Columbia Rivers . The fort 's ownership passed to the North West Company , then the Hudson 's Bay Company . Fort Colville , near Kettle Falls , was another important fur trading outpost . The Okanogan River was used by fur brigades traveling between Fort Okanogan and Kamloops . In the late 1850s this route became known as the Okanogan Trail and was widely used as an inland route to the Fraser Canyon Gold Rush .

In the 1850s , European @-@ Americans settled in the area that is now Omak and built houses and inaugurated mining , logging and agricultural activities . As more white settlers arrived , a dispute about land ownership arose between them and the Native Americans .

In response , a treaty stating that an Indian reservation would be formed on some of the disputed

land while the European @-@ Americans would own the remaining land was signed . The Indian land was later reduced to about 5 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 acres (2 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 ha) . Colville Indian Reservation was developed around 1872 by President Ulysses S. Grant . In 1887 , the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation , a federally recognized tribe , was formed by executive order from 12 individual bands as per the General Allotment Act of 1887 . The federal government decided to move Colville Indian Reservation 's location west of Columbia River , reducing its area to 2 @,@ 800 @,@ 000 acres (1 @,@ 100 @,@ 000 ha) . It would continue to be reduced for the next 60 years .

Nearby Alma was platted as an unincorporated community around 1886 . Alma was renamed Pogue in honor of orchardist J.I. Pogue , and was later renamed Okanogan ? the present name . J.I. Pogue was upset that his name was replaced , and requested that surveyor , civil engineer and settler Ben Ross establish another town 4 miles (6 @.@ 4 km) to the north . Born in Bureau County , Illinois , Ross worked for the Great Northern Railroad shortly before moving to Okanogan County . He decided to found a new community at Pogue 's proposed location during 1907 . It was named Omak , supposedly for the Salishan word Omache ? said to mean " good medicine " or " plenty " ? and referring to the town 's favorable climate ; although according to William Bright the name comes from the Okanagan placename [umák] . Ross sold various items on the present townsite , trying to have his town recognized , and built a cabin in 1907 to provide shelter for his daughter , son and grandchildren ? becoming one of the first white men to settle the area .

= = = Growth = = =

The town began to develop after the completion of the Okanogan Irrigation Project , which was designed to facilitate farming . At this time , many farmers came to Omak looking for homes . Fruits including apples , berries , peaches , plums and watermelons were cultivated after 1910 . Omak served as a census @-@ designated place (CDP) in 1910 , and incorporated as a city on February 11 , 1911 . Omak and Okanogan have shared a rivalry in high school sports . During the Great Depression of 1933 , several residents of Omak were forced to work in nearby communities . As a result , the United States Bureau of Reclamation promoted work which was available as part of an improvement project at Grand Coulee Dam in nearby Coulee Dam , which employed approximately 5 @,@ 000 people between 1933 and 1951 when the megaproject ended . By 1950 , the city was home to various buildings and structures including the St. Mary Mission church , which satisfied residential needs .

In the 1910s , Omak was chosen as the location for a sawmill to expand economic growth . Omak Fruit Growers controlled the mill and a nearby orchard processing factory . The Biles @-@ Coleman Lumber Company bought out the organization and built a sawmill outside municipal boundaries on the nearby Omak Mountain in 1924 . A secondary sawmill was constructed in the Omak area . The company and their mills were purchased in 1975 by Crown Zellerbach and thus an associated organization ? Cavenham Forest Industries ? acquired the mills . The company ultimately went bankrupt , and in response , employees purchased the mill for 45 million dollars and renamed it Omak Wood Products in an attempt to save their jobs . Omak Woods Products ' payroll decreased to 480 in the early 1990s and later went bankrupt themselves , along with Quality Veneer , who later owned the property for 19 million dollars until 2000 . The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation later purchased the mill for 6 @.@ 6 million dollars , having closed in 2009 because of low demand , ending over 130 jobs . As of 2013 , there are proposals to reopen the mills during the summer season .

= = Geography = =

= = = Topography = = =

The Canada ? United States border ? with an official crossing into Osoyoos , British Columbia from

Oroville ? lies approximately 45 miles (72 km) to the north . The Idaho border lies about 160 miles (260 km) southeast . The state 's largest city , Seattle , lies 237 miles (381 km) southwest of Omak . The Okanogan River , coming out of the town of Riverside , defines the city 's northern border , while the southern border is defined by the city of Okanogan ; the terrain here is mountainous and forested . The nearest primary statistical area is the Wenatchee ? East Wenatchee metropolitan area . A CDP located northeast of the city was named North Omak because of its proximity to Omak . It is part of two census county divisions : Omak (western half) and Colville Reservation (eastern half) .

