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# Bryan Municipal Utilities

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## *Strategic Plan* **2023-2026**



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## Mission Statement

***Bryan Municipal Utilities is dedicated to providing reliable and responsive service while pursuing innovative solutions to create the best value for our customers.***

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## Introduction

***Bryan Municipal Utilities provides high-quality, safe, reliable and competitively-priced utility services, tailored to the unique needs of the community it serves.***



Bryan Municipal Utilities (BMU) is a not-for-profit, community-owned electric, water and communications (internet and fiber optic) services provider that serves Bryan, Ohio, and its surrounding area. From its creation by local citizens more than 125 years ago, BMU has not only grown with Bryan, but it has also been one of the reasons behind the community's growth.

BMU has a rich tradition of providing high-quality, safe, reliable and competitively-priced utility services, tailored to the unique needs of the community it serves. The organization's progressive mindset as an early adopter of renewable hydroelectric and solar power resources and as a communications services provider reflect the entrepreneurial spirit that has played such a significant role in Bryan's heritage.



In 2018, the Bryan Board of Public Affairs—BMU's governing body—initiated a strategic planning process. BMU senior staff, and participants from each utility department joined the Board of Public Affairs to comprise the initial strategic planning team. The team sought to help preserve for Bryan residents, businesses, and institutions the many benefits of living and working in a municipal utility community by focusing on a strategic plan for 2019-2022.

This initial strategic planning team worked through a series of sessions to update BMU's vision, mission and values; review organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; identify key strategic issues for the next several years; develop objectives to achieve the strategic goals; and

## Introduction

establish success measures to track the strategic plan's progress. To ensure that the strategic plan reflected community priorities, BMU staff conducted face-to-face interviews to collect customer opinion information and selected Hometown Connections, Inc., public power's utility services organization, to help facilitate development of the initial strategic plan with the Board and staff.

The primary objective of the strategic plan is to support BMU's continuing excellence in providing safe, reliable, competitively-priced and environmentally-responsible utility services that is focused on the customer and community and protected through superior financial, technology, and workforce management. With this objective in mind, the Board and BMU continue to work diligently to measure and monitor the progress of the organization, while adjusting to unprecedented national and/or local economic, operational or social events.

Keeping the focus of the organization's vision and values in the forefront for the benefit of its customers and the community helps ensure the trust and investment that our community instills in BMU. This strategic plan was provided as a blueprint for moving forward for future generations while continuing the rich tradition started many years ago.

### A PROUD HISTORY

Bryan Municipal Utilities began more than 125 years ago with establishment of the Bryan municipal water system in 1892. Electric service was added in 1896 when Bryan residents voted to establish their own electric utility. A communications utility was created in 1998 to provide Bryan with a fiber-optic system designed to provide cable television and high-speed Internet access and data transfer.



Presently, the utility serves approximately 6,000 customers. Since its formation in 1906, the Board of Public Affairs has developed the policies that govern the utility's operation. The Board has focused on providing the residents and businesses of Bryan superior service at a competitive cost.

The birth and development of Bryan Municipal Utilities is a success story of which all Bryan citizens can be proud. The enduring determination of Bryan's residents to own and operate their electric, water and communications utilities for the benefit of the community, and their wisdom in electing competent and dedicated citizens to oversee their investment, has been well rewarded with competitive rates and superior services for more than 125 years and ensures the community is well positioned to address the challenges of the 21st Century.

### READY FOR THE FUTURE

BMU recognizes the utility industry as a whole is in transition. BMU must address a fluid wholesale power market, constant changes in regulatory requirements, the need to invest in innovative technologies to improve efficiency and reliability, and customer demand for instant online access to utility information. With the market in transition, BMU has and will continue to evolve its services and invest in infrastructure improvements while maintaining the competitive and reliable services customers expect. The BMU strategic plan focuses on actions to take during the next several years to ensure success far into the future.

