



# NOS Outreach & Engagement

*March 2023 Update*



# Objective

Per the edited and approved Resolution 6518, OPPD's Board of Directors cited that OPPD's continued outreach should ...

*“Engage with local educational, public health, and community-led organizations in carrying out the process that includes engaging the North Omaha community in understanding the benefits and developing action plans to reduce overall impacts related to ongoing operations at North Omaha Station for residents.”*

# Phases



## Phase I (pre-August vote)

Inform and communicate local, regional and national challenges and changes to the electrical system landscape.

Various, internal communications, external 1:1s, videos, industry articles, Speakers Bureau, website education, FAQs, etc.

## Phase II (Aug-Feb)

Engage with, consult and listen to local educational, public health, and community-led organizations.

Listening tour, data collection, employee community connections and retiree outreach, LB1024 hearings, NOS plant tour and community leader conversations.

## Phase III (Ongoing)

Output of listening phase – plan to be developed based on feedback.

Likely to include continued engagement with LB1024 implementation and the North O business park, product development & marketing engagement, community conversation and events.

# Broader Engagement

- January 6 Empowerment Network – Community Leaders
- January 13 Sierra Club Meeting
- January 14 Empowerment Network – Community Meeting
- January 27 Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL)
- January 28 State of North Omaha Meeting
- February 2 Miller Park Minne Lusa Neighborhood Association Meeting
- February 7 North Omaha Ad Hoc Committee Meeting
- February 18 NAACP Omaha Chapter Meeting
- February 21 OPPD Community Conversation
- February 27 North Omaha Commercial Club

## Research and Feedback

- Community Conversation feedback (Feb. 21)
- North Omaha Survey (closed Feb. 27; report March 3)
- OPPDCommunityConnect feedback (closed Feb. 28)



## North Omaha Station Extension

In August 2022, OPPD's Board voted to extend current energy asset practices at North Omaha Station.

# What We Heard

- Community Conversation breakout sessions
- Research conducted with MSR Group
- Feedback from broader outreach



# February 21 Community Conversation

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## Meeting summary

- Florence City Hall
- ~40 public attendees. Included North Omaha residents and a handful of interested individuals outside the area
- 30 OPPD table facilitators and guides
- Exit survey completed by 23 attendees
- Opening remarks by Director Eric Williams
- OPPD growth, commitment and North Omaha Station information shared by President & CEO Javier Fernandez and Vice President Brad Underwood
- Wendy Goldberg, Executive Director Tri-Faith Initiative, led facilitated conversations

## Initial feedback

- Satisfaction with format
- Interest in similar events, with broad scope of employees participating

## Lessons learned

- Be clear on direct ask for help in spreading word of event
- Brainstorm virtual options with event of this nature
- Broader marketing of OPPD's active speakers bureau needed

# OPPD Community Conversation: Breakout Summaries

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## When you think about the prosperity and wellbeing of this community (access, education, etc.), what matters most?

### **Equity was a common theme.**

Participants viewed the community as underserved and as having been so for some time. Several perceived causes exist, such as racism and lack of political power (e.g., power plants are where they are because utility took advantage of underprivileged communities who couldn't fight it).

### **Participants wanted North Omaha to be heard and given a voice.**

Participants commented that developers and companies do the talking and are not listening to their needs. They also commented that North Omaha does not have political power like other parts of Omaha.

### **Participants also wanted to see more good-paying jobs and training in North Omaha.**

Participants commented that many entities are moving west. They believe education needs to be drastically improved, specifically in North Omaha. Our students are purely meeting state standards. Once they get to middle school, they get lost in the system, making it more challenging to succeed.

# OPPD Community Conversation: Breakout Summaries

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## What do you expect from your electric utility?

### **Participants felt OPPD must stick by its mission statement.**

They wanted OPPD to provide affordable, reliable and environmentally sensitive energy services to its customers. Participants noted that OPPD could use its “bigger voice” to represent all of its customers, particularly the lower income and elderly ratepayers who they perceive do not have a voice.

### **Participants wanted more community education on energy-saving opportunities and available grant funds.**

Participants commented that OPPD should continue to use its voice to bring more economic growth to North Omaha.

### **Participants commented OPPD should be the source of transparent information about North Omaha Station.**

Some commented they would like OPPD to explain how North Omaha’s air quality “got to the point that it is,” implying a perception that air quality is poor or that information is not readily available.

# OPPD Community Conversation: Breakout Summaries

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## How can we best reach and/or communicate with you?

### **Participants wanted OPPD to use all the channels it owns or can access.**

This includes The Wire, Outlets, social media, emails, online forums, Omaha World-Herald, radio, etc.

### **Participants also commented that OPPD should leverage partnerships.**

Examples included partnering with the Empowerment Network and other neighborhood associates and having partnerships/champions with teams in the community. They also mentioned using community leadership to get information out to constituents through additional channels beyond our community listening activities.

### **Participants also suggested more OPPD-led community events and engagements.**

Ideas included more open houses, and organizing with the Community Calendar when deciding on open house dates; engaging the community through youth and family activities; and planning events to engage youth in developing solutions for the community.

# Community & North Omaha Station Perception Study: Methodology

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## STUDY OBJECTIVE

Explore OPPD customer sentiment around **community needs and energy generation.**

This included identifying what community needs customers prioritize as most important in terms of community well-being, as well as identifying what prioritized community well-being needs can be positively affected by OPPD.

## SURVEY INSTRUMENT

An online questionnaire was co-developed by OPPD and The MSR Group.

## SAMPLE PLAN

Samples of OPPD's residential customers were **randomly drawn and mutually exclusive.**

Sample 1 included a randomized selection of 50,000 OPPD residential customers across OPPD's service territory, and Sample 2 was a geo-targeted oversample of 5,000 residential customers in North Omaha area zip codes 68104, 68111, 68112, 68131, 68134, and 68152.

