



BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

Regular Board of Directors *Meeting Notes*

July 13, 2020

Recommendation to the Bryan City Council to Approve a Texas Municipal Power Agency (TMPA) Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Budget Resolution

The Board approved a motion to recommend the TMPA FY2021 Budget Resolution to increase the TMPA decommissioning budget to the Bryan City Council.

Approval of a Natural Gas Pipeline Removal Project

Wes Williams, Executive Director of QSE Services and Power Generation, presented the bid tabulations for the FM 2818 Natural Gas Pipeline Removal Project. Three responses were received from the solicitation of bids. Staff determined that Heatro Pipeline Services had the best price and schedule. The Board authorized a contract with Heatro Pipeline Services to remove and plug the pipeline.

Recommendation to the Bryan City Council to Approve the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 City and Rural System Budgets

Gary Miller, BTU General Manager, presented the budget resolution to recommend the FY2021 budget appropriation to the Bryan City Council. The Board approved the resolution and recommendation to the Bryan City Council.

Discussion of Potential City of Bryan Broadband Initiative

Gary Miller, BTU General Manager, discussed a feasibility study that will be conducted for a potential City of Bryan broadband initiative.



Steele Store Substation ▶

BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES
KIOSKS
 BTU Drive Thru – 205 E. 28th St. (Open 24 Hours)
 HEB Grocery – Tejas Center on Villa Maria
 HEB Grocery – Texas Ave. & Hwy 21

WAYS TO PAY



CASH



CHECK



CARD

Bring your BTU account number, BTU bill, keycard or reminder letter.

BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES



BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

205 East 28th Street • Bryan, TX 77803

email: ContactBTU@btutilities.com

www.btutilities.com

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Board of Directors

Mr. Flynn Adcock, Chairman

Mr. Carl L. Benner

Mr. Pete J. Bienski, Jr.

Mr. Paul Madison, Sr.

Mr. A. Bentley Nettles

Ms. Rosemarie Selman

Mr. Paul Turney

Mr. Buppy Simank, Ex-Officio

Mr. Jason Bienski, Ex-Officio

General Manager

Gary Miller

Executive Directors

Randy Trimble

David Werley

Wes Williams

Division Managers

James Bodine

Shawndra Curry

Ken Lindberg

Clay Lindstrom

David McIntyre

Vicki Reim

Gary Massey

Doug Lyles, Chief Risk Officer

City of Bryan

Kean Register, City Manager

Joe Hegwood, Chief Financial Officer

Bernie Acre, Chief Information Officer

Important Numbers

Billing/Collections/Connects

(979) 821-5700

Electrical Outage/Lines Down

(979) 822-3777

Distribution/Line Design

(979) 821-5770

SOCIAL MEDIA



BryanTexasUtilities



BTU_BryanTX



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DOING HOME RENOVATIONS?

You probably need a permit.

Doing some home renovations? Before you get started, make sure you check with the City of Bryan's Development Services Department to see if you need a permit to do the work.

Buildings permits ensure the work that is being done is performed in a safe manner and that the improvements are built to city-approved construction standards. No matter what the specific job may be, the enforcement of building codes protects public health and safety for construction projects and protects the investment you have in your home.

Obtaining a permit gives you legal permission to start construction and has these other positive benefits. It ensures that contractors do good work. Profit-driven contractors might be tempted to cut corners, but a building permit ensures that they use safe construction methods and materials. And, an inspection ensures you that the contractor did the work correctly. It also protects your home's value. Permits are public record, and potential home buyers can see whether improvements to the home were completed with the proper permits.

But which types of things need permits?

- Fences over 7' in height
- Masonry fences
- Masonry work (brick or stone veneer)
- Foundations
- New or replacement siding
- New or replacement stucco
- Doors / windows (new and replacements)
- Roofing, re-roofing, or roof replacement
- Mechanical / HVAC systems
- Electrical systems
- Plumbing systems
- Decks over 30" off grade
- Storage buildings on concrete foundations
- Storage buildings on skids over 120 square feet in area.
- New homes or structures
- Additions
- Exterior remodeling
- Interior remodeling
- Carports
- Garage enclosures
- Renovations
- Mobile Homes
- Prefabricated structures
- Temporary Buildings
- Demolitions
- Driveways / sidewalks
- Water heater replacements
- Insulation
- Swimming Pools / hot tubs 24" or more in depth
- Retaining walls over 4' in height

What type of things do not need permits?