Omak , situated in the foothills of the Okanogan Highlands in central Okanogan County , is part of the Okanogan Country region , extending into British Columbia . It also lies within the Inland Northwest , centered on Spokane , and the Columbia Plateau ecoregion near the Okanogan Drift Hills . The Okanogan River , a 115 @-@ mile (185 km) tributary of the Columbia River , flows through the central portion of the city , and receives Omak Creek from the east just outside municipal boundaries . Known for its balancing Omak Rock , the 3 @,@ 244 @-@ acre (1 @,@ 313 ha) Omak Lake ? 950 feet (290 m) above sea level ? is the largest saline endorheic lake in Washington . The 80 @-@ acre (32 ha) Crawfish Lake is located about 15 miles (24 km) northeast of Omak at the border of the Colville Indian Reservation and Okanogan National Forest . The 1 @,@ 499 @,@ 023 @-@ acre (6 @,@ 066 @.@ 33 km2) forest comprises varied terrain and several mountain peaks .

Elevations around the area range from 780 feet (240 m) above sea level at the mouth of the Okanogan River to 6 @,@ 774 feet (2 @,@ 065 m) above sea level at the Moses Mountain . The average elevation is 843 feet (257 m) above sea level according to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) . The Moses Mountain , with a summit , sits east of the city , while Little Moses Mountain , located 5 @,@ 963 feet (1 @,@ 818 m) above sea level , and Omak Mountain , located 5 @,@ 749 feet (1 @,@ 752 m) above sea level , are adjacent to the Moses Mountain . West of the city are the North Cascades , anchored by the Cascade Range . Mountain peaks on the western portion of the Omak area range between 6 @,@ 000 feet (1 @,@ 800 m) and 8 @,@ 000 feet (2 @,@ 400 m) . The Coleman Butte mountain summit ? 1 @,@ 450 feet (440 m) above sea level ? is located directly adjacent to municipal boundaries .

According to the United States Census Bureau , the city encompasses a total area of 3 @.@ 5 square miles (9 @.@ 06 km2) , including 0 @.@ 07 square miles (0 @.@ 18 km2) of water , accounting for two percent of the overall area . The area expanded in April 2010 , when 0 @.@ 56 square miles (1 @.@ 5 km2) of land formerly within the city of Okanogan was accumulated . Omak is the fourth largest settlement in Okanogan County by area after Nespelem Community (23 sq mi ; 60 km2) , North Omak (11 @.@ 2 sq mi ; 29 km2) and Disautel (3 @.@ 80 sq mi ; 9 @.@ 8 km2) . Omak covers 0 @.@ 07 percent of the county 's total area . Its 4 @.@ 83 @-@ square @-@ mile (12 @.@ 5 km2) urban cluster , the Greater Omak Area , includes the city of Okanogan and the CDP of North Omak . The surrounding metropolitan region comprises a total area of 1 @,@ 037 square miles (2 @,@ 690 km2) , although it has not officially been designated as a statistical area .

= = = Climate = = =

The city experiences a semi @-@ arid climate (Köppen climate classification BSk) , with little precipitation , hot summers and cold winters . Average temperatures in Omak range from 16 @.@ 6 ° F (? 8 @.@ 6 ° C) in January to 88 @.@ 8 ° F (31 @.@ 6 ° C) in July . The lowest temperature recorded was ? 26 ° F (? 32 ° C) on February 1 , 1950 and the highest was 114 ° F (46 ° C) on July 26 , 1928 . The annual daily mean temperature is 48 @.@ 6 ° F (9 @.@ 2 ° C) . Average monthly precipitation ranges from 0 @.@ 49 inches (12 mm) in August to 1 @.@ 66 inches (42 mm) in December . Despite its geographical location further south , the city of Wenatchee maintains almost the same average annual temperature as Omak , as well as several other southern communities .

Omak experiences four distinct seasons . Summers are hot and relatively dry , with a daily average

of 72 @. 2 ° F (22 @. 3 ° C) in July , while winter is the wettest season of the year , with 22 @. 3 inches (570 mm) of snowfall between November and February . Spring and autumn are mild seasons with little precipitation . The city is located in plant hardiness zone 6a , according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) . In July 2012 , a severe thunderstorm occurred in Omak , producing heavy rainfall , gusty winds and hail , and forced the temporary closure of U.S. Route 97 and requiring repairs to public streets . Omak was affected by the 1872 North Cascades earthquake ? the state 's largest historical earthquake ? which occurred on December 14 , 1872 . The epicenter was at Omak Lake . The earthquake had a magnitude of between 6 @. 5 and 7 @. 0 and was followed by an aftershock . Another earthquake with minor shaking affected the city in November 2011 .

