Omaha Public Power District

OPPD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 17, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Omaha Public Power District ("OPPD" or "District") was held on Thursday, April 17 at 5:00 p.m. at the Omaha Douglas Civic Center, 1819 Farnam Street, 2nd Floor Legislative Chamber, Omaha, Nebraska and via WebEx audio and video conference.

Present in person at the Civic Center were Directors M. J. Cavanaugh, M. R. Core, J. L. Hudson, C. C. Moody, and E. H. Williams. A. E. Bogner, S. E. Howard and M. G. Spurgeon were absent. Also present in person were T. R. Via, COO and Vice President, for L. J. Fernandez, President and Chief Executive Officer, who was absent, Messr. T. F. Meyerson of the Fraser Stryker law firm, General Counsel for the District, E. H. Lane, Sr. Board Operations Specialist, and other members of the OPPD Board meeting logistics support staff. Chair M. R. Core presided, and E. H. Lane recorded the minutes. Members of the executive leadership team present in person included K. W. Brown C.V. Fleener, S. M. Focht, G. M. Langel, T. D. McAreavey, M. V. Purnell, and B. A. Underwood.

Board Agenda Item 1: Chair Opening Statement

Chair Core gave a brief opening statement, including reminders for using the WebEx audio and video conferencing platform.

Board Agenda Item 2: Safety Briefing

J. Clark, Manager Protective Services, provided physical safety reminders.

Board Agenda Item 3: Guidelines for Participation

Chair Core then presented the guidelines for the conduct of the meeting and instructions on the public comment process in the room and using WebEx audio and video conferencing features.

Board Agenda Item 4: Roll Call

Ms. Lane took roll call of the Board. All members were present in person, except A. E. Bogner, S. E. Howard and M. G. Spurgeon who were absent.

Board Agenda Item 5: Announcement regarding public notice of meeting

Ms. Lane read the following:

> *"Notice of the time and place of this meeting was publicized by notifying the area news media; by notifying the Omaha World Herald and Nebraska Press Association, OPPD Outlets newsletter, oppd.com and social media; by displaying such notice on the Arcade Level of Energy Plaza; and by e-mailing such notice to each of the District's Directors on April 11, 2025.*

A copy of the proposed agenda for this meeting has been maintained, on a current basis, and is readily available for public inspection in the office of the District's Corporate Secretary.

Additionally, a copy of the Open Meetings Act is available for inspection on oppd.com and in this meeting room."

Board Consent Action Items:

6. Approval of the December 2024, January 2025, and February 2025 Financial Reports, March 2025 Meeting Minutes and the April 17, 2025 Agenda
7. SD-5: Customer Satisfaction Monitoring Report – Resolution No. 6700
8. SD-14 Retirement Plan Funding Monitoring Report – Resolution No. 6701
9. RFP 6189 Cass to Sarpy Transmission Project -- Insulator & Hardware Contract Award – Resolution No. 6702
10. RFP 6180 SC3 Exhaust Silencer Baffle Replacement Contract Award – Resolution No. 6703

It was moved and seconded that the Board approve the consent action items.

Chair Core noted the Board discussed the action items during the All Committees meeting held on Tuesday, April 15.

Chair Core then asked for public comment. There were no comments from the public in attendance at the meeting.

Chair Core then asked for public comment on WebEx. There were no comments.

Thereafter, the vote was recorded as follows: Bogner – Absent; Cavanaugh – Yes; Core – Yes; Howard – Absent; Hudson – Yes; Moody – Yes; Spurgeon – Absent; Williams – Yes. The motion carried (5-0).

Board Discussion Action Items

11. SD-4: Reliability Monitoring Report – Resolution No. 6704

Director Williams moved to approve the discussion action item, and it was seconded by Director Cavanaugh. Chair Core asked for Board member questions or comments.

Chair Core then asked for public comment. There was one comment from the public in attendance at the meeting.

David Begley, 4611 S. 96th Street, Omaha provided comments on the Southwest Power Pool and renewable energy, and presented materials which are attached to the minutes.

Chair Core asked for comments from members of the public on WebEx. There were no comments.

Chair Core asked for comments from the Board. There were comments made by Director Williams.

Thereafter, the vote was recorded as follows: Bogner – Absent; Cavanaugh – Yes; Core – Yes; Howard – Absent; Hudson– Yes; Moody – Yes; Spurgeon – Absent; Williams – Yes. The motion carried (5-0).