## DATA COLLECTION

An initial email and one reminder email was sent to **the 55,000 total customers.**

Fieldwork was completed February 21 – February 28, 2023.

Completed surveys:

- Sample 1, OPPD Service Territory, n=862
- Sample 2, North Omaha area oversample, n=88

# Executive Summary from MSR Group

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- Though North Omaha oversample customers are less satisfied with OPPD overall than OPPD customers in general, over 70% still give high ratings.
- Trust remains high for both groups (North Omaha oversample and OPPD Service Area), with about 75% giving high trust scores.
- Overall relationship with the community is also high for both groups with 75% giving positive scores.
- Of those that are aware of OPPD's community engagement, the vast majority rate the involvement positively.
- There is strong expectation that OPPD should be involved with issues around electricity production, power affordability, and the environmental impacts associated with production.
- Both groups do not see the need for OPPD to be involved with issues outside of OPPD's mission (e.g. police and fire services, housing, education, and medical care).
- Only a third of customers in both groups reported hearing anything related to OPPD's North Omaha Station power plant; however, those customers in the North Omaha oversample who had heard about the topic felt slightly less positive about OPPD as a result compared to OPPD's customers in general.

# Themes

## Community Development

### OPPD Role: Partner

Work side-by-side with elected officials, area organizations and businesses to ensure a thriving community.

## Public Health

### OPPD Role: Supporter

Per Resolution, understand and support public health programs and community needs.



## Safety, Support & Education

### OPPD Role: Collaborator, Connector, Owner/Partner

Listen, learn and launch events, education and programs that are unique to the communities we serve.

# Opportunities



## Communication

- Develop communication timeline and cadence for NOS updates
- Conduct Community Conversations across 13 counties
- Promote existing communication channels using more targeted channels (i.e. Omaha Star, radio)
- Expansion of communications in multiple languages

## Economic Development

- Support implementation of LB1024
- Lead Urban Core
- Assist with Business Park planning
- Connect & promote small business planning tools

## Outreach

- Assist with connections to other bike trails and eBike stations
- Coordinate neighborhood clean-up events
- Arrange volunteer orgs and neighborhood associations with tree plantings
- Coordinate educational presentations via SB
- Collaboration with community resources (basic needs)

# Opportunities



## Customer Service

- Outreach & communication efforts to increase awareness of assistance programs (EAP, LIHEAP, CAP, EEAP)
- More energy efficiency and weatherization programming
- Market Greener Together Program

## Policy and Grants

- Inflation Reduction Act (including Energy Efficiency incentives and tax credits)
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
- Grant education page (similar to COVID-19 page)
- LB560 support (seeking IRA funds)

## Environmental

- Coordinate with local agencies on air monitoring plan
- Direct to local agencies for existing air quality alerts
- Advocate for North Omaha infrastructure through advisement of the city's Climate Action Plan
- Review availability of emissions data on oppd.com

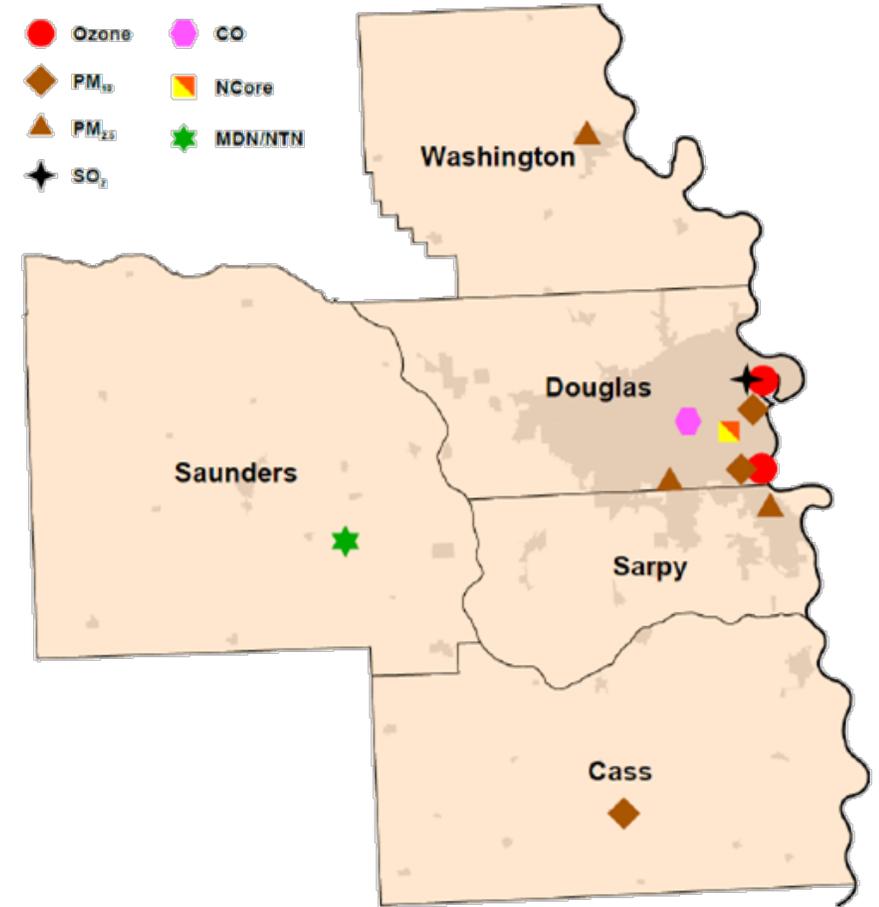
# Ambient Air Quality

## Perception - what we heard:

- Great interest in ambient air quality.
- Misunderstanding that ambient air quality is either not measured or how it is measured.
- Request for ambient air quality monitoring in the North Omaha community.