= = = Cityscape = = =

Omak is a planned city . Throughout the 20th century , Ross designed what would become the city of Omak . Within a year of its establishment , the town had a central business district with a public bank and hotel supported by the local agricultural industry . The town was provided with a post office , previously known as Epley . Ross founded Omak School District in 1906 ; soon after this its first school , Omak Schoolhouse , was built . In 1910 , a meat market , hardware shop , law office , stationery and confectionery store were constructed in Downtown Omak . A steel bridge built the following year collapsed into the Okanogan River upon initial use . It was quickly rebuilt with no further problems .

The city consists of a central business district and residential areas . Downtown Omak , the central business district , is the economic center for Omak and Okanogan County . There are several functional churches in the city . The post office in Omak ? managed by United States Postal Service (USPS) ? is the city 's only listing of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) . The Breadline Cafe is a notable restaurant and music venue in Downtown Omak . The City of Omak maintains the Omak Memorial Cemetery , comprising around 3 @, 747 graves in a region located adjacent to Washington State Route 215 , having been formerly known as Okanoma Cemetery . The 118 @- acre (48 ha) North Omak Business Park , the city 's business park , is bordered by U.S. Route 97 from the east . The city 's residential neighborhoods are encompassed by East Omak and South Omak .

= = Demographics = =

The 1910 United States Census , before the city 's incorporation , recorded 520 residents . The following 1920 census ? the first to define Omak as a distinct subdivision ? counted 2 @, 500 residents , making it the most populous municipality of Okanogan County , having surpassed Okanogan (1 @, 519 residents) . Subsequent census counts documented an increase to 4 @, 000 residents before a shrink in population at the 1980 census , when fruit prices rose , land was lost , and major employers were shut down . After this decline , the population steadily increased , approaching approximately 5 @, 000 residents by the 2000 census . Between 1990 and 2000 , the city 's population experienced a boom of 14 @. 7 percent , while between 2000 and 2010 , the population increased by around 2 @. 6 percent . The United States Census Bureau estimated that there were 4 @, 792 residents in 2013 , representing a 0 @. 6 percent increase over the 2010 census , while an estimate from Office of Federal Financial Management in 2013 documented a population decrease of 0 @. 3 percent to 4 @, 830 people . A 2011 study from the United States Census Bureau showed that there were 4 @, 881 residents , a 0 @. 7 percent increase over the 2010 census .

According to the 2010 census , Omak had 4 @, 845 residents living in 2 @, 037 households , with 1 @, 412 @. 5 inhabitants per square mile (545 @. 4 / km²) . These residents created an average age of 38 ? one year higher than that of the entire state . About 15 percent of residents were single and 13 percent were lone @- parent households . With 2 @, 168 housing units at an average density of 632 @. 1 inhabitants per square mile (244 @. 1 / km²) , the city 's

populace consisted of 2 @, @ 540 females and 2 @, @ 305 males , giving it a gender balance close to national averages with 14 @. @ 8 percent male and 11 @. @ 9 percent female . The racial makeup was dominated by white people , with 71 percent of the population . Between the 2000 and 2010 censuses , Omak had an increase of 10 families to 1 @, @ 230 and a decrease of 21 lone @- @ parent families . Omak had an urbanized population of 8 @, @ 229 people , with 1 @, @ 737 inhabitants per square mile (670 @. @ 7 / km²) and around 20 percent of the county 's residents . The last complete census in 2000 found that the average household consisted of around two residents and the average family consisted of approximately three people .

Approximately 89 @. @ 5 percent of residents over the age of five spoke English at home , according to the 2007 ? 2011 American Community Survey . It was then estimated that 889 people , comprising 18 @. @ 5 percent of local inhabitants have German ancestry ? the largest ethnicity in Omak ? and 15 @. @ 3 percent have Irish ancestry . The Omak area has a relatively high percentage of people of American Indian and Mexican ancestries ; there were over 80 American Indians and over 535 Mexican immigrants , with a combined percentage of 28 percent of residents . Conversely , the city has a small Asian population , making up less than one percent of Omakians . The 2010 census showed that approximately 35 percent of residents lived alone , most of whom were female . Those over the age of 65 comprised about 16 percent of the population . There have been several efforts to provide service to the homeless people of Omak , although official population figures have not been released .