Board Agenda Item 12: President's Report

COO Via next presented the following information:

- March 2025 Baseload Generation
- March 2025 Balancing Generation
- March 2025 Renewables
- March Storm Recap
- OPPD Safety & Preparedness Recognition
- SPP RTO West Expansion
- Giving Wednesday – Energy Assistance Program
- Honor our Community – Connecting the Dots
- In Memoriam – Michael Formanack

Board Agenda Item 13: Opportunity for comment on other items of District Business

Chair Core asked for comments from the public in the room on other items of District business. There were three comments.

David Begley, 4611 S. 96th Street, Omaha, provided comments on DEI and net zero programs and presented materials which are attached to the minutes.

William Harper, 4024 California St, provided comments on energy efficiency programs.

Jad Haddadin, 17634 Douglas Cir, provided comments on environmental justice and energy efficiency programs

Chair Core asked for comments from members of the public on WebEx. There was one comment.

John Pollack, 1412 N. 35th Street, Omaha, provided thanks for the storm restoration efforts and a weather update.

There were no additional comments from the public in attendance at the meeting or via WebEx.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Signed by:
S. M. Focht
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S. M. Focht
Vice President – Corporate Strategy & Governance and Assistant Secretary

DocuSigned by:
Erin H. Lane
965CE2363A0A42C...

E. H. Lane
Sr. Board Operations Specialist

DDB

#7.7B IN NEW TRANSMISSION

UTILITY DIVE

SPP to rely on demand response to help bridge shrinking power supplies: CEO Nickell

"Excess generating capacity is dwindling, and it's dwindling to a point where it's becoming dangerous," the Southwest Power Pool's Lanny Nickell said Thursday.

Published April 4, 2025

Ethan Howland
Senior Reporter

Enel North America's 250-MW Smoky Hills wind farm near Ellsworth, Kansas. The Southwest Power Pool, the grid operator for Kansas and 13 other states, faces dwindling reserve margins, Lanny Nickell, SPP president and CEO, said April 3, 2025. milehightraveler via Getty Images

It is unlikely that enough power supplies can be built in time to meet near-term rising electricity demand in the Southwest Power Pool's footprint, according to Lanny Nickell, SPP president and CEO.

As a result, SPP will need to turn to demand response programs to help bridge that supply-demand gap, Nickell said Thursday during a meeting held by WIRES, a trade group focused on transmission issues.

SPP expects its excess capacity will fall to 5% in 2029, down from 24% in 2020, according to Nickell. "Excess generating capacity is dwindling, and it's dwindling to a point where it's becoming dangerous," he said.

A lot of generation has to be added quickly to meet a one-day in 10-year loss of load expectation, according to Nickell. "I don't think it can be added that quickly," he said. "So what does that mean? Means we're going to have to rely a lot more on demand response to help us meet this challenge."

SPP is developing a "comprehensive" demand response policy that includes more effective DR options, Nickell said.

SPP expects that its peak load could grow to 97 GW by 2035 from 56 GW last year, driven by data centers, home heating electrification and electric vehicles, according to Nickell. SPP operates the grid and wholesale power markets in 14 states from northern Texas to Montana.

The grid operator's interconnection queue has about 135 GW of potential capacity, including nearly 23 GW of gas-fired generation, according to Nickell.

"That is by far the most gas generation we've ever seen in our generator interconnection queue, by far, and it's going to be valuable, because it's going to provide that dispatchability that we need to offset the solar and the wind," Nickell said. "The storage will be very helpful, too."

Last year, wind farms provided about 38% of SPP's electricity, followed by gas at 28% and coal at 25%, Nickell said.

SPP — "the Saudi Arabia of wind" — has about 32 GW of wind, but during one morning hour on June 6, 2023, the wind fleet produced 100 MW, Nickell said, highlighting the need for dispatchable generation.

SPP is reforming its interconnection study process so that by the end of this year a generation interconnection agreement can be

offered within one year after an interconnection application is submitted, Nickell said.

SPP has developed a consolidated planning process so it can study generator interconnections, load connections and long-range transmission plans in one study, Nickell said. It is set to be in place in 2027, he said.