- Exterior Painting (outside historic districts)
- Interior painting, wall papering or similar finish work
- Cabinets and counter tops
- Swings and playground equipment
- Wood fences 7' or less in height
- Residential storage buildings on skids less than 120 square (must meet setback requirements and not located in easements or floodplain)

If your project needs a permit, you should obtain that permit before starting any of the construction. For more information on beginning the permitting process, go to **bryantx.gov** or call **979.209.5030**.

SOLAR

FACTS & MYTHS

Residential and commercial solar energy systems have become more popular in the United States over the last several years. According to energy.gov, the average cost of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels has dropped nearly 50 percent since 2014, making the cost of a solar energy system more competitive with standard utility rates.

While many of the early adopters of solar energy were driven by environmental concerns and off-grid lifestyles, homeowners are now looking at the economics of installing a solar energy system. According to the Center for Sustainable Energy, the cost of a residential solar electric system is currently between \$3.00 and \$5.00 per watt. A standard 5 kilowatt (KW) system will cost between \$15,000 and \$25,000 before tax incentives. Using the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) PVWatts® solar calculator for the Brazos Valley, a 5 KW solar energy system will provide an estimated annual energy output of 7,285 kilowatt hours (kWh). This would save the homeowner an estimated \$757 per year in electricity costs, putting the breakeven period between 19 and 33 years.



Here are a few solar facts and myths to consider before deciding if solar is right for you:

Fact:

There are federal tax credits to offset the cost of residential and commercial solar energy systems. The federal solar energy tax credit can be claimed on federal income taxes for a percentage of the cost of an installed solar energy system. The current tax credit is 26 percent of the cost of a system that is fully installed by December 31, 2020. This tax credit decreases to 22 percent in 2021, and the program ends entirely for residential systems on December 31, 2021. However, commercial systems can still apply for a 10 percent tax credit thereafter. The tax credit does not apply to homeowners who lease a solar energy system. For a detailed explanation of this tax credit program, go to [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov) and use the search term “Residential and Commercial ITC Factsheets.” It is always a good idea to check with your tax preparer or CPA if you’re considering installing a solar energy system.

Myth:

You can use my solar power during a power outage. When the power goes out, grid-tied systems go out as well, unless you have a battery backup. That’s because it’s not safe to be pushing electricity back onto the electric grid while workers may be trying to fix the problem. The inverter (the big box near your meter that converts DC electricity created by the panels into usable AC current) recognizes that the power is out and automatically shuts off the system.

Fact:

BTU will buy the extra solar power I don’t use. In the BTU service territory, for any month in which a solar energy system produces more energy than a home draws, BTU will purchase the excess energy based on the current fuel rate, which is presently about \$0.03 per kWh. At the end of a billing cycle, the total amount of energy put back onto the grid is subtracted from the total amount of electricity that was drawn from BTU. If the solar energy system consistently produces more than the amount drawn from BTU, BTU will write a check to the system owner, usually once the credit exceeds \$150.

Myth:

The hotter the temperature, the more energy the solar panels will produce. Just as with any other electronic equipment, solar panel performance declines as the panels get hotter. Most PV panels are efficiency rated at 77 degrees Fahrenheit. As the panel temperatures rise above 77 degrees, the output of the PV cells fall. Each PV panel manufacturer lists a “temperature coefficient,” which quantifies the amount of efficiency lost as the panel temperatures rise. Usually, this temperature coefficient is relatively small, but it is compounded as the temperatures rise. In our hot climate, the output of a PV panel can be reduced by 10 to 25 percent during the hottest of our summer months.

The majority of solar energy systems will place the PV panels on the building’s roof. When deciding if a roof-mounted solar energy system is right for you, consider these questions:

Which way does your roof slant? South-facing roofs are the most productive for solar due to our location north of the solar equator, followed by west- and east-facing roofs. The more usable area on these sides of your roof, the more energy the PV panels will generate, which makes a difference on the overall return on investment of your system.

Is your roof shaded? Look at the shadows on the south, west, and east sides of your roof. If portions of your roof are blocked by trees or buildings, that will lower the potential solar output.

How big is your roof? It takes an average of about 100 square feet of roof area for each KW of a solar energy system. An average residential 5 KW system requires about 500 square feet of roof space.

How old is your roof? Solar systems are usually warrantied to last for 25 to 30 years. That means your roof should have at least that many years of life left when you install solar panels. Otherwise, you’ll have to temporarily remove the solar panels when you replace the roof, which will add to the cost of roof replacement.