## Mission, Vision & Values

*Central to Bryan Municipal Utilities' planning for the future is ensuring all efforts align with its enduring mission, vision, and values.*

### Mission

BMU's mission statement is:

**Bryan Municipal Utilities is dedicated to providing reliable and responsive service while pursuing innovative solutions to create the best value for our customers.**

### Vision

BMU's long-term vision for success includes:

- Deliver reliable electric, water, and communications services
- Deliver A+ customer service
- Attract and retain a skilled workforce through competitive compensation, benefits, and training
- Maintain a modern IT Infrastructure
- Deploy advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) for water and electric services
- Make capital improvements to increase water capacity and reliability in distribution system
- Develop a lead-free water strategy
- Maintain BMU's financial health
- Offer competitive retail rates
- Invest in power plant, substation, and distribution system upgrades
- Improve reliability through transmission redundancy
- Increase capacity for industrial load growth

### Values

The essential and enduring guiding principles for the BMU Board of Public Affairs and staff are:

- **Integrity:** doing the right thing in an honest, fair, and responsible way
- **Dedication:** committed to applying our knowledge, expertise and resources in a professional manner
- **Service:** providing reliable service at competitive rates
- **Customer Focused:** making our customers our primary focus every day
- **Communication:** providing clear and consistent communications in all we do

## Understanding the Customer

*In recognition that different types of customers have different utility service needs and priorities, BMU is designing programs reflective of the needs of various customer categories:*



### Industrial

- Use electricity for processing, producing, or assembling goods
- Including such diverse industries as manufacturing, food processing, agriculture, and construction
- Focused on powering various motors, heating, cooling, and electro-chemical processes (e.g., to produce aluminum)
- Electricity use tends not to fluctuate through the day or year as in the residential and commercial sectors, particularly at manufacturing facilities that operate around-the-clock
- Focused on service reliability, efficiency and cost competitiveness



### Commercial

- Includes government facilities, service-providing facilities and equipment, and other public and private organizations
- Biggest uses of electricity are lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
- Electricity demand highest during operating business hours; decreases substantially on nights and weekends
- Focused on service reliability, efficiency and cost competitiveness



### Residential

- Those interested in savings through energy management
- Those interested in utility service choose to protect the environment
- Customers focused on smart grid applications for ease of use and convenience
- At risk customers focused on service reliability
- Customers eager for financial savings and environmentally-friendly service options
- All value service reliability and cost competitiveness

BMU will monitor and measure customer opinions in a variety of ways, including social media interactions, personal contact, surveys, and Board meetings.









## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

*A foundational element of the strategic plan is identifying Bryan Municipal Utilities' strengths in the marketplace, its vulnerabilities, and its opportunities.*

### Strengths

- Reliability
- Management
- Quality/skill of workforce
- Good place to work
- Diversity of power supply
- Generation—costs, control, leverage
- Equipment quality
- Board of Public Affairs support for providing adequate resources
- Innovation
- Training
- Visibility in community
- Offering value to community
- Coordination with city departments
- Teamwork within utility
- Financially responsible
- Competitive rates
- Customer outreach/response time
- Project management
- Succession plan

### Weaknesses

- Communications business model
- Flat/decreasing growth
- Compensation package
- Aging workforce
- Aging infrastructure
- Metering system
- Communications technology
- Customer information system
- Digital transformation
- Industry Workforce Development

### Opportunities

- New technologies for distribution system management, metering, customer information, communications
- New market opportunities
- Strengthen customer relationships
- Training
- Economic development programs
- Mutual aid

### Threats

- PJM capacity costs
- AEP transmission costs
- Changing communications model
- Power plant age
- Water plant age
- Load loss
- Pole attachment policy changes
- Loss of customers
- Competition—communications
- Inflation
- Cyber intrusion and sabotage
- Industry workforce challenges
- Parts for aging infrastructure
- Sale of utilities
- Regulatory updates
- Supply chain issues
- Job market competition