"We're going to need significant amounts of not only generation, but transmission, because transmission can bridge when you need a bridge when you're struggling in your own footprint, and you can import from somebody who's not struggling," Nickell said. "That is a tremendous insurance plan to have."

SPP's latest transmission plan calls for building $7.7 billion in transmission, including nearly 300 miles of 765-kV lines, Nickell said. SPP estimates the investment will save $88 billion to $95 billion in reduced energy costs, he said.

Adding East-West transmission

Looking ahead, more transmission may be needed to get additional benefits from SPP's expansion as a regional transmission organization into the Western Interconnection, a plan the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approved in March, according to Nickell.

SPP plans to launch its RTO West on April 1, 2026. SPP's Eastern Interconnection and Western Interconnection regions will be linked by three direct current interties that total 510 MW.

Being able to operate across the Eastern and Western interconnections provides "tremendous" value for SPP's members, according to Nickell. It allows them to tap into hydroelectric

generation in the Northwest, solar in the Southwest and wind in SPP's eastern region, he said.

"We can get to a cleaner future much more quickly and much more reliably if we can leverage that resource mix across that broader interconnection," Nickell said, noting that the two-hour time zone difference across the region will also provide benefits.

"One of the most strategic things that we can work on is to be able to maximize that value ... by building east-to-west transfer capability," Nickell said. "We've got some today. We think that's going to provide value, but there's so much more value that could be obtained by drastically increasing that east-to-west transfer capability."

SPP is taking the lead among regional transmission organizations on intertie optimization to increase the efficiency of trading across RTO markets, Norman Bay, an attorney at Willkie Farr & Gallagher and former FERC chairman, said at the meeting.

SPP is studying intertie optimization because the grid operator's Western expansion will need it, Nickell said. "We think there's value that can be provided to the existing RTO seams in the East, but it's our western expansion that's caused us to think differently and to try to do better. There's a lot of seams in the West, and those seams are going to require unique solutions."

DDS

Green Electricity Costs a Bundle

The data make clear: The notion that solar and wind power save money is an environmentalist lie.

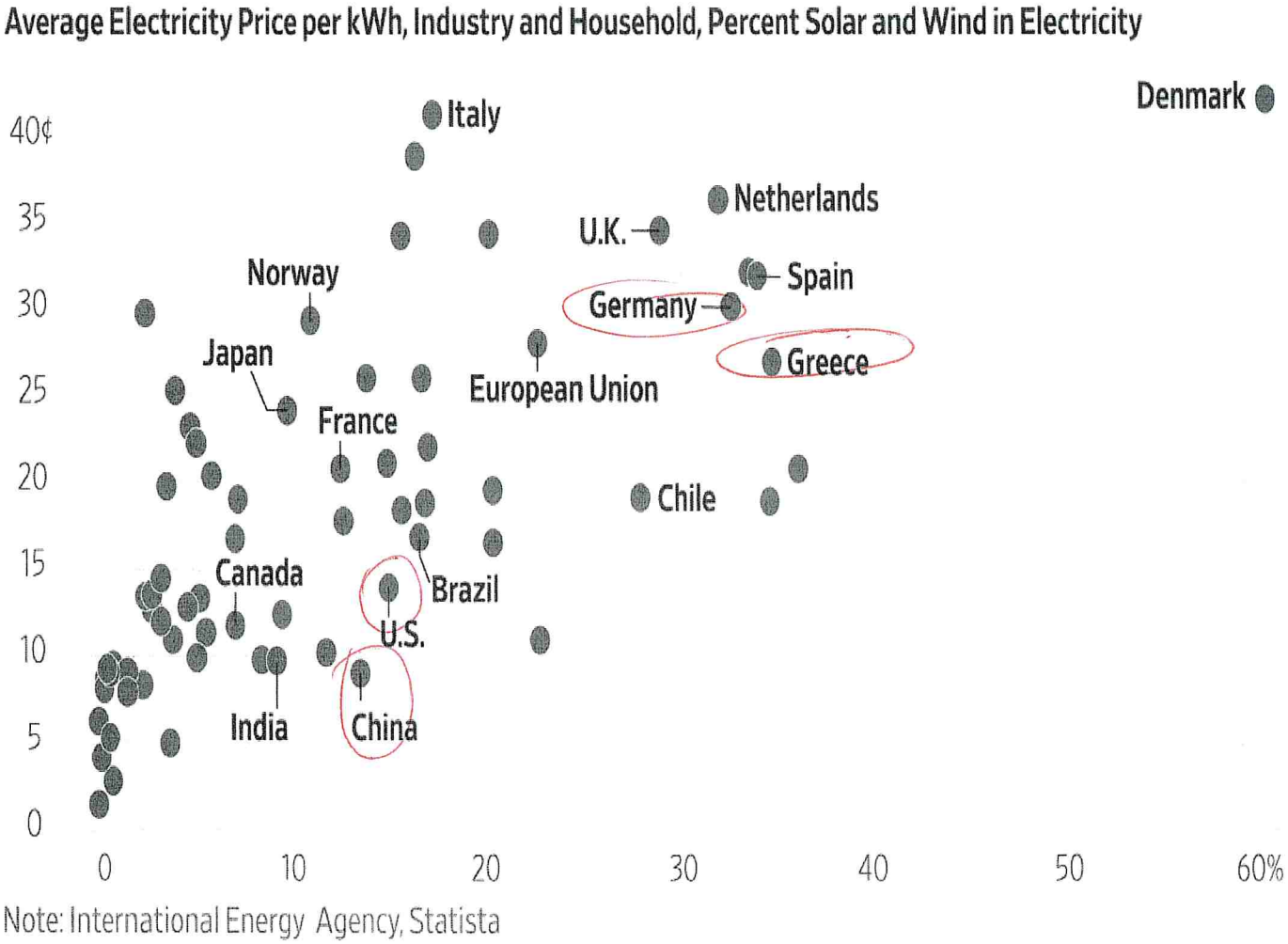
By
Bjorn Lomborg
Jan. 1, 2025 5:31 pm ET