## How we can help:

- Ambient air quality and plant regulatory limits are different concepts.
- Continuous emission monitoring system (CEMS), installed on plant stacks for NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and CO<sub>2</sub>, help ensure the station remains within all regulatory limits.
- NOS currently holds Low-Emitter Status for PM and Mercury under the MATS standards.
- The ambient air quality monitoring network in the Omaha area is operated by NDEE and the Douglas County Health Department.
- Ambient monitoring done at the plant fence line from 2017-2020 provided “evidence that there is not an air quality problem around the North Omaha facility.” (2021 EPA Summary of NE SO<sub>2</sub> NAAQS).



**NCore**  
4102 Woolworth Avenue

**Ozone**  
Omaha, 4102 Woolworth Avenue (NCore)  
Omaha, 1818 Whitmore Street  
Omaha, 2411 O Street (currently closed)

**Carbon Monoxide**  
Omaha, 4102 Woolworth Avenue (NCore)  
Omaha, 7747 Dodge Street

**Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)**  
Omaha, 4102 Woolworth Avenue (NCore)  
Omaha, 1818 Whitmore Street

**PM<sub>10</sub>**  
Omaha, 18<sup>th</sup> & Burt Streets  
Omaha, 2411 O Street (currently closed)  
Omaha, 4102 Woolworth Avenue (NCore)  
Weeping Water, 102 P Street

**PM<sub>2.5</sub>**  
Omaha, 4102 Woolworth Avenue (NCore)  
Omaha, 9225 Berry Street  
Bellevue, 2912 Coffey Avenue  
Blair, 2242 Wright Street

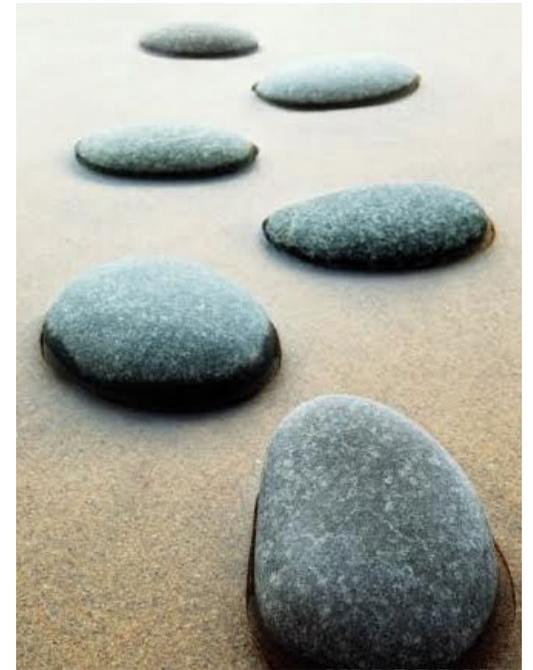
**National Atmospheric Deposition Program**  
Mead, Saunders County: MDN (Mercury Deposition Network),  
NTN (National Trends Network)

# Next Steps

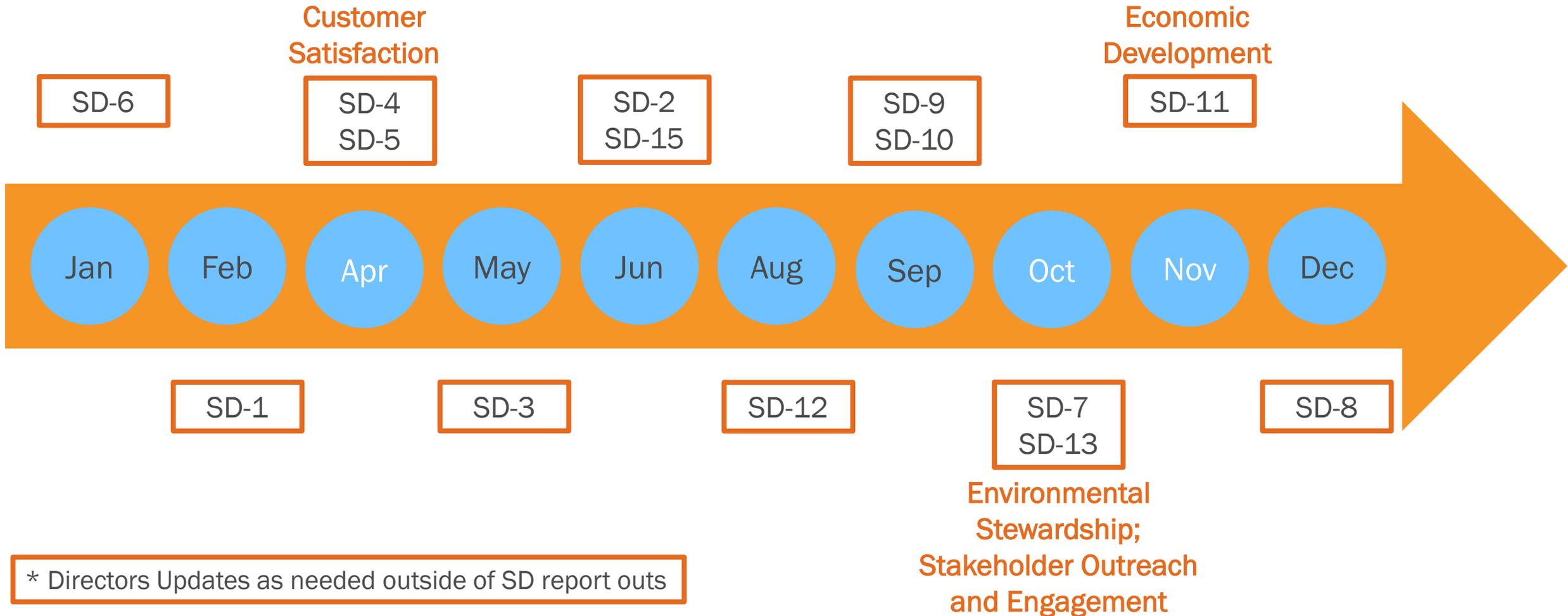
Work will move to respective areas and will be reported on in upcoming SD monitoring reports.