= = Economy = =

Omak is the commercial center for the rural communities of Okanogan County and other nearby settlements . It is the regional center for services and trade in the county . As of 2007 , the city 's economy is experiencing significant growth , according to the County of Okanogan . It is an agricultural community with a reliant forestry industry . In the late 1990s and early 2000s , almost 90 percent of Omak 's manufacturing jobs were in the city 's two sawmills . Infrastructure services and retail trades were also major industries . About 425 private firms employed a total of 3 @, @ 332 workers in local industries including manufacturing , retail and infrastructure , at this time . Located within Greater Omak , the adjacent city of Okanogan serves as the administrative center for Okanogan County , the region 's largest employer .

As of 2010 , there are 1 @, @ 859 civilians over the age of 16 employed in the city of Omak . Despite its recognition as an agricultural community , there were only 26 inhabitants employed in the agriculture and forestry industries , but the surrounding area has more agricultural jobs . Office and sale services were the largest occupation in Omak , comprising approximately 30 percent of the city 's total employees , followed by business occupations , with 26 @. @ 5 percent . Majority of residents work in public services . Approximately seven percent of people in Omak are unemployed , while 25 percent live below the poverty line , including 34 percent of those under 18 and 10 percent of those aged 65 or over . The cost of living rate is 85 @. @ 5 per unit , less than state and national averages . During the 2007 ? 2011 American Community Survey , the city had a per capita income of \$ 17 @, @ 785 and an average income of \$ 31 @, @ 649 per household . Omak 's 98841 zip code maintained 265 businesses in 2011 , with an average payroll of \$ 78 @, @ 884 .

The city has a Walmart store , which was built in 1993 as the state 's first such store , serving over 60 @, @ 000 residents . The process of opening the retail facility took various discussions and approvals . Proposals in Omak began around 1992 , in which 93 @, @ 188 square feet (8 @, @ 657 @. @ 4 m²) of land were expropriated from the Omak Planning Commission . Local retailers feared that the chain would devastate their businesses , although other people felt that it would increase business at other shopping regions in the city . Shortly after its opening , numerous shoppers came to the Omak area looking for items . Walmart hired approximately 200 employees , boosting the city 's economy significantly and becoming among Okanogan County 's largest retailer for a short period . The store was later allowed to remain open for 24 hours per day .

Omak 's economy is also driven by a mixture of tourism . Nearby recreational destinations , with their mild climate , increase the local economy significantly . The local Ace Hardware , Big 5

Sporting Goods , Big R and Walmart retail stores maintain license vendors for recreational activities . There is a 1 @, @ 541 @, @ 470 @-@ square @-@ foot (143 @, @ 207 m2) shopping mall , the Omache Shopping Center , located in North Omak Business Park along U.S. Route 97 , which attracts residents from nearby rural communities . Established in 1987 , the mall is home to 12 stores and services . Hotels in Omak include Best Western , Rodeway Inn , Omak Inn , and Motel Nicholas . Omak is the headquarters of two infrastructure organizations : Okanogan County Transportation & Nutrition and Cascade and Columbia River Railroad .

= = Culture = =

= = = Nicknames = = =

The municipality has been named a " tree city " for ten consecutive years since April 2007 . The Washington Department of Natural Resources announced on April 11 , 2013 , that Omak had again been named a " tree city " because of their continuous efforts to " keep urban forests healthy and vibrant " for 15 years . The City of Omak brands itself as the " Heart of the Okanogan " ? referring to its significant economic importance in the Okanogan . The Okanogan County Tourism Council uses the same branding to define the Greater Omak region . It is officially recognized as the City of Omak ; Omak residents are known as Omakians .

= = = Tourism = = =

The Omak Stampede , which operates the Suicide Race , has been hosted at a local rodeo facility , the Stampede Arena ? renovated in 2009 ? since 1933 . The Omak Stampede occurs annually on the second weekend of August . During the event , the city has an estimated population of approximately 30 @, @ 000 people . As part of the Suicide Race , horses and riders run down Suicide Hill ? a 62 @-@ degree slope that runs for 225 feet (69 m) to the Okanogan River . Horses must pass a veterinarian examination to ensure they are physically healthy , and a swim test to ensure they can cross the river , to demonstrate their ability to run the race and navigate the river . Several animal rights groups , including Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) , In Defense of Animals and Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) , have expressed concerns about the horses ' welfare and have opposed the specific event .