As nations use more and more supposedly cheap solar and wind power, a strange thing happens: Our power bills get more expensive. This exposes the environmentalist lie that renewables have already outmatched fossil fuels and that the "green transition" is irreversible even under a second Trump administration.

The claim that green energy is cheaper relies on bogus math that measures the cost of electricity only when the sun is shining and the wind is blowing. Modern societies need around-the-clock power, requiring backup, often powered by fossil fuels. That means we're paying for two power systems: renewables and backup. Moreover, as fossil fuels are used less, those power sources need to earn their capital costs back in fewer hours, leading to even more expensive power.

This means the real energy costs of solar and wind are far higher than what green campaigners claim. One study shows that in China the real cost of solar power on average is twice as high as that of coal. Similarly, a peer-reviewed study of Germany and Texas shows that solar and wind are many times more expensive than fossil fuels. Germany, the U.K., Spain, and Denmark, all of which increasingly rely on solar and wind power, have some of the world's most expensive electricity.

The International Energy Agency's latest data (from 2022) on solar and wind power generation costs and consumption across nearly 70 countries shows a clear correlation between more solar and wind and higher average household and industry energy prices. In a country with little or no solar and wind, the average electricity cost is about 12 cents a kilowatt-hour (in today's money). For every 10% increase in solar and wind share, the electricity cost increases by more than 5 cents a kilowatt-hour. This isn't an outlier; these results are substantially similar to 2019, before the effects of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine.



Take Germany, where electricity costs 30 cents a kilowatt-hour—more than twice the U.S. cost and more than three times the Chinese price. Germany has installed so much solar and wind that, on sunny and windy days, renewable energy satisfies close to 70% of Germany's needs—a fact the press eagerly reports. But the press hardly mentions dark and still days, when these renewables deliver almost nothing. Twice in the past two months, when it was cloudy and nearly windless, solar and wind delivered less than 4% of the daily power Germany needed.

Current battery technology is insufficient. Germany's entire battery storage runs out in about 20 minutes. That leaves more than 23 hours of energy powered mostly by fossil fuels. Last month, with cloudy skies and nearly no wind, Germany faced the highest power prices since the energy crisis caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, with wholesale prices reaching a staggering $1 a kilowatt-hour.

At least climate-obsessed European governments are generally honest about solar and wind costs and raise electricity prices accordingly, making consumers bear the weight of green energy policies directly. In the U.S., by contrast, consumers pay solar and wind costs indirectly—through tax deductions and subsidies.

Solar and wind credits cost the federal government more than $20 billion in 2024, supplemented by state subsidies. Texas received about $2 billion in federal subsidies last year, and state government subsidies at least tripled that cost. This suggests a total hidden cost for the entire U.S. that perhaps runs more than $60 billion annually, implying that the actual cost of electricity with solar and wind is far higher than stated prices.