Plan to operationalize across our service territory.

Ongoing communication.



# Status Report Planning



# Appendix

## **1. When you think about the prosperity and wellbeing of this community (access, education, etc.) what matters most?**

Our community needs access to basic necessity. Affordable food, clean affordable water, affordable electricity (clean) and education for our young people. Basic necessities in an affordable manner, not everyone has that.

All arrows point to racism (in the form of environmentalism). North Omaha residents are recipients of benign neglect, things are happening without their knowledge/consent.

North Omaha suffers because of a lack of opportunities. We lack access to health care and education. North Omaha does not have political power like other parts of the city of Omaha. We have empty lots that contain trash and debris. We had a bowling alley, and now it's a storage facility, barber shops closing, and many restaurants. Prosperity feels backward; if you are going to reverse this of what put north Omaha at this disadvantage, you'll have to put resources in there disproportionately.

Good health, Provide inhalers for asthma to the North Omaha residents. We have five of the poorest zip codes in our community. George Floyd incident put racism in its most proper form by continuing to burn coal in the city's poorest section. Hard to justify burning coal in a low-income area when we have high-income areas that can handle the coal issues. North Omaha is underserved due to public health and lead sulfur dioxide and we can't have prosperity without proper healthcare. Florence and the surrounding area have been underserved; we need to discuss toxins in the air and their effect on the community. We need to have an increased amount of monitors daily to track emissions in the air so OPPD can make real-time adjustments based on emissions in the air. Provide regular updates and education on toxins; these community meetings must be scheduled regularly to update the community and have OPPD explain what is happening with the air.

Our community needs access to basic necessities: affordable food, clean water, affordable electricity (clean), and education for our young people. It's a necessary commodity that people should have access to. People have to decide whether to buy groceries or pay for electricity

Residents of North Omaha want to know they are being heard. More big companies need to provide transparency like OPPD is doing. Unfortunately, open houses like this are not available very often. Our community needs more good-paying jobs and training. So many entities are moving west. Education needs to be drastically improved, specifically in North Omaha. Our students are purely meeting state standards. Once they get to middle school, they get lost in the system, making it more challenging to succeed. But it's not just the schools; what happens in students' homes. Discipline issues and kids not getting support become more managing than teaching. North Omaha has terrific teachers and principals but needs to improve. OPS at the bottom of the entire state creates a cycle of disadvantage. There is a shortage of therapists, therapists of color. This is a significant barrier, many people need those services, and a small percentage get it.

Hidden needs – better housing, school, and what isn't apparent – mental health care access a layer of needs across economics, transportation, education and health. Some North Omaha residents could use more “safe homes” from domestic violence and work with the victims. We need more resources such as Women's Community Access, Francis House, and Catholic Charities. We don't know how many people are out there with fundamental struggles.

North Omaha needs help with the economy – what makes everything else possible. Listen to the local residents, authentic listening. Many times companies do the talking and not the listening. OPPD seems different. North Omaha needs more resources. Provide a bike trail by the power plant. Our air needs to be monitored and informed of the results. Some say in a perfect world, the private sector would provide all. Does the justice department have a role to play in our community? How do we know what justice is, what is just and unjust, who benefits, and who loses?

## **2. What do you expect from your electric utility?**

OPPD should explore new energy-generating technologies that can be both clean and reliable. Continue to maintain a competitive and fair rate—transparency and comparative data.

IRA is opening up new opportunities for OPPD— having some of those problems in rural solar. Things like rooftop solar can help address some of these issues of inequality in Omaha. In addition, OPPD has the opportunity to educate its customers more. There is a significant energy burden in North Omaha. OPPD is in a vital position to provide information to residents. Offer incentives for customers to switch over the appliances, especially in the summer.

OPPD could offer bill financing; this could be a beneficial program. This would help even the poorest areas with bill financing. MAPA presented at their last meeting about solar energy for homes and businesses. The presentation showed OPPD's calculator, which made it understandable and doable. The calculator made sense. LinkedIn stores up quite a bit of their usage through their parking lot. OPPD could show businesses how easy it was to invest in solar and how to save it.

OPPD should provide safe power for the North Omaha community and produce more renewable energy, making food sources cleaner. Stick to your mission statement. North Omaha residents feel the environmental sensitivity portion has taken a back seat to reliability and affordability. OPPD should adopt more of a company approach, there are more federal dollars available now, and OPPD needs to use those federal funds seeking those dollars to help add clean generation to the North Omaha community. President Biden has put money into energy renewables, and OPPD needs to take advantage of it and seek federal money for the Community. OPPD needs to be transparent and continue to have these meetings to have honest conversations, and the Community needs to have feedback on the feedback they provide.

The expectation of public utilities in general – want to be able to rely on them. Reliability, having the power when needed, at a low cost, and ensuring clean energy. Ensure the health of the communities and all the communities OPPD serves. Public power has an obligation to reinvest in the community.

We expect OPPD to be net zero by 2035. Be more concerned about climate change for the entire world. Think about emissions from the coal plant in North Omaha and Nebraska City that have collectively contributed. OPPD needs to follow through as planned. Moving systems need to happen by 2035 to be on track and not to have crazy changes in the environment. We are so annoyed that we have been breathing emissions for so many years. We expect OPPD to help this community – educate the community that the money is available and how to apply in the state; here are contractors who have already done this.

