

SD-11: Economic Development Customer & Public Engagement Committee Report November 2024

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SD-11: Economic Development

Economic prosperity is foundational to cultivating vibrant and thriving communities we serve.

OPPD's strategic leadership and active participation in regional economic development initiatives will create a favorable environment to attract new business and help existing business customers to

expand and support workforce and community needs. OPPD's economic development strategy will adapt and change to maximize value for the region as the utility and the region's advantages and opportunities evolve.

Therefore, OPPD shall exercise leadership and participates in economic development to:



Attract, retain & expand businesses



Serve as a community leader and trusted partner
to organizations and leaders on local, regional and statewide initiatives and activities in economic development, including workforce and community needs



Offer and promote effective tools, resources, programs, products, services and rates
to educate our business customer owners and support economic growth, sustainability, cost savings and/or vitality



Assist with site development and marketing
to plan or best optimize our energy system for businesses and industrial customer-owners

Economic development is the intentional practice of improving a community's economic well-being and quality of life.

Source: International Economic Development Council



Economic Developers are stewards of the ecosystem.

As stewards, they play many roles:



Our focus is driven by our communities' needs and our long-term vision.



Businesses need:

- Access to land, skilled labor, utilities and capital
- Networks and connections that increase competitiveness



Workers need:

- Quality jobs
- Education and training
- Opportunities for advancement



Communities need:

- Funding for basic services
- Quality of life amenities
- Economic diversification and resilience



Attract, retain & expand businesses

Key takeaway:

We serve as a catalyst to bring economic growth to our region and anticipate \$3.25 million in annual revenue from announced projects since last monitoring report

Industries



Food Processing
& Food Distribution



Manufacturing



Warehousing,
Office &
more

New Jobs



430

Direct Jobs Landed

1,265

Overall Jobs (Total Effect)

\$157M

430 direct jobs bring additional production of goods and services

\$280M

1,265 overall new jobs bring additional production of goods and services

2,740

new additional jobs due to capital investment

Return on Investment



\$264M

Direct Capital Investment

\$476M

Total Economic Impact

Source: University of Nebraska-Omaha 2024 OPPD Economic Impact Analysis



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Delivering on generation plans

- Pipeline of economic development project activity remains strong.

Reliability and affordability

drive more growth.



- Executing on generation plans to deliver on community needs:

- ✓ 81 MW Platteview
- ✓ 600 MW High Banks
- ✓ 420 MW Pierce County Energy Center
- ✓ 300 MW Milligan



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Comparing ourselves against other metro areas



Our Strengths:

Growth

- GDP growth
- Low unemployment

Innovation

- Increases in science-related grants & NIH funding per job (indication of scientific research)

Business Cost

- Maintaining position as one of the most affordable metros

Entrepreneurship

- Our prosperous entrepreneurs earn higher income than almost all of our comparisons

Quality of Life

- Leader with rich arts & cultural options, accessible healthcare & fast commutes
- Increases in public safety

Private Capital

- Valuable stock of private equipment & structures

Our Opportunities for Growth:

Growth

- Slow, steady growth in jobs & wages
- Advantageous in that we minimize severe economic downturns but we are also losing ground to rapidly growing metros

Innovation

- Lower concentration of both IT-related industries and tech workers

Infrastructure

- Fewer passenger enplanements and gradually decreasing transportation & services industry

Human Capital

- Lagging in college graduates, population growth and minority workforce

Entrepreneurship

- Our entrepreneurs are more successful, but less numerous than other metros, especially in the business services industry and among minorities

Inclusivity

- Education attainment is relatively low for non-white and Hispanic persons
- Poverty rate is high for non-white and Hispanic persons compared to the non-Hispanic, white population

2024 Omaha Index Ranks

- #7 GROWTH
- #4 INCLUSIVITY
- #8 HUMAN CAPITAL
- #6 INNOVATION
- #8 ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- #7 INFRASTRUCTURE
- #4 BUSINESS COST
- #4 QUALITY OF LIFE
- #4 PRIVATE CAPITAL

- Growth improved from 8th to 7th
- Human Capital maintained ranking of 8th - 4% above the U.S. average
- Fell behind slightly in Quality of Life and Infrastructure
- Sustains rankings on all other indexes: Inclusivity, Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Business Costs, and Private Capital

Greater Omaha Chamber Barometer Report



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Leading and partnering on economic & community development planning



Leading and serving on dozens of boards, key partner on community initiatives, including community development workshop, housing study and more



Serving as partner of Entrepreneurship Education Collaborative with more than 500 participants across 7 training events statewide as well as on Nebraska's New Venture Competition



Serving as key stakeholder of 6 Regions, One Nebraska initiative in metropolitan and southeast regions and other regional economic development focuses, including as partner of Bio Innovations Midwest event with State, BioNebraska and Omaha Chamber



Working closely with elected officials and community leaders on growth and strategic/comprehensive planning, including Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, Southeast Nebraska Development District, City of Bellevue, City of Omaha and more



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Leading, advocating and partnering on workforce and community needs