Poor countries are especially hurt by the lie that green energy is cheap. Rich countries often refuse to help poor countries with fossil fuel projects. If solar and wind really were less expensive, the world's poorer countries would easily leapfrog from today's energy poverty to energy abundance. New energy infrastructure would all be solar and wind. But this happens only in rich countries where generous subsidies and existing fossil-fuel backup infrastructure make our solar and wind deception possible.

In poorer countries, where electricity consumption rose almost 5% from 2022 to 2023, most of the additions came from fossil fuels, with coal contributing more than all solar and wind additions. China during that period added more new coal than new solar and wind. Bangladesh added 13 times as much coal as solar and wind. Despite India's ambitious solar targets, it added three times as much coal as solar and wind.

This sets the backdrop for U.S. authorities' recent bribery allegations against Indian billionaire Gautam Adani. Since most Indian states don't want to "risk 'intermittent' renewables," according to Reuters, he allegedly had to bribe government officials to get them to buy power from his $6 billion solar power project. Mr. Adani's case confirms what the data already show: Solar and wind are bad business and make our power much more expensive.

Mr. Lomborg is president of the Copenhagen Consensus, a visiting fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution and author of 'Best Things First.'

Environmental

Your message to the Department of Justice

Dear Sir/Madam,

Omaha Public Power District ("OPPD") is a political subdivision of the State of Nebraska. It has a monopoly to supply electricity in its service area; roughly the eastern 1/3 of Nebraska. It has revenue of $1.5 billion.

President Trump issued an Executive Order on April 8, 2025 regarding American Energy. OPPD has a policy, SD-7, that commits OPPD to net zero carbon. In my legal opinion, OPPD's policy is contra to the President's Executive Order.

Please investigate OPPD on this matter.

Sincerely,

David D. Begley
Nebraska attorney and
OPPD customer-owner

Updated April 15, 2025

Commentary

Solar and wind energy wrong for Nebraska

David Begley

March 29, 2025 3:00 am

The two windmills visible to drivers of Interstate 80 near northeast Lincoln are coming down next month. (Courtesy of Lincoln Electric System)

I often oppose new wind and solar energy projects in Nebraska. I've appeared in opposition to proposals in Cass, Knox, Lancaster, Saunders and York Counties.

As an attorney, I represent Knox County and a group of Lancaster County landowners. I regularly address the Omaha Public Power District board regarding its foolish net-zero policy.

I am opposed to wind and solar for many reasons, but the main reason is economics. I do, however, agree with the Amish farmer who spoke in opposition to a solar project that was rejected in Knox County. He said, "I don't think it is a good idea to build a business based on a fad."

Tax credits tilt playing field

Wind and solar are all about the federal income tax credits. That's it. Goldman Sachs projected $1.2 trillion in federal payments for renewable energy projects through 2032.

It has little to do with saving the planet. For wind and solar proponents, there is certainly an element of virtue signaling to show others how much they care about the future of mankind.

I've long been of the opinion that the theory of catastrophic anthropogenic global warming is a scam. It is based on corrupt data that is fed into faulty models by people who have a financial bias in the result.

It is a prediction about the entire climate of the planet in the distant future, a prediction unlikely to be accurate.

Adam Smith created the academic discipline of economics with his "The Wealth of Nations." In that book, he proved the economic law of natural advantage.

Nebraska has other advantages

The natural advantage of Nebraska is the efficient production of food. Oklahoma and Texas, on the other hand, have the natural advantage of efficient oil and natural gas production.

Nebraska trades food for oil and natural gas with other states. Both states benefit. This is how the United States has become the wealthiest nation in the world.

Gov. Jim Pillen is aware that it is not possible to create additional acres of Nebraska farmland. That's part of why he has opposed putting solar panels on productive Nebraska ag land.

It is true that participating landowners get three to five times the cash rent for their land to let these projects happen. But many landowners reject the offer because they value something more than the almighty dollar.

I saw neighbors pitted against neighbors in Cass County. I also saw a woman cry before a legislative hearing after she recited the facts of disappearing farmland.

Debt matters

Our country is $37 trillion in debt. For every dollar spent on an approved wind, solar and battery project, the developer gets a significant slice of federal money.