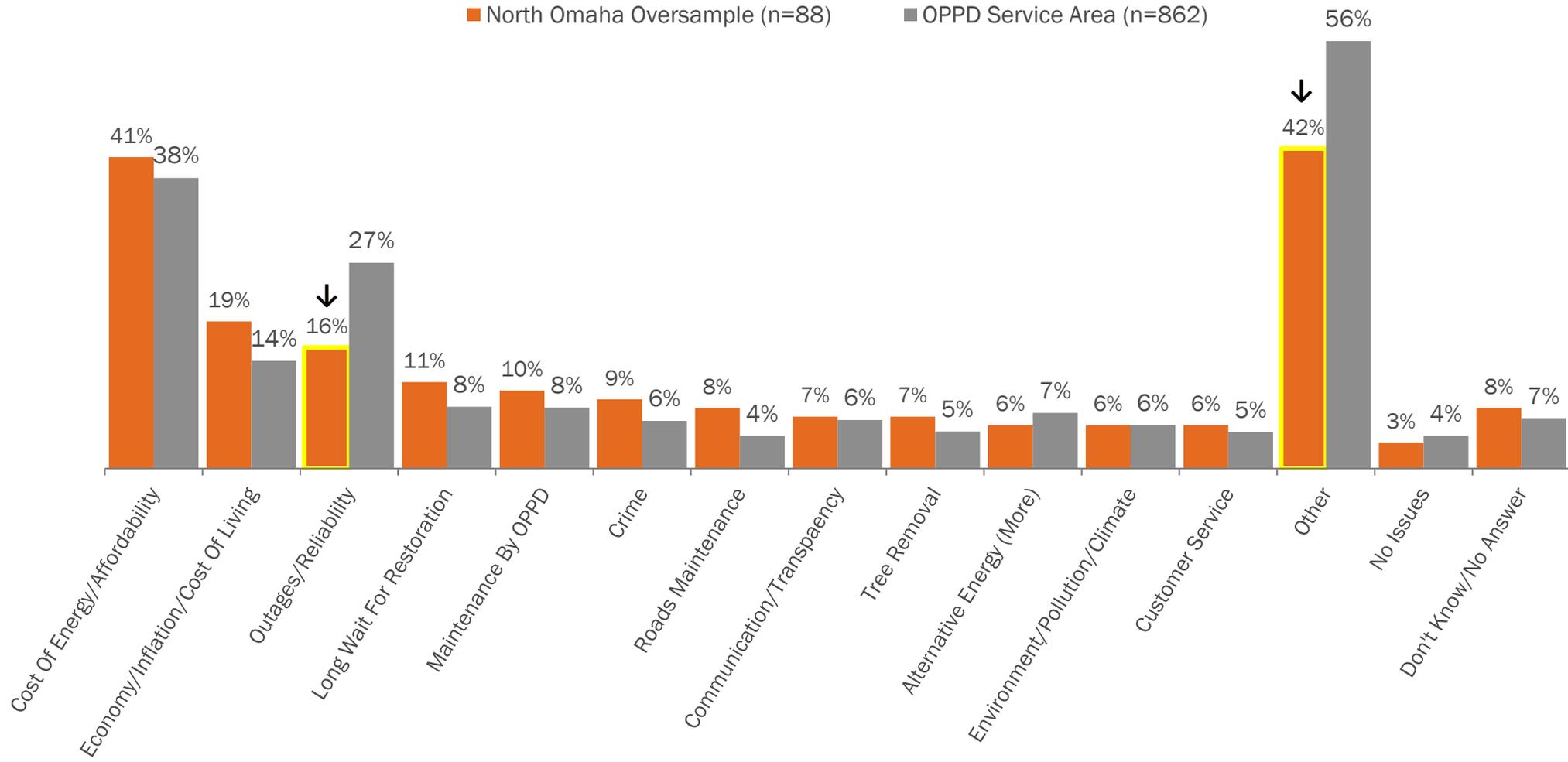
North Omaha expects reliable power. Provide equity for people who need energy. Elderly or low-income residents shouldn't have to be cold because they can't afford their bills. North Omaha needs advocates for our kids that have too much time on their hands. Our kids need technology to learn. Also, it's hard to get program information to people who don't have a computer or smartphone and make it efficient.

We expect OPPD to provide zero-carbon energy at an affordable price for all and begin trimming trees in the North Omaha area again to prevent fewer outages. Also, educate more people and companies about battery-powered vehicles and school buses.

# Top 3 Issues Facing Local Community (Unaided replies)

■ North Omaha Oversample (n=88)    ■ OPPD Service Area (n=862)

- All respondents were asked what they felt were the three most important issues facing their local community.
- Among North Omaha Oversample respondents, the topic mentioned most often was cost of energy/affordability, followed at a distance by economy/inflation/cost of living and outages/reliability.
- The OPPD Service Area also mentioned the same three topics most often. When it came to outages/reliability, they mentioned this issue significantly more often than their North Omaha Oversample counterparts.



↑↓ Indicates significant difference between sample groups.

Base: Total Sample

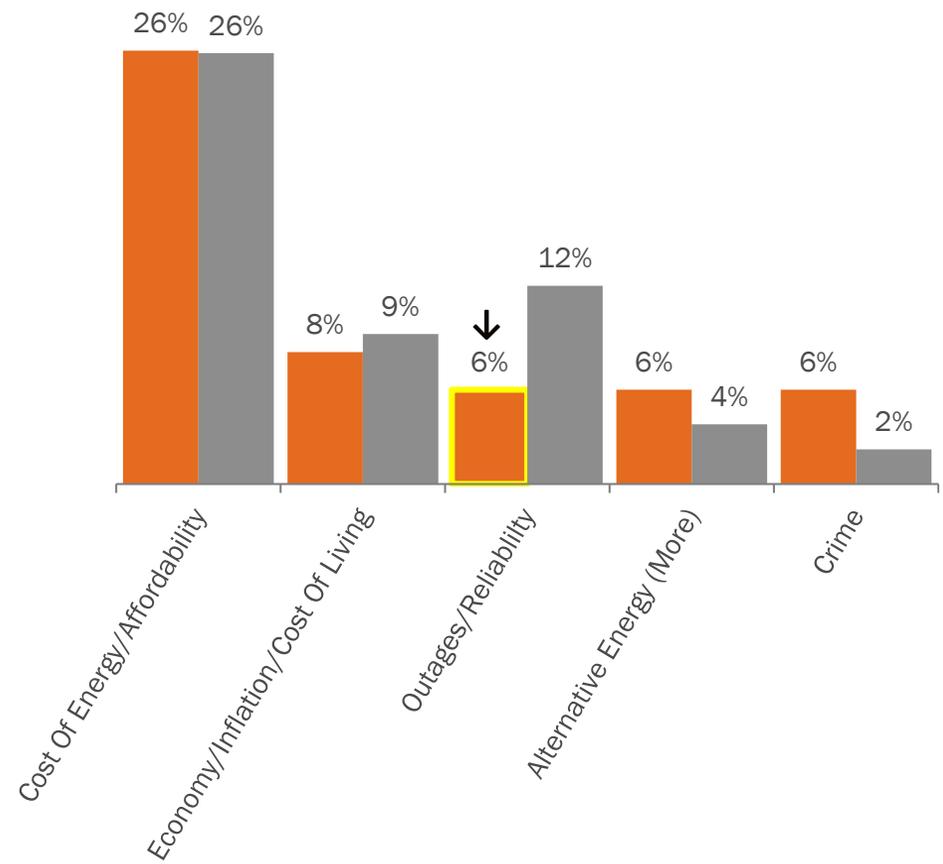
Reference: Q4. Thinking about your local community, what would you say are the 3 most important issues facing your local community? (Total Mentions/3 Replies)