## Strategic Areas of Focus

*To take advantage of its organizational strengths and address opportunities for growth and improvement, Bryan Municipal Utilities identified four areas of focus to serve as the framework for its strategic plan:*

**1**

**Continuous  
Improvement  
in Services to  
Our Customers**

**2**

**Maintain a Skilled  
Workforce**

**3**

**Utilize Industry  
Best Practices to  
Maintain a Financially  
Sound Utility**

**4**

**Leverage New  
Technology to  
Improve Quality  
of Services to  
Customers**



## Business Goals

***Bryan Municipal Utilities established detailed business goals for each of the four areas of focus in its strategic plan:***

### **Continuous Improvement in Services to Our Customers**

#### **Strengthen and Implement Capital Improvements Strategy**

- **Electric Service**

- Substation Investments (Power Plant Substation Upgrades) (Lorentz Substation Upgrades)
- Underground Plant (Conduct 1 reliability project per year)
- 69 kV plan (Power Plant to Edgerton Street) (Titan Tire to Allen Street)
- Overhead Primary (Replace 100+ poles per year)
- Evaluate Long Term Power Supply Options

- **Water Service**

- Path to Lead Free in Water Distribution System
- Replace 0.5 Miles (2,640 Feet) Per Year of Existing Water Distribution main
- Overhaul one High Service Pump and one Well Per Year
- Develop Water Supply and Water Treatment Plan
- Reduce water losses
- Continue to enhance backup generation for facilities

- **Communications**

- Continue to maintain internet HFC Plant
- Fiber Optic System – Inner Ring 2023-2024
- Core Switch Replacement/Upgrade 2023 – 2024
- Headend Improvements (Construct new building) (Backup Power)



### **Maintain a Skilled Workforce**

- **Continue Implementation and Update Annually BMU Succession Plan**

- **Strengthen Workforce Development**

- Continue Industry-Specific Training Programs
- Growth and Professional development of staff

- **Compensation**

- Continue compensation studies and wage compression impact
- Maintain Competitive Benefits Levels

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## Business Goals

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### Utilize Industry Best Practices to Maintain a Financially Sound Utility

- **Study Ratings Agencies Best Practices**
  - Minimum Fund Balance Targets
  - Debt Service Coverage
  - Debt Levels
  - Depreciation Values
  - Rates
  - AMP Credit Score

- **Maintain Appropriate Capital Budgeting**

### Leverage New Technology to Improve Quality of Services to Customers

- **Deploy AMI for Electric and Water (2023/2024)**
- **Geographical Information System—Enhance and Improve**
- **Explore Load Management, Customer Portal, Smart Cities, Outage Management and Mobile Workforce Solutions**
- **Continue Enhancing Cyber Security**
- **Improve Reliability and Redundancy of the work**

***BMU strives to attract and retain a skilled workforce able to provide reliable and responsive service while pursuing innovative technological solutions to create the best economic value for our customers.***

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## Focused on a Future of Excellence

***Using the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan as its guide, BMU will pursue the technology improvements, customer service programs, human resources policies, and financial management strategies that will enable BMU to chart a course for a successful long-term future.***



BMU will use the plan to develop specific tactics for operational planning, employee engagement, new customer initiatives, and a capital improvement program. BMU will also follow the plan's guidelines when monitoring regulatory and industry changes, exploring growth opportunities, and setting internal goals. The framework of the plan will support BMU's core focus on continued delivery of reliable and competitive utility services. The BMU Board of Public Affairs and staff will review on a regular basis the progress of the plan implementation.



Above all, Bryan Municipal Utilities maintains its commitment to providing innovative, competitively priced, reliable, safe, and environmentally responsible water, electric, and communications services. BMU will provide best-in-class operations and serve as a trusted resource for utility services and community support.



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**BRYAN MUNICIPAL UTILITIES**

841 East Edgerton Street

Bryan, OH 43506

419-633-6100

[www.cityofbryan.net](http://www.cityofbryan.net)