Other significant events include the Omak Film Festival , inclusive of a variety of films at the Wenatchee Valley College and Omak Theater , the Okanogan County Fair , an annual carnival at the County Fairgrounds and the Omak Western and Native Art Show , a Native American carnival . In an attempt to increase tourism , the City of Omak operates a Main Street Historical Tour in the central business district . A local recreational complex comprises a Native American wooden sculpture area . Two functional movie theaters , the single screen Omak Theater , built in 1928 , and the Mirage Theater with three screens , built in 2004 , service the city . A drive @-@ in theater , with a capacity of 250 automobiles , was proposed in 1948 , but never built .

The Omak Visitor Information Center ? deemed the " best little information center in the west " ? has historical images and a gift shop offering pamphlets regarding Okanogan County and surrounding regions . The Okanogan County Historical Museum comprises a historic fire hall , research center , genealogical area and a display of historical photographs or the area . The Omak Performing Arts Center ? a 500 @-@ seat venue which hosts presentations , ceremonies , and performances ? was built by Omak School District in 1989 . There is a 58 @, @ 000 @-@ square @-@ foot (5 @, @ 400 m2) casino operated by the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation since 2008 , incorporating over 400 gaming machines , a convention center , and an arcade . Nearby Okanogan Bingo Casino , along U.S. Route 97 , also primarily serves Omak , consisting of approximately 360 gaming machines .

= = = Recreation = = =

The area 's mild climate and its close proximity to lakes , rivers , and mountains make Omak an outdoor recreational destination . The city maintains eight general recreational complexes , of which the 76 @. @ 6 @- @ acre (31 @. @ 0 ha) Eastside Park , with an enclosed skate park , municipal pool , seven baseball diamonds , four soccer fields and tennis courts , and two basketball courts , is the largest . Civic League Park is the municipality 's oldest park , while Dalton Klessig Park is the newest . The Omak City Park Board has been formed to protect these public spaces . Omak has several beaches at the north @- @ south shores of Omak Lake on the Colville Indian Reservation , comprising over 100 acres (40 ha) of sandy land . Fishing and boating are available at Omak Lake , and at the Fry Lake and Duck Lake ? near the city 's local airport ? and Conconully Lake , Crawfish Lake and the Okanogan River , all of which are home to several species . The Valley Lanes bowling alley serves the city and has hosted intrastate competitions , while the Okanogan Valley Golf Club ? a country club with 334 @- @ and @- @ 284 @- @ yard (305 and 260 m) golf courses ? is located in Omak .

The Okanogan National Forest , the largest forest on the West Coast , provides residents with trails for walking , hiking and cycling close to home and encompasses several skiing regions . It received approximately 397 @, @ 000 visitors in 2005 , most of whom came from over 50 miles (80 km) away . Numerous general recreational opportunities , such as hunting and rock scenery , are available nearby . There are various hiking trails in nearby hilly areas , including Omak Mountain and its look @- @ out tower , and Moses Mountain . The Granite Mountain Trail is located between the forests about 33 miles (53 km) away from the city . There is skiing available about 25 miles (40 km) west of town at the Loup Loup Ski Bowl . Nearby state parks include Conconully State Park (17 mi or 27 km northwest) , Bridgeport State Park (36 mi or 58 km south) , Osoyoos Lake State Park (41 mi or 66 km north) , and Alta Lake State Park (47 mi or 76 km southwest) , Birdwatchers can see quail , anatidae , turkey buzzard , wild turkey and bald eagles in the Omak area .

Camping is available at local recreational vehicle parks (RV parks) , including Carl Precht Memorial RV Park , Sunset Lakes RV Park (adjacent to Duck Lake) , and Margie 's R.V. Park . There are over a half @- @ dozen campgrounds in proximity to Omak . The Omak ? Okanogan region has been well known for its rock climbing structures since the early 1970s . Nearby communities in Okanogan County offer horseback riding and hunting . Fishing and boating is achievable within short distance , at the nearby Omak Lake . The Omak Pioneers represent Omak High School as their baseball , basketball , football , soccer , volleyball , and wrestling teams . There are separate teams based on age and gender . There are all @- @ terrain vehicle (ATV) courses located nearby , specifically in the Loup Loup Ski Bowl .