# Most Important Issue Facing Local Community & Extent To Which OPPD Can Positively Influence This Issue

- From the three issues the respondent volunteered in the prior question, they were then asked to choose which one they felt was the most important issue facing their community. Cost of energy/affordability was the top issue for both sample segments.
- Approximately eight in every ten respondents from both sample groups felt that OPPD had at least a moderate level of ability to positively influence the issue they chose as most important to their community.

**MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE (FROM VOLUNTEERED REPLIES)**

■ North Omaha Oversample (n=88) ■ OPPD Service Area (n=862)



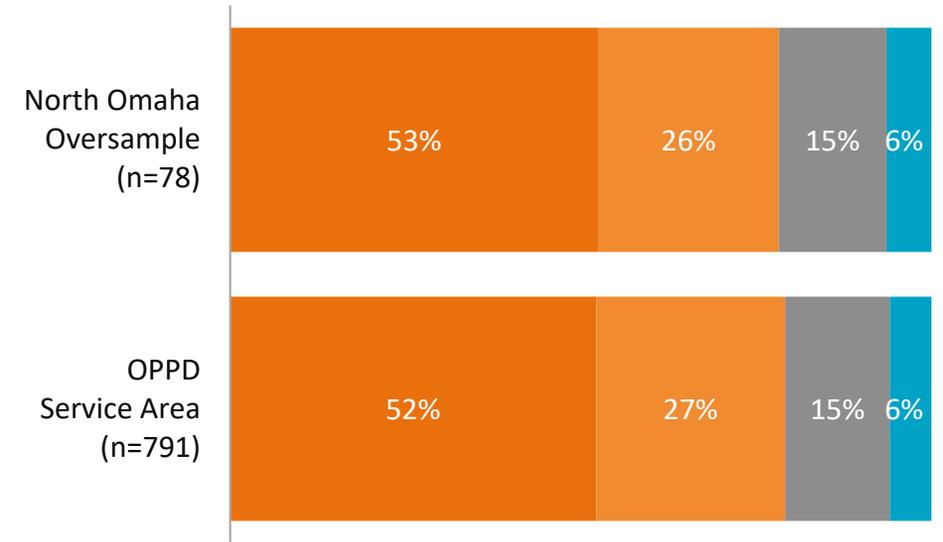
↑↓ Indicates significant difference between sample groups.

Base: Total Sample

Reference: Q4a. Of the 3 issues you mentioned above, which do you feel is the most important issue facing your local community? / Q4b. Please indicate to what extent, if any, you feel that OPPD can positively influence that issue.

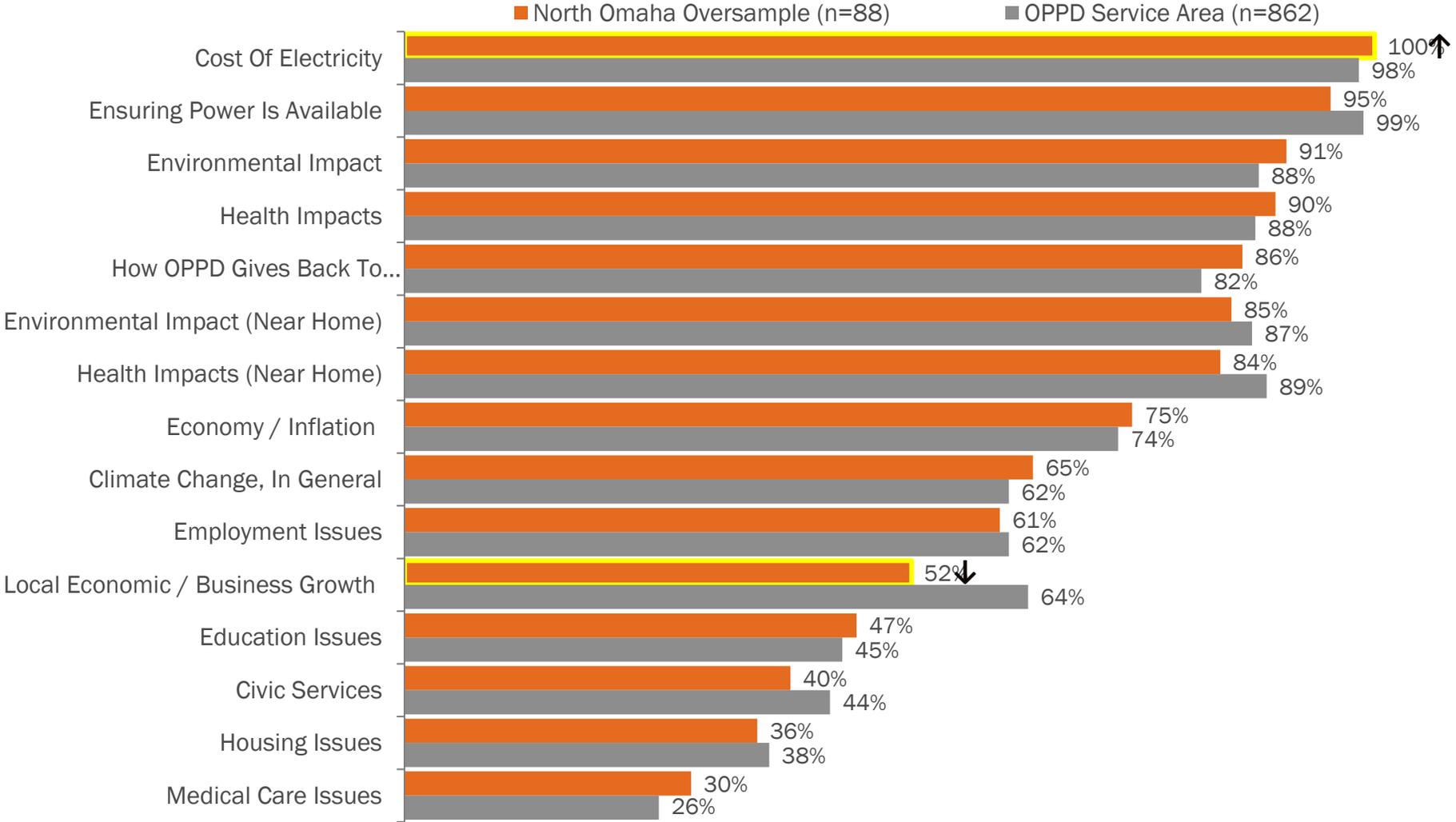
**WHAT EXTENT CAN OPPD POSITIVELY INFLUENCE THIS ISSUE**