Here are some recommended neutral websites for those considering solar energy systems:

<https://pvwatts.nrel.gov/pvwatts.php>

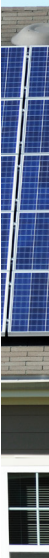
<https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/finance/solar-panel-cost>

<https://www.energy.gov/eere/solarpoweringamerica/solar-energy-united-states>



Want to support renewable energy sources without installing a solar energy system?

Check out BTU’s RENEWability program to purchase 100 percent wind and solar energy. Go to btutilites.com and click on the “Energy Efficiency” link to get information on RENEWability, solar, SmartHOME, or other energy programs from BTU.





WILLIAM JOEL BRYAN PARKWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT: *Update*

If you have driven down William Joel Bryan Parkway in Bryan recently, you may have noticed construction crews in the area. A joint project between the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the City of Bryan (COB), and the Bryan/College Station Metropolitan Organization (BCSMPO) is planned to improve safety, mobility, and aesthetics for those travelling along the thoroughfare. The planning and consideration for this project included many opportunities for community input including several public meetings, surveys, individual meetings and design presentations.

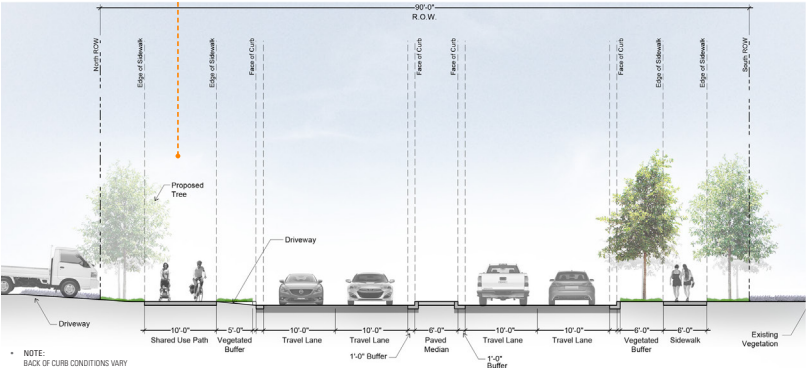
The project encompasses many aspects of safety and mobility, including adding a raised median to separate the portion of the thoroughfare that has two-way traffic, turn lanes to reduce turn conflicts, and landscaped buffers between pedestrians and bicyclists, and vehicle traffic. Additional safety measures such as traffic signals, roundabouts, and hybrid pedestrian signals are designed primarily near the recreational area around Sue Haswell Park. Planners intend to narrow the travel lanes and use other design elements such as roundabouts and crosswalks to reduce vehicular speed in the residential and recreational areas. Road construction is planned to begin in early 2021.

A portion of the project that must be completed prior to road construction beginning involves converting existing overhead electric lines to underground facilities and the relocation of an existing substation. The overhead to underground conversion begins at Earl Rudder Freeway and extends along William J. Bryan Parkway ending at Texas Avenue – spanning more than two miles. Last fall, Bryan Texas Utilities (BTU) contract crews began installing underground facilities along the roadway to prepare for the conversion. In mid-August, crews began converting approximately 30 existing overhead connection points to accommodate the new underground electric service. Connection points to homes and businesses along the thoroughfare must be adapted to accept the alternate type of service at no cost to the customer. After all connection points and new underground infrastructure is installed and commissioned into regular service, dismantling of the overhead infrastructure will commence.



Another aspect of BTU’s participation in the largescale project is the relocation of an existing substation. When originally constructed, the Nall Lane Substation sat near the boundaries of the city. However, with growth and expansion over the years, the substation now sits very close to the heavily trafficked William J. Bryan Parkway. A replacement substation, dubbed the Rodgers Substation, is nearing completion on Nash Street just a block or two away from the existing Nall Lane Substation. Relocating an entire substation is no simple task, but is necessary to improve reliability, allow for growth, and to improve public safety and mobility along the roadway.

BTU’s conversion of the overhead to underground electric service and relocation of the substation is expected to be complete by the end of October - weather permitting. In the meantime, as with any project of this size, there will be minor inconveniences in the form of traffic delays and planned outages. The community’s support and patience is essential to achieve the goal of a safer, more convenient, and more aesthetically pleasing artery into the heart of Bryan.