= = = Media = = =

In 1910 , C.P.Scates established the Omak Chronicle . Three years later , it was renamed the Omak ? Okanogan County Chronicle and expanded its coverage to the whole county as its primary newspaper . In February 1998 , an online version was established , which had approximately 170 @, @ 000 viewers in April 2013 . He later became the owner and publisher . Since then , the newspaper has been expanded to serve nearby Ferry County . The Okanogan Valley Gazette ? Tribune , based in Oroville , and The Wenatchee World , based in Wenatchee , with an administration office in nearby Okanogan , also serve Omak as alternative publications .

Newscasters Becki and John P. Andrist own three licensed radio stations in the city . Branded as " Radio Okanogan " , KOMW broadcasts a middle @- @ of @- @ the @- @ road format and serves the entire Okanogan County , while country music station KNCW features programming from Citadel Media and Dial Global . KZBE also broadcasts programming from Dial Global in the hot adult contemporary format , while KQWS operates from Washington State University as Northwest Public Radio . KOMQ rebroadcasts KPBX @- @ FM from Spokane . Spokane stations including KEEH and WXL86 , and CJMG @- @ FM , commonly known as Sun FM , from Penticton , British Columbia are receivable in the Omak area .

Omak is well @- @ served by television and radio , with all major U.S. networks and at least five

other English @-@ language stations available . Omak cable viewers can also receive CHAN @-@ DT (Global Television Network) from Vancouver , British Columbia . The nearest major television market area is based in the Seattle metropolitan area . The Omak ? Okanogan market area includes several broadcast television stations that can be received in the city . K17EV @-@ D , channel 17 ? a broadcast translator of KSPS @-@ TV ? is branded as Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) , while K07DG , channel 7 , rebroadcasts KREM , a CBS affiliate , in the municipality . An American Broadcasting Company (ABC) affiliate , KXLY @-@ TV is translated as K09DG in Omak . K11DM , channel 11 , is a translator of National Broadcasting Company (NBC) ' s KHQ @-@ TV , Community television stations , K19AU @-@ D and the Fox Broadcasting Company translator at K31AH @-@ D , are owned by Mountain Licenses and operate from Omak , in addition to a Three Angels Broadcasting Network @-@ owned station , K26GV @-@ D. The Riverside market area is nearby and contains three licensed television stations which can be received , including K08CY , K10DM , and K12CV .

= = Government and politics = =

The City of Omak 's mayor ? council government comprises a mayor ? who also represents north @-@ central Washington 's separate economic development district ? and a seven @-@ member council . These positions , stipulated by the Omak City Code , are subject to at @-@ large elections every two years , rather than by geographic subdivisions . Like most portions of the United States , government and laws are run by a series of ballot initiatives whereby citizens can pass or reject laws , referenda whereby citizens can approve or reject legislation already passed , and propositions where specific government agencies can propose new laws or tax increases directly to the people . Federally , Omak is part of Washington 's 4th congressional district , represented by Republican Doc Hastings , elected in 1995 . The current mayor , Cindy Gagne , was first elected in 2000 as a councilwomen , and was appointed in May 2009 .

The State of Washington operates a public government administration office in Omak for access to social and health assistance . Omak is considered to be a code city , based on proposals to provide the local government with more authority from its previous second @-@ class city status . With a functional court for traffic , parking and civil infractions , the city maintains the sewer , water , local road , sidewalk , street lighting , animal control , building inspection , park , and recreation services . It also funds a volunteer fire department which services Omak and nearby rural communities . The Omak Fire Department estimated that there were 312 service calls around 2012 , of which 80 included fire emergencies , 105 emergency medical incidents , six hazardous conditions , 26 service calls and three calls related to excessive heat concerns .

Omak is also governed by an eight @-@ member planning commission ? part of the Omak City Council ? which also operates the Greater Omak Comprehensive Plan , adopted in April 2004 and consisting of improvements considered for the city and surrounding communities . The five @-@ member Omak Library Board and Tree Board are also divisions of the Omak City Council , with public meetings taking place at the Omak Public Library . With four @-@ year terms for participants , the local Civil Service Commission services Omak . The City of Omak 's income has been \$ 1 @,@ 170 @,@ 828 for two consecutive years , of which \$ 1 @,@ 207 @,@ 026 was used as an expenditure . Shortly after being incorporated in 1911 , Omak unsuccessfully contested Okanogan to become the administrative center of Okanogan County , after Conconully lost its status . During the temperance movement before national prohibition , Omak residents favored the banishment of alcohol in Washington , which was opposed by those of Okanogan . The United States Army (USA) operates two military recruiting centers in Omak , although a historical military band , the Omak Military Band , also operated around 1910 .