A Year of Firsts and Enhancing Partnerships

OPPD community focus

- **Education**
(STEM, mentoring, workforce development)
- **Basic Needs**
- **Sustainability & Community Betterment**
- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**
- **Leading partnership of Metropolitan Community College Sustainability Boot Camp**
 - Second year of 4-week camp (OPPD driven) where 16 students participated to learn about sustainability through hydroponic gardening, composting and solar energy
- **Continuing Connect the Dots partnership with University of Nebraska-Lincoln**
 - 600+ students attending 5 career focused events across southeast region
- **Supporting supplier diversity programs and events**
 - Featured at Nebraska's 1st Annual Supplier Diversity Trade Conference and more
- **Actively leading and supporting on regional and statewide workforce efforts and initiatives**
 - Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Heartland Workforce Solutions, Nebraska Energy Workforce Development and more





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Leading, advocating and partnering on workforce and community needs

- **Launch of first Youth Power Summit**
More than 100 OPS high school students attended in partnership with six high schools
- **Partner of 5 Habitat for Humanity Rock the Block events**
Supported 3 in North Omaha, 1 in South Omaha and 1 in La Vista
- **Launch of two new Community Resource Fair pilots in North and South Omaha**

North Omaha

- 15 agencies, focused on all customers within six area zip codes
- Served more than 300 customers from 120 households
- Provided \$29,924 in energy assistance that was distributed to 82 customers
- Enrolled 39 customers in the Customer Assistance Program (CAP) Pilot Program

South Omaha

- 25 agencies, focusing on our most vulnerable customers
- Over 100 attended from South Omaha and surrounding areas
- There were 36 Payment Installment Plan enrollments, totaling \$26,119, and 35 households were served with energy assistance totaling \$12,367
- OPPD also provided 10 SMART Thermostats to eligible households





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Promoting tools and resources to support economic growth and vitality



SizeUp Leader

Objective:

Provide tools and resources to educate small business customers

Outcomes:

- Provided 23,766 reports for business owners and entrepreneurs with 1,264 unique visits
- Entrepreneurial ecosystem leaders support tool and looking at more partnerships to amplify exposure



SourceLink

Objective:

Connect businesses and entrepreneurs with resources to support economic growth

Outcomes:

- Served 1,167 entrepreneurs and business owners (increase by 53% compared to previous year)
- 389 businesses received direct assistance with development of action plans; 6,046 direct referrals to resource partners
- Total users: 10,790; Year-over-year increase: 53% (from 7,047 in the previous reporting year)



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Providing offerings to support cost savings & sustainability



Renewable Energy Credit program established

Objective:

Help customers offset their carbon emissions associated with energy purchased from OPPD by assigning them the rights to renewable energy

Outcomes:

- 5 customer enrollments resulting in an estimated offset of nearly 10,000 metric tons of CO₂



Greener Together Program projects awarded

Objective:

Support sustainability and cost savings by promoting and funding community-focused projects to customers

Outcomes:

- Urban Bird & Nature Alliance
 - Replenish, restore and maintain a healthy shade tree canopy throughout the North Omaha area
- Free Farm Syndicate
 - Establish permanent infrastructure to increase yields and more sustainably provide free, nutrient dense, local produce to residents in North and South Omaha



Assist with site development and marketing

to plan or best optimize our energy system for businesses and industrial customer-owners

Supporting site development partnerships



NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Opportunity.
DEPT. OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Municipal Inland Port Authority Planning

Objective:

Support implementation of inland port legislation passed in 2021 to further growth and development of the region

Outcomes:

- Partnering with City of Bellevue, Greater Fremont Development Council and City of Omaha on inland port authority focus involving policy, planning and growth opportunities for the region and state



South Omaha Planning

Objective:

Partner with Canopy South to assess opportunities in south Omaha for development

Outcomes:

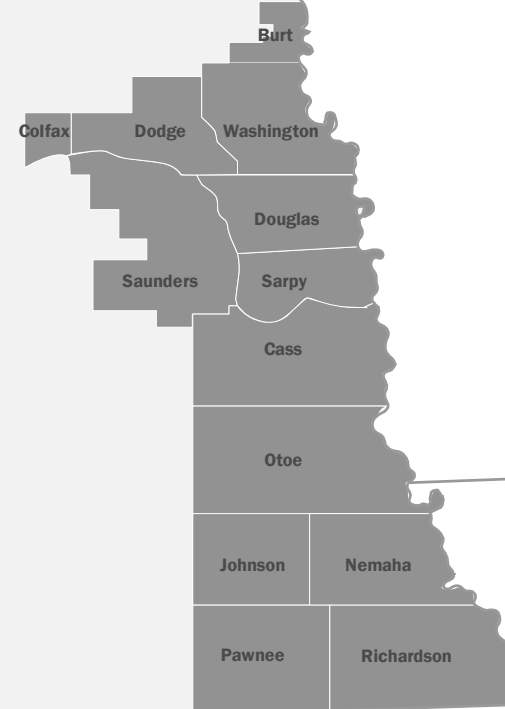
- Serving on the advisory committee to identify properties strategically to develop and redevelop areas for residential, commercial and industrial projects in South Omaha
- Top priorities include redevelopment of mixed-use commercial and infill residential throughout impact area

Economic Engine Fueling the State



Leader and stakeholder of supporting policy and planning today to further drive the economic growth of the region in the next decade plus to come

- Nuclear siting study
- Nebraska Chamber Energy Study
- Local regulations education and advocacy
- Siting and development
- Economic development programming



Recommendation

The Customer and Public Engagement Committee has reviewed and accepted this Monitoring Report for SD-11: Economic Development and recommends that the Board finds OPPD to be sufficiently in compliance with Board Policy SD-11: Economic Development.

Any reflections on

**what has been
accomplished, challenges
and/or strategic
implications?**