■ OPPD Has A Lot Of Ability To Positively Influence This  
 ■ Moderate Level Of Ability  
 ■ Has Little Ability  
 ■ OPPD Has No Ability To Positively Influence This



# Should OPPD Be Involved In ...? (Aided replies; % Yes)

- Fifteen topics were presented to respondents to gather their opinion on whether or not OPPD should be involved in that topic.
- Most agreed that OPPD should be involved in the cost of electricity, ensuring power is available, as well as the environmental impacts and health impacts of producing electricity.
- Fewer respondents felt that OPPD should be involved in topics such as medical care, housing, civic services, or education.



↑↓ Indicates significant difference between sample groups.

Base: Total Sample

Reference: Q6. Please indicate whether you believe OPPD should be involved in the following topics...

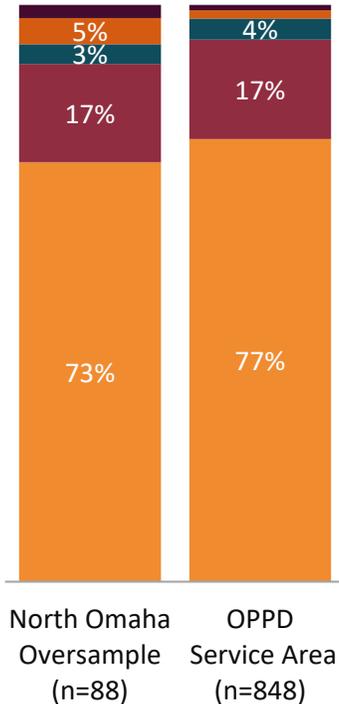


# OPPD Involvement With: The Cost Of Electricity & How Much You Have To Pay For It

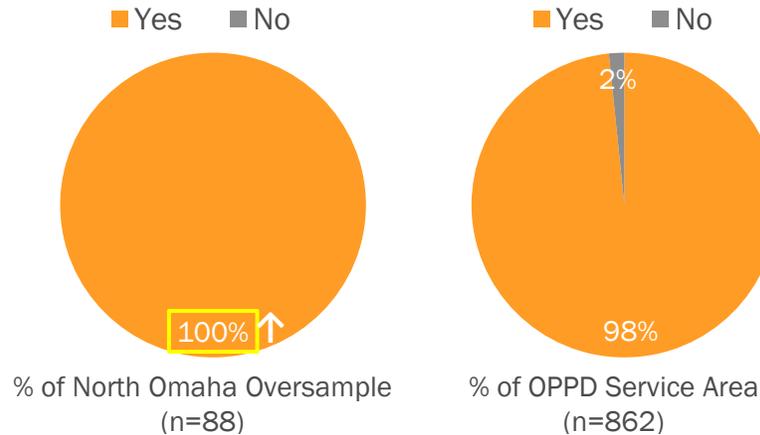
- After respondents were asked whether or not OPPD should be involved in the specific topics, they were next given a set of response options and asked which best explained why they believed OPPD should, or should not, be involved in that topic.
- The majority of respondents who believed OPPD should be involved with the cost of electricity, selected “the topic is directly related to OPPD’s business” as their reason for this belief.
- Only a handful of respondents felt that OPPD shouldn’t be involved in this issue.