We all pay for the federal debt, even those landowners who get windfall cash rents from renewable energy developers. The other point that I repeatedly make is that as wind and solar are added to the electric grid, electricity prices increase.

Over 50% of Germany's electricity comes from renewable sources. That's why Germany's electricity is three to four times more expensive than the U.S. average. That's also why Germany's industrial base has been declining. The economics don't work.

The OPPD board has been informed about economic studies done by the Center of the American Experiment regarding net-zero policies in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The studies show that electric rates will triple and that there could be forced blackouts in the dead of winter.

The essential problem is that solar and wind are intermittent power sources, but electricity demand is constant. Nebraska's public power districts are required, by law, to produce only reliable power. Only dispatchable power is reliable.

David Begley is an Omaha attorney. He is a graduate of Creighton University and the Creighton University School of Law.

Email received after the Nebraska Examiner published David Begley's commentary.

"Wow, an educated ignorant idiot, let me guess, you're also an anti American, communist sympathising, Trump supporter too.

How much do you make shilling for big oil? No educated person could actually believe the crap you write.

You must hate farmers or be ignorant of their plight. Solar & wind are not only good for the environment, they are great sources of income for farmers who are facing bankruptcy due to the ignorant anti farming policies of this administration.

Solar panels can increase yields, & reduce the amount of water crops need.

You're anti farmer, anti democracy beliefs are wrong for the USA; have you considered immigrating to Russia ?"

Prepared and submitted by customer-owner David D. Begley, 4611 South 96th St., Omaha.

Fraser Stryker

Karsen E. Sims
ATTORNEY
402.978.5340
ksims@fraserstryker.com
fraserstryker.com

April 9, 2025

VIA EMAIL: dbegley@lawyer.com
David Begley
4611 South 96th Street, Suite 253
Omaha, NE 68127

RE: Public Records Request to Omaha Public Power District

Dear Mr. Begley:

As you are aware, this firm represents the Omaha Public Power District ("OPPD"). On behalf of OPPD, we are responding to your electronic request for records that was received Thursday, March 27, 2025, pursuant to the Nebraska Public Records Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712 *et seq*. (the "Act"). You received an initial response to your requests on Wednesday, April 2, 2025. Please direct further communications concerning this matter to the undersigned.

Your request seeks the following information: *total renewable energy credits or payments received from any source for the past five (5) fiscal years.*

The chart below provides the number of renewable energy certificates ("RECs") that OPPD has received in the past five (5) fiscal years from renewable energy facilities as a result of OPPD entering power purchase agreements with such facilities.

Total RECs Received 2020 – 2024	
Fiscal Year	**Total**
2020	3,874,188
2021	3,695,177
2022	5,178,417
2023	4,269,236
2024	5,030,891
Total	**22,047,909**

OPPD spent eight (8) hours or less searching for and/or gathering responsive documentation to your request. Therefore, under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712(3)(c), as a Nebraska resident the cost to you will be $0.00. In providing this response to your request, OPPD does not assume any obligations beyond those specified in the Nebraska Public Records Act. Furthermore, OPPD reserves its rights to withhold the documents requested or parts of documents requested as provided in the Act.

Best regards,

Karsen E. Sims
FOR THE FIRM

KES: cc Troy F. Meyerson

State	Price/billions	Watts	**Owner or Contractor**
PA	$10	4.5 GW	Kiewit
MS	$20	N.A.	Compass Datacenters
ND	$250	20 GW	N.A.

UTILITY DIVE

Largest US gas-fired power plant planned for data centers in Pennsylvania

The 4.5-GW, $10 billion project at the former Homer City coal-fired power plant could start operating by 2027, according to the project's developers.

Published April 3, 2025

Ethan Howland
Senior Reporter

The coal-fired Homer City Generating Station in Burrell Township, Pennsylvania, in 2018. Homer City Redevelopment and Kiewit Power Constructors plan to build up to 4.5 GW of gas-fired generation at the site to serve data centers, the companies said April 2, 2025. The image by Andre Carrotflower is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0

Homer City Redevelopment, or HCR, and Kiewit Power Constructors intend to build up to 4.5 GW of gas-fired generation at a retired power plant in Pennsylvania to serve a planned data center campus, the companies said Wednesday.