The five @-@ officer Omak Police Department detachment , which covered the municipality and nearby rural communities , reported over 180 criminal code offenses in 2010 . The city 's crime rate of 154 offenses per 100 @,@ 000 people is 28 percent higher than the 2010 state average and one percent higher than the 2010 federal average . According to Uniform Crime Report statistics compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2011 , there were 19 violent crimes and

166 property crimes . The violent crimes consisted of one forcible rape , three robberies and 15 aggravated assaults , while 32 burglaries , 104 larceny @-@ thefts , eight motor vehicle thefts and one arson defined the property crimes . The FBI classifies Omak as having 4 @, @ 921 people located within the Omak Police Department area . The city 's highest crime rate was recorded in 2004 , with 413 incidents per 100 @, @ 000 people . Until 2013 , when a murder and motor @-@ vehicle theft occurred in the city , there had not been a homicide for over ten consecutive years . The crime in Omak has decreased throughout the past decade . Before marijuana was legalized in Washington , marijuana users were arrested , per state law . Growers , drug lords and international smugglers residing in the Omak area are still arrested .

= = Education = =

The 2010 census estimated that 1 @, @ 057 people in Omak have attended college , while 504 residents received an academic degree ; more than five percent higher than the state average . Approximately 91 @. @ 5 percent graduated from high school or a more advanced institution ; two percent higher than the state average . Omak 's schools are administered by the county 's largest educational district , Omak School District , which operate two mainstream high schools , one mainstream middle school , two mainstream elementary schools and three virtual schools . Omak High School , built in 1919 , had a 2010 ? 11 enrollment of 435 students , while the Omak Alternative High School had an enrollment of 48 students . In contrast to the municipal average as a whole with 2 @, @ 540 females and 2 @, @ 305 males , Omak Alternative High School had 28 males and 20 females attending the institution . Omak Middle School , with an enrolment of 339 children , had 171 males and 169 females in the 2010 ? 11 school season . The city 's primary schools are East Omak Elementary and North Omak Elementary which had a combined 2010 ? 11 enrollment of 748 children .

In February 2010 , Omak became the third settlement in Washington to have a virtual school . During the 2010 ? 11 season , Washington Virtual Academy Omak Elementary , Washington Virtual Academy Omak Middle School , and Washington Virtual Academy Omak High School had a combined enrollment of 969 pupils . The private Omak Adventist Christian School , which operates outside of Omak School District , had 16 pupils in 2011 . It is affiliated with the nearby General Conference of the Seventh @-@ day Adventist Church . The Veritas Classical Christian School has also operated in the Omak region .

The Omak Public Library , managed by North Central Regional Library (NCRL) , was established in 1956 under provisions of state law passed by the City of Omak . The library is open daily , except on Sundays in the summer season . The community college , Wenatchee Valley College , maintains a campus in Omak , which had an enrollment increase of 19 percent between the 2009 ? 10 and 2010 ? 11 educational seasons . Located approximately 95 miles (153 km) from the main campus in Wenatchee , it was established in the 1970s , and offers adult education classes and two @-@ year associate degrees . Based in Toppenish about 215 miles (346 km) away , Heritage University operates an Omak campus consolidated with Wenatchee Valley College 's , providing degrees in several academic subjects .

= = Infrastructure = =

The 2010 census estimated that 89 @. @ 3 percent of residents in Omak commuted to work by automobile ; more than the state average of 72 @. @ 4 percent . Four percent of residents carpooled ; fewer than Washington 's average . 3 @. @ 8 percent walked ; close to the state average . The median time to travel to work was 11 @. @ 5 minutes , less than the state average of 25 @. @ 5 minutes . In the late 1960s , U.S. Route 97 was rerouted to the east and Downtown Omak was bypassed . Large signs located just off U.S. Route 97 promote the city 's central business district .

Washington State Route 215 runs north @-@ south through Omak , connecting the city to Okanogan four miles (6 @. @ 4 km) to the south . U.S. Route 97 and State Route 20 also run north @-@ south through Omak , connecting the municipality to Okanogan 5 miles (8 @. @ 0 km) south

along this route and Brewster 32 miles (51 km) south , Nespelem 35 miles (56 km) southeast is connected to the community by the east @-@ west State Route 155 , before it becomes a spur route and continues west along Omak Avenue to terminate into State Route 215 . The residential areas are separated from the industrial sector and the highway by backroads near the major highways . Omak 's central business district is connected by several spur routes along municipal roads , such as Riverside Drive , Main Street and Okoma Drive .