## WHY OPPD SHOULD BE INVOLVED WITH THIS TOPIC

- Other
- Should Try To Contribute
- Can Indirectly Impact
- Can Directly Impact
- Directly Related To Business

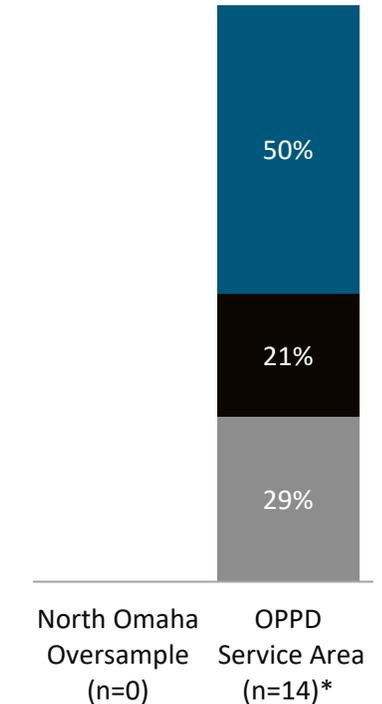


## SHOULD OPPD BE INVOLVED WITH THIS TOPIC? The Cost of Electricity and How Much You Have To Pay For It



## WHY OPPD SHOULD NOT BE INVOLVED WITH THIS TOPIC

- Other
- Not That Important
- Not Related To Business
- Cannot Impact



↑↓ Indicates significant difference between sample groups. / \*Caution: Small sample size.

Base: Total sample

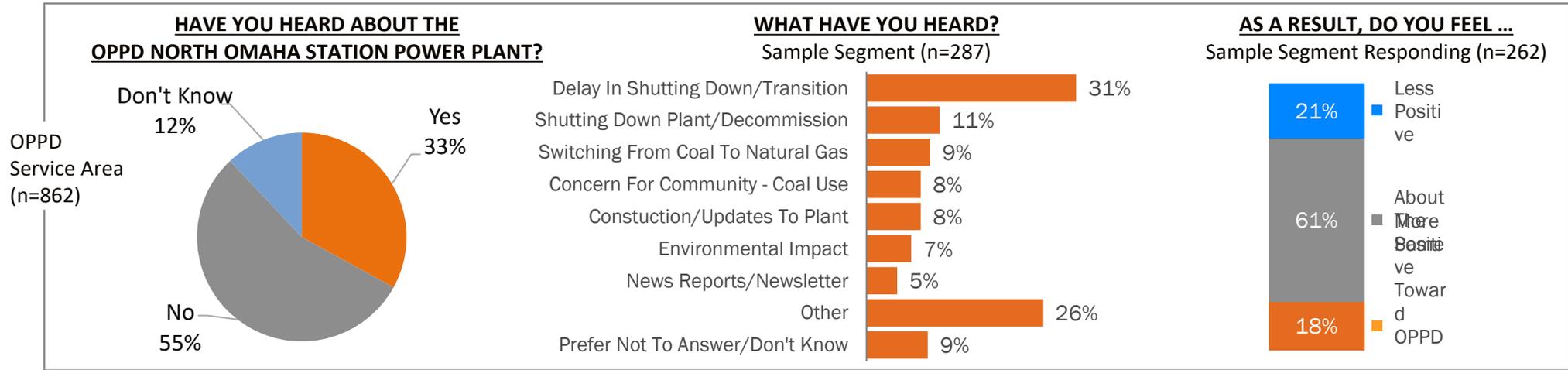
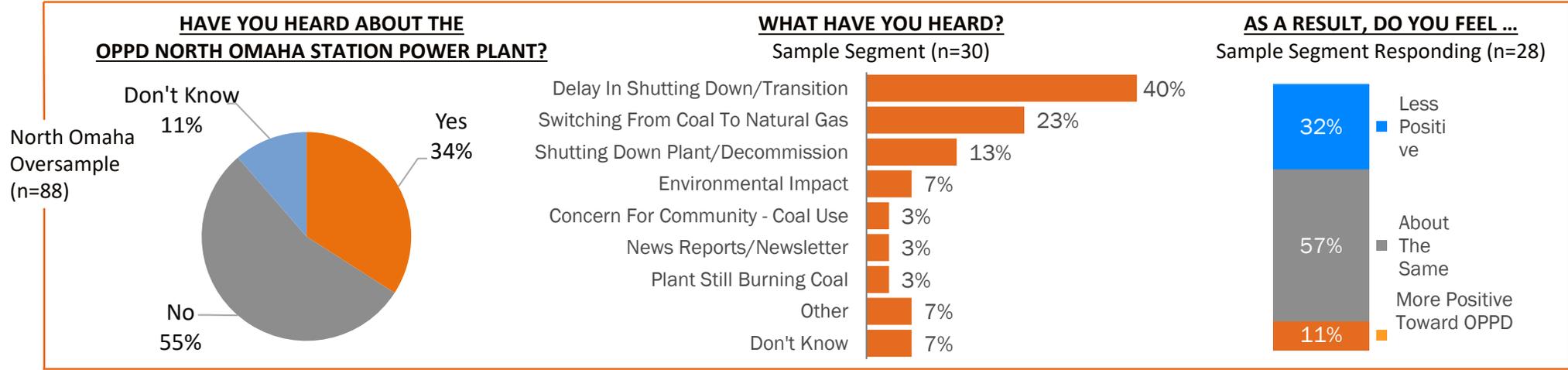
Reference: Q6. Please indicate whether you believe OPPD should be involved in the following topics... / Q7. Which of the following best explains why you believe OPPD should be involved with this topic? / Q8. Which of the following best explains why you believe OPPD should not be involved with this topic?

# Hearing About OPPD North Omaha Station Power Plant & Influence On Feelings Toward OPPD

Final questions assessed whether respondents had heard anything about the OPPD North Omaha Station Power Plant (NOS) and if they had, how that made them feel toward OPPD.

Results were somewhat similar among both sample groups with only a third of respondents mentioning they had heard something about NOS. Most of those who had heard something said they feel the same about OPPD as a result of the information they heard.

There is no significant difference between the proportion of North Omaha Oversample respondents who reported they feel less positive toward OPPD and that of OPPD Service Area respondents. In both samples, the majority said they still feel the same about OPPD.



No significant difference between sample groups.

Base: Total Sample

Reference: Q10. Have you recently heard anything about the OPPD North Omaha Station power plant? / Q11. What have you heard about the OPPD North Omaha Station power plant? / Q12. As a result of the information that you've heard related to the OPPD North Omaha Station power plant, do you feel more positive, less positive or about the same TOWARD OPPD?