The $10 billion generating project is slated to be built at the site of the 1,884-MW coal-fired Homer City power plant, which was shuttered in mid-2023. The 3,200-acre site, about 50 miles east of Pittsburgh, includes interconnections to the PJM Interconnection and New York Independent System Operator grids. The site interconnects with FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric's system in PJM.

GE Vernova will supply the Homer City Energy Campus project with seven hydrogen-enabled, gas-fired turbines, with the first deliveries expected to begin in 2026, HCR and Kiewit said. The

generating project is expected to start producing power by 2027, they said.

The power plant would be the largest gas-fired power plant in the United States, according to Kiewit. Greenhouse gas emissions from the power plant would be about 60% less per MWh than from the previous coal-fired power plant, according to HCR and Kiewit.

The planned power plant will be supplied with fuel from the Texas Eastern gas pipeline system. HCR received a $5 million state grant to support construction of an interconnection between the generating station and the pipeline, which is about five miles away.

The planned power plant will also provide electricity to "thousands of homes on the local grid," HCR and Kiewit said.

The project is backed by Knighthead Capital Management, a New York City-based private equity firm that as of mid-September owned about 75% of Homer City Holdings, the owner of the Homer City power plant, according to a filing at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. GoldenTree Asset Management owns about 12% of the company.

HCR didn't respond to questions about the project.

The project comes as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is working to set a policy for colocating data centers at power plants in PJM. Analysts expect FERC will potentially approve new colocation rules in PJM by the end of this year.

Partly driven by the power demands of AI computing, data centers could use 6.7% to 12% of all U.S. electricity by 2028, up from about 4.4% in 2023, according to a U.S. Department of Energy report released in December. Total use by data centers could grow from 176 TWh in 2023 to a range of 325 TWh to 580 TWh by 2028 —

translating to a total power demand for data centers between 74 GW and 132 GW, DOE researchers said.

Two companies seek to develop $125bn AI data centers in North Dakota - report

One of the firms could be Microsoft

September 04, 2024 By: **Georgia Butler** Have your say

Two companies are looking to develop artificial intelligence (AI) data centers in North Dakota.

First reported by **The Information**, Commissioner of Commerce Josh Teigen revealed during a Public Service Commission meeting in August that two companies had approached him and state Governor Doug Burgum about developing AI data centers.

The data center projects would start between 500MW and 1GW projects, but could scale up to 5-10GW facilities eventually.

The projects would cost up to $125 billion each.

The identity of the companies involved was not shared, but both were described as having trillion-dollar market capitalizations.

This could include businesses such as Nvidia, Amazon, Microsoft, Google, Meta, and Apple.

North Dakota could get two new data centers

– Getty Images

Microsoft has previously been reported as looking into developing a major AI data center. In March 2024, Microsoft and OpenAI were allegedly investigating building a $100 billion supercomputer campus that could reach as much as 5GW of capacity.

Dubbed Stargate, that project did not have a specific location associated with it, nor were details about the chips that would be used.

The Information has speculated that one of the companies in talks with North Dakota may be Microsoft, noting that Governor Burgum was previously a Microsoft executive.

Commissioner Teigen said that the interest in such projects has increased, adding that he is "at the table with the companies that are most aggressively pursuing this."

Teigen is also encouraging the state to make it easier for companies to rezone land and gain access to power, stating that it risks missing out on these major investments if it doesn't.

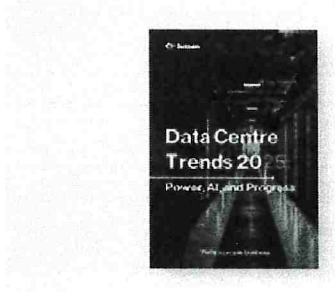
North Dakota does not have a large data center market, with Data Center Map listing only seven facilities in the state. Despite this, it saw the highest relative growth in electricity demand caused by data centers - 37 percent in four years - according to a July 2024 report from the Energy Information Administration.

Data center companies operating in North Dakota include cryptomining and AI provider Applied Digital, which secured $200 million in financing to build out its facilities in the state in June of this year. It has agreed to a deal with an unnamed hyperscaler which will take up space at the expanded facility.