Omak has rail , air , and bus services for regional and state transportation . Rail lines from Cascade and Columbia River Railroad enter Omak from Oroville in the north and Wenatchee in the south . The line interchanges with BNSF Railway in the Wenatchee area . The City of Omak operates the general Omak Airport . The paved runway is the third largest in central Washington . The airport provides three daily charter flights , except on Saturdays and Sundays . Wings for Christ Airport and Mid @-@ Valley Hospital EMS Heliport are private aviation ports . The closest commercial airports are located in Penticton and East Wenatchee . Okanogan County Transportation & Nutrition provides bus services in the city , and the federal Amtrak and Greyhound Lines maintain bus stops there .

The 30 @-@ bed Mid @-@ Valley Hospital provides medical services , including a 24 @-@ hour emergency medical service , ambulance service , nursing care , a birthing center , and a trauma center . The facility employs 10 physicians and dentists , 20 registered nurses and two licensed practical nurses . Established in July 2000 , Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare serves the city as an alternative medical facility . Numerous nursing homes , including Rosegarden Care Center , New LifeStyles and The Source for Seniors , operate in Omak . The city 's clinic was constructed in 1996 using \$ 4 @, @ 800 @, @ 000 of local funds . The City of Omak measures residents ' drinking water use and provides storm drains , solid waste , and garbage services since 1984 . Residents under 60 are charged a 10 percent utility tax on purchases . Electricity is supplied by Okanogan County Public Utility District , and natural gas by Amerigas . Other utility companies serving Omak include AT & T (telephone) ; and Comcast (telephone , Internet , and cable television) .

= = Notable people = =

Joe Feddersen was born to a German American father and an Okanogan ? Sinixt mother in Omak in 1953 . Feddersen later became an active member of the Colville Indian Reservation and primarily serves as a sculptor , painter and photographer , known for creating artworks with strong geometric patterns reflective of the landscape and his Native American heritage . He was first exposed to printmaking at Wenatchee Valley College under the direction of Robert Graves and worked as an art instructor at the Evergreen State College in Olympia , after he earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Washington and his Masters of Fine Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin ? Madison . In 2009 , Feddersen moved back to Omak , after leaving his teaching position at the Evergreen State College .

Marv Hagedorn was born in Omak in 1956 . He was raised in northern Idaho and served in the United States Navy (USN) from 1973 to 1994 while attending Pensacola Junior College and the University of Maryland . He entered politics and was elected to the Idaho House of Representatives by Governor Butch Otter in January 2007 . In 2012 , he was laid off , and was elected to represent the Idaho State Senate . Outside politics he is a member of the Disabled American Veterans and North American Fishing Association . Hagedorn and his wife later decided to reside in Meridian , Idaho , along with their children .

Don McCormack was born in Omak in 1955 . He later entered baseball and made his major league debut as a catcher with the Philadelphia Phillies in 1980 , after being chose as fourth round draft pick at the 1974 Major League Baseball Draft . McCormack would end up participating in a total of five games in the major league between 1980 and 1981 and spent nine years playing in the minor leagues for the Detroit Tigers and Philadelphia Tigers farm teams . McCormack later managed the Reading Phillies (Eastern League) and served as the bench coach of the Long Island Ducks (Atlantic League) for a short period , but was replaced .

William Stephen Skylstad , delivered in Omak on a garage table around 1934 to a Norwegian father

and a Minnesotan mother , was raised on a farm near Skylstad , Norway , where his family later moved . When he was 14 years old , Skylstad left home to attend seminary in the United States , and was trained for the priesthood at Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington , Ohio . Twelve years later , he was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Spokane on May 21 , 1960 . Skylstad serves as a Roman Catholic Bishop and a Bishop Emeritus of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Spokane , having retired on June 30 , 2010 . He was appointed as the Apostolic Administrator of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Baker , in Oregon , on January 24 , 2011 , upon the appointment of Bishop Robert F. Vasa as Coadjutor Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Santa Rosa in California .

= = International relations = =

According to the Lieutenant Governor of Washington , Omak is a sister municipality with Summerland , British Columbia , a district with a population of 11 @, @ 280 people according to the 2011 Canadian census . Located on Okanagan Lake in the adjacent Okanagan @-@ Similkameen Regional District , Summerland was incorporated in December 21 , 1906 , and is located 96 miles (154 km) north of Omak . An agricultural community like Omak , Summerland comprises several trails for hiking , walking or cycling .