You can learn more about the project at wjbproject.com.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES: *A History*

Due to a recent rise in popularity, many believe that electric vehicles (EVs) are a modern invention. However, Scottish inventor Robert Anderson built the first crude electric vehicle in 1832. It was powered by battery cells that were not rechargeable, and thus not very practical. Throughout the 19th century, inventors and scientists across the globe worked to improve the idea of an electric vehicle. William Morrison created the first successful electric vehicle in the United States in the 1890s. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, by the turn of the century, about one-third of all vehicles on the road were electric vehicles. Interest continued in EVs with notable inventors such as Thomas Edison endeavoring to develop better batteries. Ferdinand Porsche – the same Porsche moniker that graces a luxury car brand today – developed the world's first hybrid electric car that ran off an electric battery and a gas engine.

The introduction of the Model T by Henry Ford proved to be big competition for the electric vehicle industry. EVs saw a massive decline in the 1920s and 1930s due to the discovery of cheap crude oil here in Texas and the convenience of gas stations dotting the landscape. For the next few decades, gas-powered vehicles dominated the market, driven by cheap fuel and improvements to the internal combustion engine. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, gas prices began to increase rapidly leading to a renewed interest in electric vehicles. Even the moon landings popularized electric cars due to the lunar rover being powered by electricity.



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The fascination with electric vehicles faded again in the 1980s due to shortcomings such as limited range and performance as compared to gas- or diesel-powered vehicles. However, as federal and state regulations on carbon emissions tightened in the 1990s, automakers began developing more electric options. In 1996, GM's EV1 gained minor popularity and was shortly followed by the first mass-produced hybrid, the Toyota Prius. Still a very popular model today, the Prius skyrocketed interest in EVs. The following decade led to more EVs being available on the market, including a Silicon Valley startup and present industry giant, Tesla Motors.

The federal government took note of the civic interest and began developing a nationwide EV charging infrastructure including residential, commercial, and publicly available chargers. The US Department of Energy also invested in technology research and provided loans to EV automakers. This resulted in the battery technology used in the Chevy Volt and loan funds being used to develop the Nissan LEAF. Further investments by the US Department of Energy helped reduce EV battery costs by nearly 50 percent in four years, during the 2010s.

Now electric vehicles are becoming more common by the day, and the charging infrastructure to support them is improving in parallel. Nearly every major automaker offers fully electric and hybrid options. Customers look to electric or hybrid vehicles to reduce their carbon footprint and possibly save money on fuel. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that the US could reduce dependence on foreign oil sources by 30 to 60 percent if all light-duty vehicles were switched to hybrid or all electric models. In early 2020, it was estimated that there are nearly 25,000 public charging stations nationwide, with more than 78,000 outlets amongst them.

BTU EV CHARGING STATIONS

Did you know that BTU has public electric vehicle (EV) chargers available in Downtown Bryan? The pilot program consists of two, level-2 charging stations that have two plugs each for a total of four charging points. Level-2 chargers charge at a maximum rate of 25 miles of range per hour (rph), which can fully charge some EVs in four hours. The stations are built to withstand outdoor elements, certified to operate in cold and hot weather and in the rain and if we have any, snow.. The stations can be easily found on the Chargepoint app available on both iPhone and Android devices. All stations have multi-language capabilities – English, French, and Spanish – and in-app

support for ease of use. The app allows you to locate available stations and most importantly, it allows you to pay for your charging time, and receive notifications when your car is finished charging. Conveniently, it also allows you to join a waitlist if the station you wish to use is full and calculates your estimated greenhouse gas emission offsets for the miles you drive using electricity instead of gasoline.



PUBLIC POWER BUILDS BETTER COMMUNITIES



COMMUNITY-OWNED AND
CUSTOMER-FOCUSED



YOUR VOICE MATTERS



LOWER COSTS AND
INCREASED RELIABILITY



PUBLIC POWER IS
#COMMUNITYpowered



PUBLIC POWER WEEK OCTOBER 4-10, 2020

Since 1986, the American Public Power Association has designated the first full week of October as Public Power Week in the United States. Public Power Week is a celebration of the more than 2,000 community-owned, not-for-profit electric utilities that serve the energy needs of approximately 48 million customers.

All public power utilities share the goal of providing adequate, safe, and reliable electricity at economical rates. BTU is wholly-owned by the City of Bryan, and the elected Bryan City Council appoints the BTU Board, which means

that decisions are made locally and in the best interest of all customers. “We are honored to serve this community as a public-power utility,” BTU General Manager, Gary Miller said. “Every decision is made with our customers in mind.”

BTU employees also live here, contributing to the local economy and giving back to the community on a daily basis. BTU serves both city and rural territories, serving the City of Bryan, parts of the City of College Station, much of Brazos County, and portions of Robertson and Burleson Counties, which encompasses more than 640 square miles.