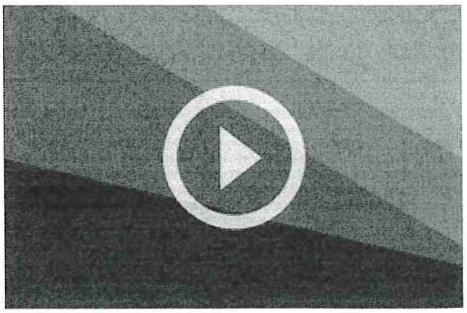
The state is also one of the few in the US that produces more energy than it uses and is the third-largest producer of crude oil in the nation.

Later this month, the Morton County Commission in North Dakota is set to hold a meeting about whether it should implement a moratorium on data centers within its borders as a preventative measure, as reported by The Bismarck Tribune.

More in Construction & Site Selection



16 Oct 2024



Construction Economic News | ConstructConnect

With $20 Billion of Investments, Mississippi Stakes Claim as Next Big Data Center Player

Written by Johnny Bradigan | Mar 26, 2025 6:13:16 PM

Mississippi is positioning itself as the next big hub for data centers. One year after Mississippi touted a then-record $10 billion investment for an Amazon data center project, construction has started on another $10 billion data center investment in the state.

Ground recently broke in Meridian, about 100 miles east of Jackson, for Compass Datacenters' new development. The project will consist of eight buildings scheduled over the next eight years.

Data centers are massive facilities and campuses that house infrastructure for IT applications and services. The demand for these facilities has quickly increased in all corners of the United States, from New York to Louisiana.

Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves (fourth from left), Compass Datacenters CEO Chris Crosby (fifth from left), and other state and local officials mark the groundbreaking of Compass' data center campus in Meridian. Image: Compass Datacenters/LinkedIn

"The growing reliance on remote work and digital collaboration tools has accelerated the demand for cloud services. This, in turn, requires more data centers to manage the storage and processing needs of companies across industries," says Economist Sebastien Tillet of Oxford Economics in a recent commentary for ConstructConnect.

The size and scale of these projects mean they can cost billions of dollars to build. Compass acknowledges the announced $10 billion in Meridian is not entirely from them. The figure includes the potential equipment eventually moved in by future tenants. In a January 2025 press release, Compass said, "The campus also will create thousands of direct and indirect jobs," a claim echoed in news releases from the Mississippi Economic Development Council and Governor Tate Reeves (R).

Compass, based in Dallas, Texas, has built data centers across the United States, as well as some in Israel and Italy. The Meridian project will be Compass' third in the Southeast, joining centers in Franklin, Tennessee, and Raleigh, North Carolina.

Compass Joins Amazon in Mississippi

Amazon's January 2024 announcement that they would build two data center complexes north of Jackson marked the largest capital investment in state history.

The Mississippi legislature quickly approved $44 million in incentives for the project, most of it toward job training programs. Like Compass's announcement, Amazon also claimed that its investment would result in at least 1,000 new jobs.

Compass will also receive incentives from Mississippi, including 10 years of state income and franchise tax exemptions and sales and use tax exemptions for necessary materials and equipment.

While Amazon's investment pledges support for STEM education for K-12 school systems and development programs for secondary and trade schools in Mississippi, Compass has not yet announced similar initiatives.

Mississippi Helping with Power Generation

Data centers need a lot of electricity to operate. When you combine this with the rise in electric vehicles and increased usage of AI automation, the stress on North America's power grid is increasing. The good news is that there is work being done on that front.

Michael Guckes, Chief Economist at ConstructConnect, says, "The response to the rising demand for electricity is evident in the number of recent power generation project starts with valuations exceeding $1 billion. Notable examples of recent energy megaprojects include a $10 billion wind-power farm off the coast of Virginia and a $4 billion next-generation nuclear power plant in Wyoming, among many others."

Back in Meridian, Compass's campus will receive around 500 megawatts of power from Mississippi Power Company.

New Normal, or Just a Trend?

Big-dollar data center investments seem to pop up every week in the U.S. In fact, just a few hours away from these new campuses in Mississippi, Meta is set to build a $10 billion data center in Richland Parish, Louisiana.

According to Tillet, we can expect to see even more.

"As digital transformation accelerates, the demand for data centers in the US will continue to grow. These facilities will play a crucial role in powering the next generation of digital services and innovations, ensuring that the US remains at the forefront of economic growth," he says.

With Mississippi often called "The Hospitality State," local government and business leaders are likely ready to roll out the welcome mat for more data center developments.

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